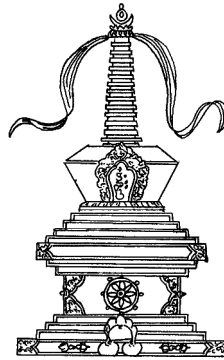


Himalayan Health Exchange

Anthropology



Tibetan Borderlands-Ladakh & Dharamsala 2009

Anthropology field expedition to the Ladakh region of the
Western Himalayan Indo-Tibetan Borderlands and Dharamsala

Anthropology Field Expedition

June 10-July 4, 2009

The first part of this anthropology field expedition takes us to India's highest, least populated, and most inaccessible area, Ladakh and the Chang Thang Plateau, located in the Western Himalayan Indo-Tibetan Borderlands. Our exciting journey through this remote part of the world provides an in-depth look at the local culture, Buddhist beliefs and social structure of Western Himalayan families and nomadic Tibetan tribes. After exploring Ladakh and The Chang Thang Plateau, team members will travel to Dharamsala, home to His Holiness and exiled Tibetans. Dharamsala is located in the North Indian state of Himachal Pradesh.

Subject Areas: Anthropology (Cultural, Medical, Environmental, Economic and Visual), Asian Studies, Pre-Medical, Public Health, Psychology, Art/Fine Arts, Geography, Philosophy, Social Work and Sociology, Yoga and Meditation

Field study topics include:

Cultural and Social:

- Indian/Tibetan history, geography, culture, and politics
- Colonization and post-colonial reality
- The cultural construction of race and ethnicity
- Socio-cultural change
- Globalization and modernization
- Introduction to the Western Himalayan religions
- Bon Pon: the indigenous religion of Tibet
- Hinduism: Beliefs, Gods, and Practices
- Buddhism: 4 Noble Truths, Eightfold Path, 5 Elements of Life
- Cultural preservation of Tibetans in exile
- Meditation and yoga in daily life

Medical and Environmental:

- Introduction to the health care needs of the local population
- Current state of Himalayan healthcare
- Role of the national, state local government in shaping health (AIDS, TB and Polio)
- Indigenous medical practices and customs of the Himalayan peoples
- Traditional Tibetan medicine (Amchi and Ayurvedic)
- Impact of modernization on various diseases
- Role of Himalayan Health Exchange and its healthcare delivery system

Visual:

- Individual use of visual media to represent anthropological ideas in the context of the Himalayas

- Study of representation in areas such as regional museums, ceremonies, rituals, artifacts and performances
- Employment of audiovisual technologies to capture “culture” in ancient villages and Tibetan settlements, stone carvings (Tabo Monastery), Buddhist monasteries, architectural wonders (Taj Mahal)

****Please Note: Recommended Readings:**

Ancient Futures: Learning from Ladakh by Helena Norberg-Hodge

A Journey in Ladakh by Andrew Harvey

Additional website sources to be added at a later date.

Expedition Objectives

To gain cultural exposure.

To learn, develop and apply practical skills in non-traditional settings.

To develop sensitivity to different cultures and religions.

To introduce team members to cultures and lifestyles in remote rural areas.

To develop awareness of different cultures by analyzing social, religious, political, economic and health factors.

In addition to the ability to work as a team member, necessary qualities for participants are:

- A sense of humor;
- Flexibility and an open mind;
- Willingness to live with what’s provided in the wilderness, at times improvised;
- Resourcefulness: the ability to make the most of the situation at hand;
- Patience and understanding of unpredictable situations

Due to the nature of this expedition, we are only able to accommodate small teams of students.

Team Instructors:

Professor Paul Donnelly Ph.D in Buddhist Studies & Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Northern Arizona University

Denise Cucurny, M.A. Full-time lecturer in Cultural, Biological and Medical Anthropology at California State University Long Beach.

