CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Social Demography of Colonial Assam is a historical perspective to understanding the impact of demography on society and economy of colonial Assam. It has been carried out within the conceptual framework that demographic structures have been the major contributing factor towards ‘social formation, economic organisation and in the functioning of government’.\(^1\) Demography or population behaviour has decided every turnout in history since the time when society in global context, emerged as a historical process when human settled down to agriculture and its companion familial ties developed. In other words, demographic concerns have always gained importance in the understanding structural change in society and economy.

Demography is a systematic study of population both static as well as dynamic. It encompasses the study of size, structure and distribution of population, spatial as well as temporal changes in population in response to birth, death and migration which impacts upon the history of any region. However, an aggregate statistics or numerical characteristics of ‘formal demography’ usually point towards large similarities as well as differences in a group. In other words the aggregates offer a tangible and well-built argument for the existence of certain trends in population in context of society. This signifies that a population is not just a collection of separate, unrelated individuals but together constitute a society

\(^1\) For a selection of studies in historical social demography see, É. Gautier and L. Henry (1958); E.A. Wrigley (1966); Roger S. Schofield and E.A. Wrigley (1981); M. J. Anderson (1988) etc.
with various distinct but interlinked classes and communities. The communities are sustained and regulated by social institutions which in turn are supported by the social as well as economic relationships among its members. This understanding of population characteristics as the backdrop of society and economy with the use of social statistics encompasses the discipline of social demography.

Social demography has been defined as the analytical study of the relationships between socio-cultural and economic factors, on one hand and the structure and processes of population on the other, i.e., it concentrates on the interface between economic, social and demographic factors that has direct bearing on historical phenomena and therefore a relationship can be drawn between the two. The liaison has been explained lucidly through a set of questions posed by Louis Henry (1911-1991), regarded as the founder of the concept of historical demography. Henry in his attempt to establish his theory of ‘natural fertility’ on empirical ground and to provide detailed description and explanation of fertility decline suggested that to answer questions associated with population behaviour viz., ‘Who we are?’ and ‘Where we are headed?’, a demographer must look back to the past and start with the question ‘Where were we yesterday and the day before?’

Thus, while formal demography is the study of the basic demographic processes, the subfield of social demography examines the intersection of demography with social distributions and dynamics, particularly population composition and differences in demographic distributions by race/ethnicity and socio-economic status. Social demography with which the present research is

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concerned, enquire into the wider implications of population structure and change and is based on the notion that social processes and structures regulate demographic processes.

The relationship between demography and social, economic and political processes received its present importance in academic and or scholarly studies with the influential political-economic investigation of population growth by Malthus in 1798. His work entitled *An Essay on the Principle of Population as it Affects the Future Improvement of Society with Remarks on the Speculations of Mr. Godwin, M. Condorcet, and Other Writers*, also imparted a stimulus for interdisciplinary studies in the field of demography. Of late the there has been a growing interaction between demography, anthropology, sociology, economy and history too. The discipline of demography has received some of its most ‘basic operational categories such as fertility and demographic transition from history’\(^3\). The proposed study which attempts at historical analysis of social demography also draws on the statistics of historical population of Assam and their attributes during pre-colonial and colonial regime to understand the various politico-administrative as well as socio-economic changes that brought about a distinctive demographic pattern in the society.

This brings us to assess the **major theoretical bases** that emerged to understand demography. It was political interest and concern which always formed the basis

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for thinking on population\textsuperscript{4} but its place was redefined in the eighteenth century when classical economics in incorporated population into a totally different conceptual framework provided with new methodical tools. Besides, by conceptualising the three factors of production, namely land, capital and labour, and by defining markets where demand and supply balance each other in relation to a price, rendered it easy for economists to theorise the dynamics of population. Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834) through his groundbreaking work \textit{An Essay on the Principle of Population} provided the main theoretical framework for modern demographic research. His main contribution was a homeostatic, cyclical view of population dynamics. Malthus noted that population growth is inherently a cumulative process, sustaining itself as long as sufficient food can be procured. Food production, on the other hand, is constrained by the finite stock of suitable land. The result is a tendency for productivity and wages to decline until the standard of living falls too low to support further population growth. The only sustainable state is one of general misery, of bare and precarious survival for the maximum number a land can maintain.\textsuperscript{5}

During Malthus’ age agriculture being the most important occupation his concern was mainly with the problem of maintaining an ideal proportion of land-man ratio and contended that any deviation from such proportion would mean poverty. Malthus was hostile to an excess of population because it ‘causes social sufferings’. Supporting Ricardo’s doctrine of diminishing return Malthus,

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\item[\textsuperscript{4}] The interest of governments shown in counting the number in its population has always been triggered by administrative requirements like military conscription, revenue assessments, budgeting, etc.
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remarked that as fertility of land was limited and law of diminishing return was in operation in agriculture, supply of foodstuff would lag behind the demand for it. He explained that as the number of people working an unchanging amount of land increases, the increments of output get smaller and smaller. In economic terms, the marginal product of labour falls, and with it the market-determined, food-equivalent wage of workers. Malthus focused on the implications of diminishing returns for population growth. To use his terms, unless there are autonomous ‘preventive’ checks on human fertility, which he thought unlikely, the inescapable fall in per capita output and income will lead to increased mortality, a ‘positive’ check to population. The reason is that so long as incomes are higher than the bare subsistence level, fertility remains higher than mortality, and new mouths continue to absorb any surplus.

Though this was the main demographic content of the original Malthusian model, it also contained a significant element of ruling class anxiety about the debilitating influence that the rapidly proliferating poor would have on society. The poorer section did not respect ‘preventive checks’ and the Elizabethan Poor Laws by transferring part of the social surplus to this class only encouraged their multiplication. This in turn increased the demand for food and raised the prices for middle class, thereby raising their mortality.

Marx, as opposed to Malthus, was favourable to demographic growth in so far as a large proletariat act as a factor aggravating the contradictions of capitalism. Marx

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6 It has been established that in a premarket society or where peasants own their land outright, they can claim the higher average product of labour. But this also falls as population rises.

was of the opinion that ‘every special historic mode of production has its own special law of population, historically valid within its limits alone’. Marx and Engels rejected Ricardo’s law of diminishing returns and expressed faith in progressing science ‘just as limitless and at least as rapid as that of population’. Lenin in his book *The Agrarian Question and the Critics of Marx* opined that the law of diminishing returns ‘has only an extremely relative and restricted application to cases in which technique remained unchanged’. Thus, with the rejection of law of diminishing returns ‘the Malthusian principle of population is left without any theoretical base’.

