

Environmental Limitations and Economic Development Among Gaddis of Bharmour, Himachal Pradesh, India

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ABSTRACT Transhumant Gaddis residing in Mid-Himalayan zone spend summer in their permanent homes in Bharmour and cultivate their lands, and in winter they migrate to lower hills along with their sheep and goat in and around Kangra Hill. As the area remained isolated, it lagged behind in social and economic progress. The development programmes sponsored by the Government of India offer challenging opportunities for research in this area, where environmental conditions constitute a significant factor in the socio-cultural system. The socio-cultural system found in Bharmour is a reflection of the way in which the Gaddis have, by tradition adopted to a mountainous, rugged environment. To combat the environmental stresses Gaddis have developed a mixed agro-pastoral economy. They have so far been relatively little affected by the impact of the outside world. In the past their culture and especially the strong individualism it fosters, is intrinsically unreceptive to change; more important, they inhabit country whose environmental limitations restrict the usefulness of western ideas and techniques and the possibility of change.