Karlie Knudsten: Yoga/Meditation Instructor. Hatha Vinyasa yoga teacher, Heart Shrine meditation instructor, Founder/Director Sadhana Yoga, Flagstaff, Arizona

Ravi Singh: Founder Himalayan Health Exchange

Tentative Daily Schedule

7.00 a.m.	Yoga
8:00 a.m.	Breakfast
8:45 a.m.	Morning Briefings
9:00 a.m.	Lectures/Field Camp/Site Visit
1:00 p.m.	Lunch
2.00 p.m.	Field Camp/Site Visit
5:00 p.m.	Meditation Practice or Independent Time (journal writing, exploring, etc.)
5.00 p.m.	Lecture
7:00 p.m.	Dinner

8.00 p.m. Q&A Session/Debrief day

Route & Introduction to the region

Team members will fly into New Delhi and take a scenic domestic flight to Leh (11,495 ft), flying over the mighty Himalayan Range. Leh lies in a small valley and is the capital of Ladakh, which was once a part of ancient Tibet. Ladakh, meaning 'Land of High Passes' is situated in a high-altitude desert, surrounded by a ring of vast, impenetrable snow-capped mountains, and is inaccessible 9 months out of the year. It is one of the most visually bewildering and spiritually rich places in the world. The high culture of Ladakh is almost entirely Buddhist. Bon-Pon was the main religion of the area before the arrival of Buddhism over two thousand years ago. Ladakh is known for its ancient monasteries, where many Buddhist teachers and followers have meditated for centuries and have preserved the Buddhist faith in its purest form. Ladakh is said to be more Tibet than Tibet itself and is commonly referred to as 'Little Tibet'. After two days of acclimatization, rest and orientation, we will study the local region of Leh before heading out for the remote countryside.

Team will then visit the ancient Alchi Monastery, on the banks of the Indus River. Next, we travel east towards the Indo-Tibetan borderlands, through deep valleys and past gorges, tiny isolated villages and white-washed gompas perched on mountainsides, all amidst a spectacular, arid mountainscape. Our destination will be Lake Tso-Morari at 15,175 ft in the Chang Thang Plateau.

Tso-Morari, 'the turquoise lake,' stretches 16 miles in length and 5 miles in width. Its shores are dotted with small nomadic Tibetan villages, we visit one of them - Korzok. People of this region are called Changpas, nomads from Western Tibet who have lived here for hundreds of years. This is an ancient culture; one inspired by religion and karma, which rule the daily lives of these gentle, hardworking people.

The Chang-Thang region is so remote that there is little or no recognition of it on maps. Its altitude and remoteness have preserved the centuries-old culture and provided a safe refuge to its exotic wildlife. This is home to the lamageer, otherwise known as the 'bone crusher,' or Himalayan eagle, as well as to the shy and rarely-seen snow leopard. Rare and exotic birds like the bar-headed geese, brahmini ducks, the great-crested grebe and the Tibetan crane migrate and nest on the shores and islands of Tso-Morari. Fields of marmots can be seen popping up from their hibernation holes.

Entry into this region was restricted due to the Chinese invasion of Tibet, and for the past 50 years only a few people have set foot on this land. Chang-Thang plateau lies southeast of the Karakoram Range (of which ten peaks reach over 23,000 feet, the highest being K2.)

From Tso Morari, we return to Leh and fly back to New Delhi the following morning to begin the second half of our overland journey to Rewalsar and Dharamsala. A combination of rail and road from New Delhi takes us to 'Rewalsar'.