Apart from Malthusian theory of population and Marx’s interpretation, there existed the theory of Demographic Transition. The Theory of Demographic Transition was first presented in 1929 by Warren S. Thompson. Later it was developed by Landry in 1934 as the overwhelming dominant explanation of European populations. The Demographic Transition Theory has often been referred to as ‘generalisation based on available long term statistical series of deaths and births in several European countries’. Its proponents argued that for centuries the mortality rate compensated for the birth rate, with no overall demographic growth. Then the transition began with a first stage of a declining

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mortality rate (except in France), while fertility remained high, leading population
growth in an accelerating pace. Then again a decline followed in the birth rate,
now resulting in a more and more slow growth. At the end of the process, towards
the end of the nineteenth century and until the end of the Second World War, both
rates were low and since they compensated each other, once again population grew
slowly. But the reminiscent data gathered in Europe and the industrialised
countries, and later in the developing countries subsequently led to the conclusion
that there are so many different paths leading to the end of transition that
ultimately it is the parameters of the transition that are really important.

Thus the focus shifted to fertility transition from demographic transition. The
classical ‘fertility transition theory’ also saw falling fertility rates as a consequence
of industrialisation and its component urbanization, new economic role of women,
decline in mortality rates leading to decline of family etc. The transition theory of
1944 further saw demographic change as a dependant variable with social,
economic and cultural developments as the main explanatory factors. Later efforts
at abstraction and modelling, particularly the theory of socio-cultural
modernisation\(^\text{12}\) formulated by Notestein (1953), further weakened the model’s
theoretical validity and therefore its universality.

One of the most significant alternatives offered to the demographic transition
theory was Caldwell’s ‘wealth-flow’ theory. Caldwell wrote in *Towards a
Restatement of Demographic Transition Theory* ‘fertility is high or low as a result

\(^{12}\) For critiques of the modernization theory, see Alvin W. Gouldner, ‘For Sociology: Renewal
of economic benefit to individuals, couples, or families in its being so’ determined ‘primarily by the intergenerational wealth flow’. Thus a shift emerged from demographic transition to fertility transition in understanding demographic dynamics. The theory found its most systematic critique from van de Kaa.13

Socially the aspect of population growth and decline has been theorised by A. Dumont.14 Dumont by his theory of Social Capillarity explained that the individual desired to mount to higher levels in his social environment. In this process of upward he becomes less and less likely to reproduce himself. As a result he gradually lost interests in the family and the welfare of the race. He showed interest in moving upward in a way that would benefit him personally. ‘The development of numbers in a nation is the inverse ratio to the development of the individual.’15 With considerable improvement in demography, the rapid decline in the birth and death rates in a number of developed countries in the West and the increase in the standard of living in various parts of the world the outlook of many writers of the modern period on the population question underwent remarkable changes. It came to be recognised that the effect of population growth and change depends upon the social conditions, technological skill and productive wealth.

Therefore, in the discipline of demography two theories- the Malthusian notion of development and the demographic transition theory has been most influential.

Another influential figure was Marx. Marx did not provide any concrete theory on demography per se but contributed much in viewing demographic growth as having only positive impacts on production regimes.

The proposed study has been undertaken with the objectives of

- To examine the major shifts in population composition in the Brahmaputra valley of Assam during colonial period.
- To analyze into the non-demographic determinants associated with the shift such as social, economic and cultural processes influencing a population and vice versa, and
- To study the pattern of spatial distribution of population.

The proposed research has been based on a set of hypotheses that:

- Population growth and change is dependent on larger structures of social interaction;
- Population growth is directly related to increase in labour force which leads to growth in production, income or wage; and
- Increase in population changes human settlement and land use pattern leading to urbanisation.

With this brief introduction of the framework of research, a literature review on the demographic analysis of structural properties of population, distribution of traits or events within population using both qualitative and quantitative approaches have been undertaken to create a ‘research space’ for the present study.
Kingsley Davis’ (1959) essay pointed out to the existence of an intimate relation between demography and society. He established that fertility trends are associated with attitudes and social institutions. Another significant observation was that population change is correlated to social and economic change, that labour force is related to population structure and social organisation. Calvin Goldscheider’s (1971) work presented a study on ‘social demography’ with reference to modernization and social differentiation. The work discussed the idea of ‘modernization’ and the role played by the population in the broad processes of social change. The significant contribution of this work is that it critiqued the general theoretical and methodological issues of social demography.

David L. Featherman and Robert M. Hauser’s (1978) essay presented a detailed discussion on intergroup shift in occupational socio-economic status as well as sources of change in socio-economic status. Amos H. Hawley’s (1978) essay analysed the relation between density, urban expansion and population redistribution. Hauser and Duncan’s (1959) edited work made significant contribution towards the development of social demography by including social

mobility in their definition of demography. Their contribution helped establishing
the studies of census and survey data on education, occupations, income, and other
census measures of socioeconomic status at the core of the discipline of
demography. They also made significant contribution in analysing data and
methods to study inequality and social mobility. Thomas Jackson Woofter’s (1933)
work\textsuperscript{21} discussed ethnic pattern, natural increase, immigration movement and
distribution, agriculture, urban occupations and race prejudice and discrimination prevalent in the American society.

Otis Dudley Duncan’s (1965) essay\textsuperscript{22} estimated the trend in social mobility in
American society using the cross-sectional measure of social mobility. In order to
understand the transition matrix of respondent’s occupation by father’s occupation
the occupational changes in a generation was examined. Duncan compared the
observed occupational distribution for various birth groups for earlier times with
their expected occupational distributions. Another innovative social demographic
analysis using an extension of the same method was Lieberson and Fuguitt’s
(1967) analysis\textsuperscript{23} that addressed the question of how many generations it would
take to eliminate racial inequality in occupational structures if discrimination were
eliminated immediately.

