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Editorial

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Editorial

In this, our penultimate issue as editors of *HIMALAYA*, we are pleased to offer readers a diverse array of content, including a “first” for the journal. Under our editorship, and as far as we know from our open access digital archives, this is the first issue to feature literature not only in translation but also, simultaneously, in its original language: Newar poet Durga Lal Shrestha’s work rests alongside David Hargreaves’ graceful translations of the same.

This issue of *HIMALAYA* includes a themed section, guest edited by Heather Hindman and Andrew Nelson, ‘A New Kathmandu for a New Nepal? The Social Politics of Urban Space in the Capital.’ This collection of original research articles (Linder, Nelson, Ninglekhu, and Whitmarsh) are coupled with several perspectives pieces (Dennis as well as Khanal, Chand, and Gurung). As described by Mark Liechty in his introductory essay, this suite of contemporary scholarship presents a vision of “Nepal’s current national ethos,” by paying attention to contingency and unpredictability while at the same time offering historically informed analyses that represent and challenge dynamics of nostalgia and longing. These include conceptions of places like Thamel in national and global imaginaries; narratives about the possibilities and impossibilities of change as embodied in Kathmandu’s urban infrastructures; the multivalent meanings of *ghar* (as ‘home’ but also as a form of social aspiration or failure); and the museumification of Nepal’s monarchical past amidst

recent political upheavals. Pranaya S.J.B. Rana’s masterful short story, ‘City of Dreams,’ distills these themes into a sensorially rich exploration of what it means to live in, with, and through Kathmandu. This issue’s Cover and Gallery artwork, featuring the work of Erina Tamrakar and Asha Dangol, bring to life visions of this city that are by turns haunting, illuminating, and intimate.

We are also happy to include several omnibus articles that expand this issue’s scope. Frydenlund’s article emplaces discourses of class, labor, and critical understandings of race within the Indigenous Nationalities political sphere. Kuyakanon and Gyeltshen’s piece, ‘Propitiating the *Tsen*, Sealing the Mountain,’ brings to life the dynamics of ritual geography and political ecology in rural Bhutan, while our two additional Perspectives pieces (Nyimatashi and Sulek) both touch on related issues of sacred landscape, natural resources, and culture change across Tibetan regions of the People’s Republic of China.

As saddened as we were to learn about the untimely passing of Tibetologist and cultural historian Elliot Sperling (1951–2017), we are glad that we could offer our readers a timely and deeply felt tribute to his life and work, in the form of an obituary written by Tenzin Dorjee.

As ever, we are indebted to the Editorial Associates and Assistants who make *HIMALAYA* possible. We thank Jacki Betsworth at the DeWitt Wallace Library, Macalester College, and her terrific student team: Rebecca Krasky,

Stella Wang, Billan Omar, Kiet Tran, and Emma Wellman. Doug Tiffit at the University Press of New England remains our production wizard, and Angie Hurlbut of AH Designs is responsible for designing our beautiful covers. At UBC, we thank Bridget Chase for assistance with copyediting. This journal would—quite literally—not be without them.

Finally, we close this editorial with a warm welcome to the journal’s Editors Elect, Mona Bhan and David Citrin. Mona is Associate Professor of Anthropology at DePauw University, and her extensive research in Ladakh has focused on questions of identity, development, militarization, and counterinsurgency. David is a medical anthropologist and public health professional with affiliations at the University of Washington where he serves on the faculty of Global Health, and as Director of Impact for Possible, a non-profit healthcare organizations that partners with the Government of Nepal to strengthen healthcare delivery systems. David and Mona will bring new networks, insights, and vision to the journal, and we are thrilled to be passing on the privilege and responsibility of editing *HIMALAYA* to this dynamic team in 2018.

Sienna Craig and Mark Turin
Editors, *HIMALAYA*