Rewalsar is a small village set around a lake which is sacred to Hindus, Buddhists and Sikhs. After two days in Rewalsar, we leave for Dharamsala circling around the Outer & Inner

Himalayas on a 6-day journey towards Dharamsala. On this journey we visit several interesting sites, settlements and villages. We will also visit ancient Monasteries and Hindu temples and camp and trek through the Kangra Valley. The biggest mountain range in the Kangra valley is called Dhauladhar, or The White Mountain. Reaching an altitude of 18,500 feet, Dhauladhar towers above Dharamsala like a great wall, almost vertical from its base. Six miles north of Dharamsala lies Mcleodganj (6,800 ft,) home to exiled Tibetans and their religious leader His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet, Tenzin Gyatso. Mcleodganj attracts people seeking enlightenment from the world over. Many have fallen in love with the beauty of the land and have settled here permanently. The local population is a mix of Hindus, Buddhists and Gaddis (herdmen). Gaddis are believed to have crossed the mighty Dhauladhar range a few centuries ago in search of greener pastures, and settled in the lowlands south of the massive mountains. Tibetans added the color and spirituality of the Buddhist world upon exile in 1959 from the communist Chinese administration. Their presence is evident throughout the region with prayer flags marking the rooftops of monasteries, shops, and homes. Other than the natural beauty, Mcleodganj has an air of peace and tranquility providing to the visitor relief from the rigors of busy city life, making it an ideal meditation retreat.

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1 June 10: Depart USA

Day 2 June 11: En route to India. Arrival in New Delhi, India

Day 3 June 12: Fly to Leh

Acclimate

Program welcome and orientation

Overnight in hotel

Teachings: Geology and Geography of Ladakh and Himalayas

Introduction to Yoga and Meditation

Day 4 June 13: **Teachings:** India: Early History, Muslim Invasions, British rule, Current Politics, Colonization and Post Colonial Reality

Activities: Yoga and Meditation Practice

Visit Tibetan Settlements

Evening trek to Shanti Stupa

Overnight in hotel

Day 5 June 14: **Teachings:** Human Adaptation to High Altitude Living

Effects of High Altitude (hypoxia, etc.)

Traditional Indian Medicine (Ayurveds)

Eastern vs. Western Medicine

Activities: Yoga and Meditation practice

Observe oracle perform healing rituals (depending on Oracle's Schedule and availability)

Visit local Ladakhi home/visit with residents

Evening dancers

Overnight in hotel

Day 6 June 15: *Teachings:* Buddhism: Buddhist Symbols: Chortens, Mani Walls,
Prayer Wheels/Flags Lamaism
Overview of Tibetan History
Traditional Tibetan Medicine (Amchis)
Activities: Yoga and Meditation practice
Visit Leh Palace. Free afternoon
Overnight in hotel

Day 7 June 16 *Teachings:* Bon Pon Religion: Indigenous Religion of Tibet
Activities: Yoga and Meditation practice
Day trip (Drive) to Alchi Monastery
Local home visit
Return to Leh
Overnight Hotel

Day 8 June 17: *Teachings:* Changpas: Tibetan nomad
Activities: Yoga and Meditation Practice
Drive to Puga via lush Rupshu Valley
Visit Hemis Monastery
Overnight camp

Day 9 June 18: *Activities:* Yoga and Meditation Practice
Drive to Tso Morari and visit nomadic Changpa tents
Overnight Camp

Day 10 June 19: *Teachings:* Himalayan Healthcare
Culturally Specific Illnesses and Public Health Issues
Himalayan Allopathic Medicine
Activities: Yoga and Meditation practice
Trek to Sumdo Tibetan Refugee Village
Visit Sumdo clinic, TCV School and village home
Discussion with village women
Discussion with local Panchiot (village leader)

Day 11 June 20: *Activities:* Yoga and Meditation practice
Drive Back to Leh
Overnight Hotel

Day 12 June 21: *Activities:* Fly to New Delhi. Free day in Delhi until 4pm.
5.15 pm train to Chandigarh.
Overnight hotel

Day 13 June 22: *Activities:* Drive to Rewalsar
Overnight Hotel/Guesthouse

Day 14 June 23: Teachings: Hinduism

History, Gods, Beliefs, Practices, Rituals
Karma, Nirvana, Cremation, Reincarnation

Activities: Yoga and meditation practice
Visit ancient religious sites and Meditation caves

Day 15 June 24: Activities: Drive to BIR

On the Way, Visit Hindu Temples
Overnight Guesthouse/camp

Day 16 June 25: Teachings: Cultural and Ecological Effects of Tourism.