\textsuperscript{21} T.J. Woofter, ‘The Status of Race and the Ethnic Groups’ in \textit{Recent Social Trends}, New York,

\textsuperscript{22} O. D. Duncan, The Trend in Occupational Mobility in the United States, \textit{American

\textsuperscript{23} S. Lieberson and G. Fuguitt, Negro-White Occupational Differences in the Absence of
David I. Kertzer and Dennis P. Hogan’s (1989) work questioned many of the orthodoxies and discrepancies of mainstream demographic ‘theory’ while studying the social demography of Casalecchio region in Italy. It attempted an interdisciplinary effort to discover how changes in family life and demographic behavior actually occurred in the studied period and how people's lives were affected. Angeliki E. Laiou Thomadakis’ (1977) work discussed the village structure and its population, family and kinship, the dependent peasant and his holding, size and movement of population as well as natural movement of population in Constantinople. David Coleman’s (2006) essay discussed how immigration leads to change in the ethnic change with empirical evidence and statistical data in his study of low fertility countries. Dudley L. Poston, Jr. and Leon F. Bouvier’s (2010) work discussed both demographic and non-demographic components of population change. One significant contribution of their work is the analysis of the relation between immigration, assimilation, cultural pluralism and its impact on demographic pattern in American society.

In India, the first comprehensive work on demography is Kingsley Davis’ 1951 work which explored and analysed the population of India and Pakistan and

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represented an approach to the analysis of social organisation and social change in the area concerned. The work used the decennial censuses as the main source of information. Ansley J. Coale and Edgar M. Hoover’s (1958) book\textsuperscript{29} has detailed on population growth vis-à-vis economic development with special reference to India. Both the works of Kingsley Davis and Coale and Hoover gave a new direction to population studies. The focus shifted to the study of inter-relationships between demographic and socio-economic variables instead of inter-relations between demographic variables.

Parameswara Krishnan’s (2010) work\textsuperscript{30} presented a historical demographic analysis of the major religious groups in India. Moreover, he also advanced a few reasons to explain the slowness in the change of demography in India in the twentieth century. Amiya Kumar Bagchi’s (2010) essay\textsuperscript{31} studied the relation between demography and economy in Indian context. In this study the author focussed on the changes in India’s national income during colonial rule and foreign capital investment and its distribution among the various income classes, the change of domestic demand for certain commodities over time and the emergence of manufacturing and processing units. V. Balakrishnan Nair’s (1994) work\textsuperscript{32} in \textit{Social Development and Demographic Changes in South India: Focus on Kerala}


provided a comprehensive account of Kerala’s demographic profile in the twentieth century and discussed the cultural determinants of fertility such as caste and religion. He pointed out through empirical evidence that caste and religion has a bearing on fertility pattern in the developed as well as developing societies. According to him the relationship between religion and fertility is a complex phenomenon and varies considerably in different socio-economic, demographic and cultural contexts. Ravindran Gopinath’s (2010) work\textsuperscript{33} analysed the historical fertility change in South India, through an examination of various demographic determinants spanning a period of hundred years. The work underlines the crucial importance of political economy, agro-climatic factors and marriage pattern in accounting for past variation in fertility and mortality in colonial South India.

Ethnographic study of population by social historian and anthropologists also addressed certain issues of social demography. Nirmal Kumar Bose’s (1953) book\textsuperscript{34}, \textit{Cultural Anthropology and Other Essays} studied the cultural change among the Juang tribe of Orissa, Bengal and other related areas using the theory of ‘diffusion’. He observed that foreign contact, economic influence, mental attitude and contents of culture play significant role in shifting demographic pattern. His work however lacked concrete statistical evidence to enumerate the impact of such change on demography.


More importantly, census categorization of population and its consequences has been dealt with in a number of studies. Benedict Anderson’s (1991) work pointed to the census as one of the primary devices employed by the colonial state to impose a ‘totalizing, classificatory grid’, on its territory, and make all inside in it its own. Another influential work in this aspect is by Arjun Appadurai (1993) essay where the study focused on the employment quantification in censuses, maps and in racial studies. The author argued that in the process of ‘exoticization’ and enumeration lays ‘a crucial part of the explanation of group violence and communal terror in contemporary India’. David I. Kertzer and Dominique Arel (2002) edited book has highlighted the many aspects of population categorization in the National Censuses of various countries over the world and analysed the social as well as political impact of such categorization in the respected countries. The editor duo made significant contribution on the issue of census and identity formation with illustration from several countries including India. Dipesh Chakrabarty (2002) work has discussed the British government’s attempt to ‘fix and officialize collective identities’ in India and tried to correlate the modern problems of religion and caste prevalent in the country to the practices and

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policies, quantification and categorization followed by the British government during their rule in India.

**Historical population change was also studied in the context of Assam** by Homeswar Goswami. His (1985) work\(^\text{40}\) presented in details the trend as well as fluctuation in the birth rates, death rates, rates of natural increase of population and contribution by net in-migration into the valley. The differential roles of net-migration and natural increase in influencing the overall growth of the Brahmaputra valley population were brought out by analysing the same in comparison to all India growth pattern as well as district-wise variation in the population. He concluded that the behavioural dynamics of the valley’s population was affected more by the environmental, medical and economic forces rather than by biological factors. Anil Saikia’s (1986) work\(^\text{41}\) has discussed exclusively the significant factor – ‘mortality’ in a demographic study of Assam Proper. He estimated the level of mortality and infant mortality rate since 1881 in Assam. P.C. Goswami’s (1963) work\(^\text{42}\) identified four groups of immigration into Assam and discussed them in a historico-administrative perspective. He examined the importance of the tea labour immigrant population, East Bengal Muslim immigrants and the Nepali graziers on the overall economic development of Assam. T. K. Chaudhuri’s (1982) work\(^\text{43}\) is an analysis of population trends in


Assam in comparison to other states of India based on the demographic data of fifty years.

Migration into Assam constituted a recurrent theme in many of the studies on demography and social change. Rana P. Behal’s (1983) unpublished thesis has studied the plantation worker in the tea gardens of Assam, social origin and demographic and non demographic factors affecting their growth. Bimal J. Dev and Dilip K. Lahiri (1984) in their book have described the different caste groups in the Assamese society. They highlighted the lack of rigidity in the inter-caste relations in Assam in comparison to caste groups and inter caste relations in India. Virginius Xaxa’s (1985) essay described the migration pattern in India in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries from Chota Nagpur, Bengal and United Provinces into Assam and West Bengal. Apart from reflecting on the recruitment policies, working conditions his main contribution lies in highlighting the process of linguistic assimilation of the migrant labour population with the inhabitants of the country they adopted. The tea migrants were also discussed in relation to the impact they had on the economy of Assam by Amalendu Guha in his (1991) work. In this book the author also reflected on the population composition of

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45 Bimal J. Dev and Dilip K. Lahiri, *Cosmogony of Caste and Social Mobility in Assam*, Mittal Publication, Delhi, 1984.


