Rural outmigration is one of the most prominent phenomena transforming societies throughout the Himalayan region today. The resulting – and mainly downstream – population movements are implicated in complex ways with major social, cultural, economic and political developments occurring along the Himalayas. Most recent research on this form of migration has been focused upon the western and central Himalayas within north India and Nepal, while the eastern sector of the mountain chain in Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh has barely featured in studies to date. This lecture presents brief case studies of rural outmigration from such eastern regions. In focus is the impact on depopulating areas of origin, rather than new contexts of resettlement. The examples reveal the diverse, localised character of this phenomenon, and the difficulty of drawing general conclusions about it.


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