



## Pathways in and out of Dharamsala: Gaddis in the context of transnational Tibetan patronage

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For such a small place, McLeod Ganj is one of the most geopolitical, capitalistic, discursively imagined 'villages' in the Himalayas. Popularly known as the home of the Dalai Lama and the center of the Tibetan diaspora in South Asia, it has a longer Gaddi tribal history. From the viewpoint of Gaddis, a mixed-caste tribal community, McLeod Ganj and satellite villages (broadly called Upper Dharamsala) is a place of pastoral nostalgia, circulating cultural practices, migration mobilities and toponomic contestation. In this presentation, I consider several pathways into and out of Dharamsala for both Gaddis and Tibetans. Because transnational patronage is increasing from East Asia, I draw from fieldwork on Tibetans in Japan to highlight the surprisingly diverse stakeholder interests.



Stephen Christopher will soon begin a Marie-Curie Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Center for Contemporary Buddhist Studies at the University of Copenhagen (2022-24). He is engaged in two interrelated projects: one on casteism within Himalayan tribes and another on the rise of Tibetan Buddhism in East and Southeast Asia. In 2019, he was a JSPS Postdoctoral Fellow at Kyoto University. He serves as the Himalayas editor at the Database of Religious History at the University of British Columbia. Stephen has taught anthropology, South Asian studies and academic writing at Beijing Normal University, Vietnam National University, University of Bremen, Pitt in the Himalayas, Syracuse University, Semester at Sea, Tokyo Metropolitan University and Denki-Tsushin University.

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