47 At present the name is spelt as Chotanagpur but in the colonial official writings it was spelt as Chota-Nagpur and hence the use here.

Assam and their systems of agriculture and economy in the pre-colonial era and discussed the reasons associated with subsequent changes.

Weiner Myron’s (1978) work\textsuperscript{49} analyses the demographic pattern change in Assam due to immigration. He argued that the economic nature of migration led to increase in land use under cultivation and contributed in the emergence of dual economy. The work is significant for its contribution toward understanding how both the economies lead to conflict when trying to dominate the natural and economic resources thereby culminating in ethnic conflict between the ethnic and migrant population. Myron Weiner’s (1973) essay\textsuperscript{50} portrayed Assam’s immigration scene and critically reviewed the relationship between the ‘Assamese’ and the immigrants in the context of linguistic, occupational, commercial, land-tenurial, cultural and political interest. He noted the Assamese reaction to the immigrants in the backdrop of employment takeover, linguistic imperialism and commercial preponderance. Rajen Saikia in his work\textsuperscript{51} discussed how the traditional passed into the hands of immigrant population due to large scale depopulation in the pre-colonial era. S.S. Harlalka’s (1975) unpublished Ph.D. Thesis\textsuperscript{52} studied the socio-economic conditions of the tea labour population and their socio-cultural background and the impact of the host society in matters of

\textsuperscript{49} Myron Weiner \textit{Sons of Soil: Migration and Ethnic Conflict in India}, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1978.


language, mode of living etc. Susanta Krishna Das in his 1980 essay\textsuperscript{53} published in \textit{Economic and Political Weekly}, presented a study on immigration induced demographic change and the subsequent economic, political and change in settlement pattern in Assam in the colonial and post independence period. Das spells out three causes for the population increase: high immigration, increase in natural rate since 1921 and the relative absence of mobility among the natives. Jayanta Kumar Gogoi’s, (1984) unpublished Ph.D Thesis,\textsuperscript{54} has discussed the various streams of migration into Assam and its impact on the economy in post independence Assam. Jayeeta Sharma (2012)\textsuperscript{55} in her work has explained how the settlement of immigrants into Assam during colonial period irrevocably changed the region’s social landscape.

The survey of literature reveals that researches in this discipline were segmented, with propensity towards specialization on thematic basis like fertility and mortality. A few scholars were also motivated by the central character of population issues and its location at a crossroad between economy, sociology, territorial analysis, and political studies and, more recently, in cultural approaches. The studies lacked in analysing the changing demographic as a historical process having profound social, economic, and even psychological or ideational implications in the social structure. Researches in social demography in India therefore, appear meager when compared to the progress made by non-Indian

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demographic studies. Further, the problem of demographic change of colonial Assam has been dealt with by only a few scholars. The survey reveals that studies on demographic change and its impact on social structure and composition of population and economic activities in understanding the historical social demography of Assam and the Brahmaputra valley are felt inadequate which explain the rationale for undertaking the proposed study on social demography. To add a new dimension to the study of social demography in this thesis an attempt will be made to trace the social demography of colonial Assam from a historical perspective.

The major themes of this research on Social Demography of Colonial Assam can be broadly defined as: description of social patterns and trends, contextual analysis and hypothesis testing and explanation. Therefore, the methodology in the present study combines historical approach with analytical method to impart the much needed validity and generality to the study. The new social, economic and political forces developing in the Brahmaputra valley of Assam during the period shall be described from historical perspective and an analysis of the effects of these forces in shaping the social composition and occupational pattern of the population along with the dynamic components of growth shall be attempted. Regarding the question of basing the proposed research on an established theory the Malthusian theory of population movement and economic equilibrium can be rejected for the fact that Assam during the period of study presented a situation where there was excess of land against population growth. Therefore, Marx’s ‘notion’ (as he did not left a theory per se) that ‘there is no one universal law of population’ shall be more relevant for the purpose of the present study. Another
guiding and more important theory for this study shall be that part of the
demographic transition theory which developed in 1944 which saw demographic
change as a dependant variable with ‘social, economic and cultural developments’.

The study area of the present research proposes to concentrate on the social
demography of Assam and the Brahmaputra valley in particular for the period
when it was held under colonial rule. The geographic coverage of the study is
therefore, selective and is limited to the six districts of the Brahmaputra valley
namely (arranging from west to east) Goalpara, Kamrup, Nowgong,56 Darrang,
Sibsagar,57 and Lakhimpur keeping in view the availability of data, nature problem
of the problem etc and covering the period between 1826 to 1941, the former date
marking an end of the six hundred year long local government under the Ahom
rulers and beginning of a new era under the political dominance of a foreign
mercantile company (which latter assumed control under British Crown) and the
latter date marked the last census year during colonial rule. The period selected for
the study is unique in the population history of the valley for many regions. It was
period of gradual increase compared to the whole of British India. The pattern of
growth was however subjected to large scale fluctuations and more importantly the
demographic pattern of the Brahmaputra valley has not been explored on the basis
of socio-political as well as economic determinants.

For better understanding of social demography of colonial Assam, a brief
introduction of the land and its history is necessary. Geographically Assam

56 The present spelling is Nagaon but it was spelt as Nowgong in the colonial records. Therefore,
this study being carried out in historical perspective uses the spelling that was used in the
colonial records.

