

December 2016

Editorial

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Recommended Citation

Turin, Mark and Craig, Sienna (2016) "Editorial," *HIMALAYA, the Journal of the Association for Nepal and Himalayan Studies*: Vol. 36: No. 2, Article 4.

Available at: <http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/himalaya/vol36/iss2/4>



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Editorial

We are delighted to bring you Volume 36, Number 2 of *HIMALAYA*. With each issue, we have tried to introduce topical themes, new formats, original art, and compelling literature. This issue is no exception.

Many readers will first and foremost be struck by the powerful art featured in this issue. We are grateful to award-winning and preeminent artist Shashi Bikram Shah for agreeing to share his work with the readership of *HIMALAYA*, and to his grandson, Priyankar Bahadur Chand, for facilitating this process and drafting the biographical note that accompanies the Gallery Sketchbook. For nearly five decades, Shah's unique artistic contributions have captured something of the world's social and religious complexity. His singular invocation of a horse to represent the continuity of suffering alongside the aspiration of salvation have become something of a signature, as can be seen in these pages.

Turning to the written contributions, we're thrilled that Georgina Drew and Ashok Gurung chose this journal as a venue to publish the findings of their research project: *Everyday Religion and Sustainable Environments in the Himalaya (ERSEH)*. Coordinated through The New School's India China Institute (ICI), the ERSEH program was designed to harness the institute's track record of collaborative research by focusing on context-specific religious understandings of environmental discourse and action. As Drew and Gurung describe in their introduction, by engaging in research around the syncretic

practices that constitute everyday religion, project partners were able to address a gap in understandings of how local communities negotiate their lived realities. As a committed partner in widening access to research generated within about the Himalayan region, we are particularly grateful to the leadership at the India China Institute for providing a generous subvention towards the costs of publishing this special issue. It is becoming increasingly apparent to scholars, editors, printing presses, and professional associations that long-term sustainability in open access academic publishing lies in stronger and more transparent partnerships and strategic alliances to ensure that important work is promoted and disseminated.

As we edited Volume 36, Number 2 of *HIMALAYA*, changing representations of Himalayan spaces and places emerged rather organically as a theme. Within the ERSEH section of this issue, we have introduced a new submission format which we are calling *Case Studies* in order to better showcase the diverse perspectives that scholars and practitioners of different backgrounds bring to understandings of the region. Still rigorously reviewed, *Case Studies* are short contributions focused on a particular theme or location, often written in a more personal voice. We're delighted that a number of research contributors to the *Everyday Religion and Sustainable Environments in the Himalaya* project were able to make good use of this new structure, while others opted to contribute more traditional academic

pieces. This themed issue is further enhanced by three significant research articles that address ethnicity, education, and equality in Nepal's schools through the prism of language (winner of the 2015 Dor Bahadur Bista Prize); organ transplantation in Nepal; and changes in religious experience in the Western Himalaya.

We at *HIMALAYA* are in a position to widen access to creative writing from and about the greater Himalayan region. To this end, the poems of Janet Hujon and Danny Dover grace this issue. Martin Saxer's contemplation on remoteness and connectivity, augmented with a number of carefully chosen historical photographs, makes an excellent *Perspectives* piece.

As ever, we could not have brought this issue to press without unflagging support from colleagues at the DeWitt Wallace Library at Macalester College, the University Press of New England, and staff at Maple Press. We're grateful to our Reviews Editor, Jessica Vantine Birkenholtz, our Editorial Board, and our reviewers for contributing their time, insights, and good humor to realizing this issue.

With Volume 36, Number 2 of *HIMALAYA* now in print and available online, we're about to enter our final years as editors. We'll be signing off with two superb issues: Volume 37, Number 1 will be guest edited by Heather Hindman and Andrew Nelson, a special issue entitled 'A New Kathmandu for a New Nepal? The Social Politics of Urban Space in the Capital' while Volume 37, Number 2 is devoted to coverage

of Nepal's 2015 earthquakes and the social, political, and economic aftershocks that continue to rock the nation. Beyond 2017, this unique and interdisciplinary journal will have a new editor or co-editors, and the search is on. For those readers interested to learn more about the role of the editor(s), a comprehensive job description can be found on the ANHS website.

We hope that you, our readers and subscribers, online and in print, will enjoy this issue of *HIMALAYA* as much we have enjoyed compiling it. As always, we look forward to hearing from you with your thoughts, comments and suggestions for ways to improve both the content and presentation. Thank you for your support.

Sienna Craig and Mark Turin
Editors, *HIMALAYA*



Shashi Shah. *Ashvamedha's Horse*, acrylic on canvas, 56 x 71 cm, 2016.