“Facts on the Ground” in the Himalayas and Academic Fashion in Himalayan Studies

In the second half of the 20th Century, the study of the Himalayan region – defined for this paper as the area between the Gangetic plains and the Tibetan Plateau -- has grown from being the intermittent concern of imperial civil servants and a few private scholars, to a field of study with by now a vast archive of books, articles, and journals focusing on a myriad of academic disciplines. This paper seeks to achieve two goals: to celebrate several among the major contributions of Gerald Berreman in defining the Himalayan region, and to do so in connection to the major turns scholars have made in attempting to (re)conceptualize Himalayan studies.