57 The present spelling is Sivasagar but it was spelt as Sibsagar during the colonial period, hence
the use in this study.
occupied the north-east corner of India, which is situated between 24°28’ north and 89°97’ east. It is naturally divided into three distinct portions, namely the Brahmaputra valley in the north, that of the Surma (Barak) valley in the south and the hilly regions running west to east which lie between the valleys and form the watershed of the two basins and help with numerous streams to swell the waters of the two of the largest rivers in Assam. Along the banks of the Brahmaputra lie the six districts of Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang, Nowgong, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur which comprised the ‘Brahmaputra Valley or Assam Valley Districts’. According to the Census of 1951 the Assam Plains covered an area of 23,033 square miles which amounted to 27.1 percent to the total area with a population of 86.3 percent.\textsuperscript{58} This Brahmaputra valley with which the present research is concerned covered an area much larger than that of the Barak valley and the Hill tracts but contained a population much lesser than its neighbouring areas. Therefore, vast tracts of lands were lying as waste to the north as well as centre of the valley where the river often shifted its course rendering it difficult for any kind of settlement or permanent cultivation. The Brahmaputra valley which was covered by the Pleistocene and Recent alluvial deposits represented the easterly extension of the Indo-Gangetic alluvium.\textsuperscript{59}

Assam owes its importance to its situation on the north-east frontier of India. It was surrounded by mountainous ranges on three sided: on the north are the Himalayas shutting off the table-lands of Bhutan and Tibet, on the north-east is a series of hills which formed a barrier between the Upper Brahmaputra valley and

\textsuperscript{58} Compiled from Census of India, 1951, Vol. XII.

the more or less independent Mongolian tribes who lived in the west of the boundary of China and on the west lies the Province of Bengal on to the large plains of which debouch the two valleys of the Brahmaputra and the less of sandy character. It was about 450 miles in length and 50 miles in average breadth.\textsuperscript{60}

The surveyed area of the valley differed in almost every Census owing to attaching or detaching of new areas. Further, the Brahmaputra valley has been divided into ‘\textit{Chapori Belts’}, ‘Central Belts’ and submontane areas. The three belts differed in topography, population pattern and agriculture. While the \textit{Chapori} belt was almost absent in the upper valley, the submontane belt was broader paving the way for extensive tea cultivation. The \textit{Chapori} belt was under two major crops, ‘early maturing rice (\textit{ahu}) and mustard’.\textsuperscript{61} The extensive \textit{Chapori} belt in the districts of Goalpara, Kamrup, and Nowgong together with the Mangaldai Sub-division of Darrang district and North-Lakhimpur Sub-division of the Lakhimpur district attracted East Bengal immigrants mostly, probably due their method of agriculture which demanded fertile area especially jute near water bodies. That these \textit{Chaporis} were not considered for habitation by the local population was explained by the fact that ‘crops raised on such lands are highly uncertain because of untimely floods’\textsuperscript{62} which must have been a contributing factor in attracting the immigrants.

On the north and south below the hills the valley was mostly covered with jungle. It is in the central tract between the jungle and the river that the population was

\textsuperscript{60} Report on the Census Assam, 1911, p. 2
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid, p. 10
mainly found. The tea gardens were generally near the hills and below lied the villages.

Political as well as administrative divisions of the Province which were a creation of the colonial government show a few variations. It was formed by incorporation of pre-existing people, institutions and social systems. During the first regular Census in 1872 Goalpara was attached to the Commissionership of Cooch Bihar and the remaining districts formed a separate division of Bengal under a Commissioner. The province of Assam was constituted in the year 1874-75, when the eleven districts comprising it were separated from the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal and established as an independent administration under a Chief Commissioner. The districts were under the direct control of a Commissioner who was subordinate to the Chief Commissioner with his headquarters at Gauhati, the chief town of the Kamrup district.

The districts consisted of tracts which differed widely in their conditions. In the Assam Plains Goalpara was permanently settled while the remaining districts the arrangement was similar- the annual system. In the five Upper districts the population was sparse. They were divided into mauzas or revenue collection circles; each in charge of a mauzadar, (native revenue collector) assisted by one or more mandals (village accountants) or village headman (gaonburah). In the fifth census of 1911 Assam was associated with Eastern Bengal for administrative purpose. The province of Eastern Bengal and Assam was constituted in 1905 and disassociated on the first of April, 1912. Following the partition in 1905, Assam

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63 The present spelling of the district is Guwahati but the present study, being carried out in historical perspective, uses the spelling that was in existence during colonial occupation i.e., Gauhati.
reverted to its former status of a Chief Commissionership. In 1921 it constituted a Governor’s Province, with an Executive Council and Ministers. In 1912 and 1914 the two frontier tracts of Sadiya and Balipara were separated from the districts of Lakhimpur and Darrang respectively.

In order to analyse social demography in historical context the singular trends in historical population pattern need to be considered. The early British records while mentioning Assam during the time of Mughal invasion stated almost clearly that the region was ‘densely populated’ and ‘highly cultivated’. Their source of information was the Records of Survey or Peda Kakat’s of Ahom rulers where the records of land survey as well as census of population were arranged and preserved systematically. No doubt these records were incomplete and crude, but significant nonetheless, as they offer partial information about types of land or assessment of revenue or about the strength or classification of the subject population. Sukapha (1226-1268), the first Ahom king,\(^\text{64}\) is said to have classified the people on the basis of their work performed and according to their speech and made a record of deaths. Later, king Suhungmung (1497-1539) sought to estimate the total strength of the subject population along with their social condition and distribution. King Pratap Singha (1603-1641) along with his civil administrator, Momai Tamuli, the Barbarua initiated a regular survey of land and population. The practice continued with occasional breaks during the rule of Chakradhwaj Singha(1663-1670), Siva

Singha (1714-1744) and Pramatta Singha (1744-1751). No detailed accounts of population are available for the reign of Rajeswar Singha (1751-1769), when the period of wars and rebellions that culminated in the decline of the Ahom Kingdom started.65

In India as a whole the rate of population growth during the colonial period was low till the 1921 census. Between 1881 and 1921 the growth enumerated annually was only 0.82 percent. This trend was attributed to the presence of excessive mortality. But there exists few assessment of population change in Assam for the period prior to 1872 when the first comprehensive census was carried out. These were mostly crude enumerations by British administrative officers as well as native initiatives.66 The major drawback associated with such enumerations was the method used to arrive at the enumerated figure. These estimates were made by non demographers and therefore the methodology used by each of the estimates must have been different. Yet a comparison between the three sets show that the population increased from an estimated seven or eight lakhs in 1826 to eleven lakhs in 1853 and then to nearly fifteen lakhs by 1872.

Since 1872 various data on population is available in the decennial census enumerations. In such enumerations again, two major problems have been identified. First, a closer look shows that the census interpretations of demographic as well as social categories had a political gradient and, secondly the inaccuracy of the enumerators, prejudiced as they were when associated with the ignorance of the

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66 For estimate of population in the pre-census period in Assam see Table 1 in Appendix I.
natives and more importantly of the tea garden labour population, rendered the return of caste and language a difficult as well as confusing affair.