Ecological Destruction to the Himalayas
Globalization and the Himalayas

Activities: Yoga and Meditation practice
Visit New Tibetan Educational Centers and Settlements
Overnight Guesthouse/Tents

Day 17 June 26: Teachings: The Himalayan Family

Local Rituals Related to Birth, Death and Marriage
Gender Roles

Activities: Yoga and Meditation practice
Trek over 'Billing Pass' to Village Barot and camp site

Day 18 June 27: Activities: Yoga and Meditation Practice

Independent Time (journal writing, research questions, area
exploration)
Overnight Tents

Day 19 June 28: Teachings: Himalayan Village Politics

Himalayan Education

Activities: Yoga and Meditation practice
Free Day in Barot, trek to closeby villages

Day 20 June 29: Drive to Dharamsala

Activities: Visit Norbulingka Institute (Summer Palace of His Holiness)
Visit Ancient Hindu Temple/s (Seven Sisters)

Day 21 June 30: Teachings: *The Dalai Lamas of Tibet*

Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama
Tibet Under Chinese Occupation
Tibetan Cultural Preservation in Exile
CTA (Central Tibetan Administration)

Activities: Attend Morning Prayers at Namgayal Monastery,
Explore McLeodganj

Overnights in McLeodGanj Hotel

Day 22 July 1: **Activities:** Free Day. Optional Trek to Triund

Day 23 July 2: **Teaching:** Closing Lecture
Activities: Free Morning and afternoon until 2 p m
Take 5 PM Bus to New Delhi

Day 24 July 3: **Activities:** Arrive in New Delhi at 9am and rest until evening
Drive to airport for night departures

Day 25 July 4: Arrive back in the U.S.A.

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis until spaces are filled.

Final application deadline: February 15, 2009 (if space allows)

****Deposit of \$500 is required to reserve a spot.**

Balance due date: February 28, 2009.

Trip expense: \$2,740.00

International airfare **\$1,700.00** off any off the following international gateways: Miami, Atlanta, Washington DC, New York, Boston and Chicago.

International departures from UK, Canada and Australia, please contact us.

Domestic airfare **\$450.00** New Delhi-Leh-New Delhi

Total: U.S. \$4,890.00

(optional): 3 university credits from Northern Arizona University \$1310.00 Payable directly to NAU. For credit details contact Prof. Paul B Donnelly Paul.Donnely@nau.edu

This is an all-inclusive trip including:

International airfare from any major international gateways mentioned above and in the application form

Domestic airfare within India

Accommodations

Land transportation

All meals (except during transit through New Delhi)

Staff service

Entrance fees to site visits

Cost does not include: international flights originating from Mid-West and West coast, domestic flights in U.S; insurance of any kind; personal clothing or gear; sight-seeing tours in New Delhi; alcoholic beverages; tips; immunizations; medical treatment; evacuation; evacuation related accommodations in hotels or guesthouses, passport or visa; excessive baggage; airport taxes; gratuities; delays due to bad weather or other causes of nature or any reason beyond the control of Himalayan Health Exchange and its outfitters.

Accommodations: We provide accommodations in hotels, guesthouses and tents. All

accommodations are on twin-share basis. Single accommodations are available for an additional charge of US \$550.00.

Food: Most meals consist of local Indian and Tibetan cuisine, mostly vegetarian and prepared with fresh produce. Non-vegetarian meals consist of chicken or lamb, depending on availability. We supervise preparation of all meals to maintain a high level of hygiene.

Weather: Temperatures in the Himalayas can vary with altitude; summer temperatures can vary between 40-70F at high elevations. Even though this region is dry, rain or snow at higher elevations is possible. We will provide you with a list of clothing required to stay warm, dry and comfortable.

This expedition is being outfitted by 'Lamageer' a private company based in India.