Assam’s population was considerably low on the eve of the colonial military domination in the year 1826. In the century that followed, the province underwent political upheavals and administrative re-organizations by becoming a British Protectorate in 1826 followed by annexation of its Lower and Upper valley to Bengal British dominion in 1828 and 1838 respectively. In 1874 the region was detached from Bengal and placed under the administration of a separate Chief Commissionership. Up to 1901 the increase in the natural population i.e., the Assam born population, were considerably less than those of the actual population despite continuous growth since 1872. The percentage growth of natural population was as low as 1.36 percent between 1891 and 1901. The chief cause of the low rate in the latter decade was the great earthquake of 1897 and the epidemic of kala-azar.\footnote{Report on the Census of Assam, 1911, p. 8.}

In 1905-1911 with the first Partition of Bengal Assam was united to the Eastern Districts of Bengal under a Lt. Governor. In 1911 the Partition was annulled and in 1921 a Governorship was created for the province. Changes in the politico-administrative structure as well as in the administrative measures and a multiple boundary line demarcation both within and outside the state had a strong bearing on the social composition. Moreover, the territorial area within a district was adjusted and readjusted frequently which affected the demographic scenario to a large extent.
From 1901 to 1911 there was a great recovery in the growth of the natural population to 15.2 percent. The rapid increase between 1901 and 1911 were attributed to the improved condition of the tea industry after 1905, absence of unusual calamities and recovery of the people after the previous decade, which had left prevalence on people in the prime of life tending to a rapid rate of production. In the later decade the effect of World War I in 1914-16 and influenza epidemic of 1918-19 was felt on the population. The census figures for the two decades following 1921 showed a growth rate up to 1.2 percent. Historical demographers have explained this growth in terms of falling mortality.

The figures in the later Censuses showed that the population had almost doubled in the seventy years till 1941. According to Bagchi the only major region of India to have experienced sustained growth of population over the period 1872 to 1946, was the eastern region, comprising primarily of Bengal, Bihar an Assam. The large growth was due to cleaning of large areas for extension of cultivation. The other migrants having significant influence on the economy of the valley were the Nepalis and the cultivators from East Bengal.

In order to analyse the changing demographic structure of Assam in general and the districts under study in particular it is important to first examine the changes in various components that constitute the demographic transition. Besides changes in total population, significant changes also took place in the different components of the population, namely the young population, aging below 15, the working-age

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68 See Table 2 and 3 Appendix I which shows the change in population growth due to natural factors and net migration as well as decadal trends in the valley.


70 loc. cit
population in the age group of 15-64 and the elderly population in the age group of 65 and above. To understand these changes the fertility, mortality and migration behaviour as well rate need to be considered.

Fertility refers to the relative frequency with which births actually occurs within a population. Fertility varies according to the variations in the proportion of married to unmarried females, affective marriage age, level of education, place of residence and occupation. It was because the progress of Hinduism had been gradual in Assam valley where large numbers of inhabitants were tribal who did not conform to the common Hindu practice of marrying girls before puberty.\(^{71}\) In 1881, only 0.4 percent of males and 1.1 percent of females were married under the age of 15 in the Assam valley, against 0.2 percent and 1.5 percent in the province of Assam.\(^{72}\) There are many other factors social, economic, psychological, political, religious etc. which may influence fertility trends in a population. The annual average recorded birth rate in the valley in 1891-1900 was 32.26 which rose to 46.7 in 1941-51.

Another important factor influencing the growth of population is mortality. This is measured by the death rates in a given population. The annual average recorded death in the valley was 34.83 in 1891-1900. The decade being one of epidemics in the valley the rates must have been much higher. Goswami for example, arrived at a figure of 51.19 per thousand for this decade. The death rates in the valley were higher than that of India during colonial period except in 1901-1910 and 1921-30. The difference between the mortality rates for the different regions of a country

\(^{71}\) Report on the Census of the Province of Assam, 1881, p. 46.
\(^{72}\) The high Provincial figures are due to the Surma Valley division where the rigid laws of Hinduism regarding marriage age were strictly followed.
may result from the influence of a number of factors, demographic and non-demographic, acting concurrently.\textsuperscript{73} These differentials are related to the differing climate, social and economic conditions found in various localities and to the differing circumstances in which the various population groups live.\textsuperscript{74}

In the Assam valley the large scale depopulation was also caused by Civil Wars and Burmese atrocities\textsuperscript{75} during the early part of the nineteenth century. The climatic condition in the valley created fertile ground for breeding germs of various diseases. The valley was frequented by disease such as cholera, malaria, small-pox, dysentery, ‘kala-azar’ etc. The ravages caused by these were so great that the amount of deaths in certain areas during the middle of the nineteenth century, were supposed to have exceeded 20 percent.\textsuperscript{76} Till the end of the nineteenth century such ravages continued and also in the latter half of the second in the twentieth century. But with the establishment of the School of Tropical Medicine at Calcutta in 1921 new means and ways in controlling diseases developed which came into use from the third decade of the twentieth century. The remarkable decline in death rates during 1921-1930 as the Census Commissioner


\textsuperscript{75} Assam since the latter half of the eighteenth century had been under factional intrigues and internal strife due to Moamaria rebellion starting in 1778 that ended in Anglo-Burmese War in 1824. The period between was of untold miseries with lack of governance, Burmese invasion, burning of villages, killing and carrying away of a large number of population as slaves.

remarked was because ‘the year 1925 is the campaign against kala-azar.’ As already mentioned that economic factors also determines mortality its component occupation also plays an important role in this aspect. Occupation largely determines the family income, work ambience and dwelling place.

Along with occupation the nutritional conditions has been regarded as determinant of death rate in preindustrial economy. The people of Assam subsisting on limited means have become well-known. Ordinarily, their diet consisted of rice reasoned with khar (a kind of carbonate potash), pulses, some vegetables, a little oil, turmeric, garlic, besides fish and meat, the expense of which was estimated at Rs. 2 per individual a year. Besides this the habit of consuming opium among the people must have had strenuous effect upon their health in the valley. The people of also suffered due to poor sanitation and ignorance about the principles of cleanliness. Hunter’s Account illustrates the effects of these non-demographic factors such as diseases, lack of nutrition, housing system, sanitation and hygiene on the mortality rate. He wrote about the district of Sibsagar thus,

Dysentery and diarrhoea are the diseases from which the natives chiefly suffer, the former proves fatal in a large number of cases among the poorer classes. The prevalence of these diseases, and the great mortality occasioned by them, are in a great measure due to the use of deficient and

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unwholesome food, insufficient clothing, bad water procured from the stagnant pools in the vicinity of their dwellings, sleeping on damp floors, want of the accustomed stimulus of opium, and the frequent practice of keeping on wet clothing.\textsuperscript{80}

Further, regarding sanitation habit he writes

There are no public or private latrines for the natives. The habits of the people in this respect are as disgusting as can be imagined. The poor classes generally go to the sides of the tanks, or to the jungle in the intermediate neighbourhood of their houses, to answer call of nature, and those who can afford private conveniences, make use of some pit or excavation within the enclosures of their houses. All filth and faecal matter deposited in this places is usually got rid of by being washed away by the rains.\textsuperscript{81}

In addition to fertility and mortality migration has been an important determinant of demographic change as well as growth. Migration again has been divided into internal and external migration and in-migration and out-migration also termed as immigration and emigration. Internal migration involves physical mobility of persons within the political boundary of their own country but across the frontier of their home province or district. External migration on the other hand, involves migration from beyond political boundary. In-migration and out-migration signifies migration into or out of a geographical and political boundary. The Census Reports for the province of Assam since 1881 to 1951 included data on


\textsuperscript{81} Ibid, p. 286.
migration in almost each chapter but more particularly in the chapter ‘Birth-Place Statistics’. Therefore, it was the change of birth-place and not the change of residence, which was considered as the criterion of internal migration during the period of study.

The Birth-Place Statistics in the Censuses do not however, show migration during any particular period of time, but survivors of cumulative migrants since birth or marriage or since the date of in-migration. The method faces major difficulty when there is a tendency among the respondents to conceal the place of birth. The birth place method of estimating migration has been criticised by Goswami and used another method to arrive at a net-migration figure for an area by differentiating two consecutive Census figures of persons enumerated in the same area but born outside and persons born in the same area but enumerated elsewhere. The conclusion that he arrived into showed that net-migration estimated by both the methods was a close approximate up to 1901-1910 but differed considerably in the following two decades. This difference in the latter decades according to him was due to concealing of birth-place data by the new influx from East Bengal due to economic reasons.

The Brahmaputra valley of Assam attracted a large variety of migrants. Migration into the valley was mainly economic in nature with administrative inducement which explains their categorization under the occupations they professed in the Censuses as well as in the migration literatures. The first major set of migrants was the tea garden labourers followed by peasant cultivators. In between migrant population consisted of graziers, defence

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83 Ibid., p. 89.
personnel, labourers and industrial works, people associated with trade and commerce and administrative as well as salaried jobs. The tea garden and agricultural population being the major chunk in the population affected predominantly the agricultural pattern, land-man ratio, along with the existing social structure.

The density of population in the valley remained low during the entire period. It was greatest at the western end where the valley opens on to Bengal. The other districts (moving towards east) showed decreasing density, the reasons being varied. Sibsagar and Nowgong were affected by large addition of waste which was taken from the Naga Hills before the twentieth century. The density of population during the decadal Census of 1931 was 179 persons per square mile against a population of 4,855,711 spreading over an area of 27,089 in the valley. The distinguishing features of the agricultural system of Assam valley were the large areas of unsettled waste land, and the system under which in certain tracts land is cultivated for two or three years and then resigned.

One of the integral parts of social demography is the social structure in which the members of the society cohabited. Historically Assam was and still is a multi-ethnic nation with diverse languages, religions and cultural traditions. In Assam Plains families were mainly extended covering kin-group with an influencing male head. Gender relations displayed substantial gender equity with entrenched role differentiation in household economy as well as in labour force and unequal inheritance of property rights.

The Brahmaputra valley was and still is inhabited by both Aryan and non-Aryan origins. Due to a succession of invaders from the north-eastern region the people of
Mongolian stock exceeded in the valley of Brahmaputra leading to predominance of Mongolian influences. The population of this stock were scattered across the valley. Geographically and culturally, the valley may be seen as being divided into two sub-regions - Upper Assam in the East and Lower Assam in the west. Historically, the two sub-regions had undergone dissimilar conditions. The western part of Lower Assam was never under the political control of the mongoloid Tai Ahoms who entered the valley as migrants from Upper Burma and ruled over most of Upper Assam for the greater part of six hundred years till the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The Koch-Rajbanshis belonging to the mongoloid Bodo-Kachari ethnic group held sway over Lower Assam and North Bengal since the beginning of the sixteenth century till the seventeenth century when the Mughals took control of North Bengal and the western part of Lower Assam. The Koch power reached its zenith in 1562 when its army sacked the Ahom capital at Garagaon, but declined later due to pressure from the Ahoms on the east and the Mughals on the west. The Mughal army penetrated into the Ahom kingdom and briefly held control over their capital Gargaon, but was forced to retreat due to fierce resistance from local tribes and inclement natural conditions. The differences in ethnic composition of the two sub-regions have gradually become indistinct through centuries of intermingling.

Ethnically, it is found that Mongoloid tribes belonging to the Bodo-Kachari stock are scattered throughout the valley and are known by different names like Bodo, Kachari, Chutiya, Moran, Thengai-Kochari, Sonowal-Kachari, Mech, Rabha, and Darrang, Kamrup, and Goalpara are regarded as the Lower Assam districts and the rest of the valley is referred to as Upper Assam. However, the districts of Nowgong is separately referred to as Central Assam and not regarded as part of Upper Assam.
Dimasa, Hojai, Hajong, Lalung, and Garo, among whom the Chutiya, Moran, Thengal-Kochari and Sonowal-Kachari are found mainly in Upper Assam, the Lalung (Tiwa) in Morigaon district, the Bodos and Kacharis predominantly in the northern part of Lower Assam with major concentrations in Kokrajhar and Darrang districts, and the Rabhas and Garos in the south-western part of Lower Assam. The Ahoms who are of Tai/Shan origin predominate in most parts of Upper Assam while the Miri (Mishing) tribe which is believed to be of a similar ethnic stock has significant concentrations of population in the Lakhimpur and Dhemaji districts.

The most numerous in this group were the Bodos who covered the widest area. They were found in every district, and in large number in the lower and middle parts of the valley i.e., in the districts of Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang and Nowgong. Those converted to Hinduism were known by the name Koch, while the unconverted inhabitants known as the Kacharis Meches Rabhas and Lalung had their habitat in the submontane tracts on either side of the Brahmaputra. The Chutiyas belonged to the Upper districts of Assam valley.

Of the population belonging to the Shan tribe the Ahoms were the most numerous. They have settled themselves in the entire district of Sibsagar, and in the borders of adjoining districts of Lakhimpur and Nowgong. Of the other Shan settlers the Khamptis were to be found in the south eastern corner of the valley while the Abors, Daphlas and Miris inhabited mostly on the north bank in the Darrang and Lakhimpur districts.\(^85\) Other than the Mongoloid population the Aryan and non Aryan Hindus occupied numerical strength in the valley. Though they were found in almost in the entire valley their stronghold was in the districts Goalpara,

\(^{85}\) Report on the Census of Assam, 1881, p. 65
Kamrup and Darrang. In the upper districts of the valley their number was gradually increasing owing to a large inclusion of the tea migrants.

Among the Muhammadan population where ‘all ethnological differences merge in the common religion,’\textsuperscript{86} were mostly confined to the district of Goalpara and a very small fraction, less than 7 percent covered the district of Kamrup.\textsuperscript{87} The caste-origin Hindu groups have some distinct cultural features like hierarchical structure (one group is placed at the top and the other is placed at the bottom; hereditary basis of the membership; endogamy (marrying within one’s own cultural group) and, purity and pollution, which govern the day-to-day life of people. Keeping this information in view, the second chapter attempted to provide a systematic overview of the social composition of population of Assam. Three sets of data are discussed for this purpose: ethnic/caste composition, language and religion.

The field of social demography uses demographic data, such as censuses and population surveys and qualitative methods in certain studies to analysis sociological questions. The majority of social demographers though used statistical methods to analyze census or population survey data; there are a few pioneers and leading advocates of in-depth interviews and focus groups, the ethno-survey, simulation, and fieldwork methods.\textsuperscript{88} Increasingly, social demographers are making important contributions by assessing the state of knowledge on specific topics in the social sciences with careful reviews of theoretical debates.

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., p. 66
\textsuperscript{87} Ibid., p. 34
\textsuperscript{88} For reference see, Knodel (1997); Massey (1987); Massey and Zenteno (2000); Wachter, Knodel, and Vanlandingham (2002); and (Waters 1999) etc.
The colonial Census Reports published decennially forms the major primary sources in the proposed research as these censuses were single most important source of stock variable. The censuses help in studying variations in demographic behaviour in terms of race, class and occupational group. On the basis of these censuses social demographers have been able to make important empirical contributions in studying inter-group social change with the help of cross-sectional data and represent the relationship between historical changes in social structure and social mobility. Census organization, which has a fascinating history in India, has been the premier organization for providing population statistics over a period of time which laid the foundation of demographic research. The investigations of anthropological nature during the pre-independence phase of the Indian Census can be grouped into three broad categories, namely, population statistics and fertility data, occupational classification of caste/ethnic groups and caste ranking and ethnology including racial classification of the Indian people.

The economic tables from 1881 onwards presented such important data as the traditional and actual occupations of important castes and tribes. The social, cultural and migration tables provided data on mother-tongue and education by selected castes, tribes or races, civil condition by age for selected castes and even infirmities by selected castes. The pan-Indian decennial census series, which commenced from 1871-72, suffered from several defects. It was not conducted all over the country on the same day, nor did it cover all the regions of British India. The Census of India in 1881 happened to be the first synchronous survey of population to be conducted in the country.
Other sources include Annual Reports on Immigration and Labour during colonial period. The making of colonial knowledge went along with the logic of colonial power,\(^\text{89}\) and therefore, accounts of colonial administrator on topography, race, tribes and linguistics survey are also considered. The power knowledge theme was presented in much official writings. Risley’s *Tribe and Castes of Bengal* (1891), for instance, claimed that an ethnographic recording of the customs of people was as necessary an incident of good administration as a cadastral survey of the land and a record of rights of its tenants. Of late the demographic events and processes which were earlier imagined as ‘natural’ or simply as a function of ‘modernisation’ are contextualised.\(^\text{90}\) Many social demographers, along with social historians, statisticians, and other scholars have used census data to describe the problems of population. This tradition of census-based societal description and accounting has exemplified caste history, gender history and postmodern history writings.

After a brief review of the definition of demography and the main streams of population theories, the major demographic data contents of the census and administrative records shall be extended to highlight the socioeconomic behaviours

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\(^{89}\) The power/knowledge concept here, has drawn on Michel Foucault’s explanation of the terms. Knowledge, Foucault argues, is something that makes us a subject because in order for us to make sense of ourselves, to classify ourselves, we must have the ability to refer back to various forms of knowledge. However, to be a part of a certain system we are also allowing ourselves to be subject to judgement, surveillance and for our attitudes to be moulded in a certain way. In this way the power of discipline and knowledge have a specific relationship in that they “make” us who we are (Danagher, Shirato, Webb, 2000). Although the term ‘power’ is in common usage and applied in a variety of contexts, in social and political theory it is a contested concept. There are essentially two ways of conceptualising power, as power-over and power-to (Dyson, 2007). To understand the ways in which individuals position themselves and how they are influenced by external factors it is necessary to understand power.

of the population concerned in the following chapters of the proposed research.

The thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter, *Introduction* includes the statement, objectives, methodology, a brief demographic profile and social structure of Assam and the theoretical background of the proposed study as the backdrop for understanding the demographic structure and change in the Brahmaputra Valley. The second chapter, *Social Demography: Caste, Ethnicity and Religion* shall attempt to chart social demographic trends affected by historical turning points - both demographic and non-demographic with equal attention on continuous interactions between structures, events and processes. The focus shall be on the racial-linguistic criteria rather than on natural demographic variables.

The third chapter, *Demography, Society and Economy* shall analyse the reciprocal impact between population growth and economy in Assam. The fourth chapter, *Interface between Demographic Change, Socio-economic Reorganisation and Population Settlement Pattern* shall analyse the interface between social demographic change and spatial distribution of population with focus on urbanization. The fifth chapter, *Social Demography: An Analysis*, is the conclusion which will provide the final analysis and summarize the major findings of the entire study.