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Editorial

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Editorial

As we put this issue to bed, 20 months after the earthquakes that rocked Nepal in April and May 2015, we have a chance to reflect on the privilege and responsibility of having served as editors of *HIMALAYA* for the past five years. We can now look back on the progress that has been made, and also look forward to what lies ahead for this uniquely interdisciplinary journal and for the wider scholarship of the region in which we are engaged.

We took over the editorship of *HIMALAYA* from Arjun Guneratne. We could not have asked for a better mentor nor a smoother handover. Arjun's intellectual dexterity, his commitment to theoretically informed regional scholarship, his editorial expertise, and his hard-won insights into academic publishing had strengthened an already important journal that had been nurtured and sustained by Barbara Brower for many years before him.

Arjun built a foundational strategic partnership with the Dewitt Wallace Library at Macalester College where he teaches. With the professional support of Library Director Terri Fishel and Library Specialist Jacki Betsworth, Arjun committed *HIMALAYA* to the Digital Commons, a hosted service offered by Berkeley Electronic Press that provides a publishing platform and an archive for scholarly and creative works in an open-access environment. Thanks to Arjun, Terri, Jacki and Macalester College, we inherited a journal with a robust digital backbone in which most of the back issues and archive were available online for free.

Over the past five years, with the tireless support of our Reviews and Reports Editor, Jessica Vantine Birkenholtz, stalwart guidance from Jacki as well as our Production Associate, Douglas Tiffit, at the University Press of New England, a terrific and ever-changing cast of Editorial Assistants at Macalester, Yale, Dartmouth, and UBC, graphic design expertise from Angie Hurlbut of AH Designs, and a committed Editorial Board, as well as support from the ANHS Executive Council (including two Presidents), *HIMALAYA* is now a fully open-access biannual publication.

We've had the pleasure to oversee a fresh look, build a new website, deepen the archive (in part by re-scanning back issues), and introduce art and literature to the pages of the journal as well as online photo essays to the journal's content. We have also taken seriously the journal's mission and mandate to be broadly representative, both in terms of disciplinary focus and in terms of scholars, scholarship, and Himalayan communities represented in its pages. While we are satisfied with many of these collaborative achievements, there is still much more work to be done.

We are deeply grateful for, and very excited by, the vision that our incoming Editors Elect, Mona Bhan and David Citrin, have been developing for the journal. Mona and David bring to *HIMALAYA* a wealth of expertise, wide regional networks, and strong communities of practice, all of which will infuse *HIMALAYA* with new energy and greater possibilities.

This final issue under our editorship is a rich and varied set of responses to the devastating earthquakes that ravaged Nepal in Spring 2015. In the Fall 2015 issue of *HIMALAYA*, we carried a Call for Papers for this special issue, and were impressed with the range of proposals and submissions that we received. That the 2015 earthquakes impacted communities and individuals in complex and interconnected ways is very evident from these powerful contributions: some are technical, analytical, and almost forensic in their descriptions of the devastation that ensued; others are far more personal and reflexive, examining the social and emotional cost of the seismic shifts.

This issue includes two research articles, six perspectives pieces, three poetry selections, and a wealth of book and film reviews alongside conference reports. We are pleased to publish a richly empirical study of the impacts of the earthquakes on Nepal's glacial lakes by a team of researchers led by Alton Byers, and a critical examination of the risks and possibilities held within Nepal's burgeoning hydropower industry by Christopher Butler and Matthäus Rest. Rune Bennike takes an incisive look at the politics and pragmatics of relief and reconstruction in hard-hit regions of northern Gorkha district, while Lai Ming Lam, Varun Khanna, and Rob Kuipers highlight other aspects of 'disaster governance' in their profile of Future Village, an NGO working in Dhading district.

Contributions to the Perspectives section by Austin Lord and Galen Murton and Lord's review of Kesang

Tseten's film *Trembling Mountain* recount aspects of the massive tragedy that occurred in the Langtang Valley. Reflecting on these contributions, we see points of convergence and distinction with Pasang Yangjee Sherpa's work to document and respond to losses across the Khumbu. The mournful cadence of Benjamin Linder's 'A Dirge for Kathmandu' is echoed in starker terms by Robert Beazley's look at the internal workings of Bir Hospital's trauma unit and citizens' responses to disaster.

As usual, we bookend this issue with art. Dolpo artist Tenzin Norbu's ethereal painting, titled *April 25, 2015*, graces the journal's cover, along with several of his other recent works. Kevin Bubriski's striking color

and black-and-white photography, along with his moving commentary which contextualizes each picture, lend form and substance to loss. In contemplating these images, we are compelled, as Terry Tempest Williams reminds us, to "find beauty in a broken world." We thank Norbu and Kevin—and all of the artists whose work we have featured over these past five years—for their contributions to the journal. All of the artists whose work we published kindly have donated their work to grace the pages of *HIMALAYA*. For this generosity, we are humbled and grateful.

We thank you—our readership—for your critical feedback and your continued commitment to open access publishing in Himalayan

studies. It has been a wonderful journey editing *HIMALAYA*, and a rare privilege. With that, we're excited to see the next incarnation of this most special journal, and wish David and Mona happiness, creativity, and excitement in their task of co-creating the next chapter for *HIMALAYA*.

And, finally, in the spirit of new beginnings, we would also like our readership and ANHS members to know that the Association welcomes new members to its Executive Council (EC). Nominations to the EC, of yourself or others, can be submitted directly to <president@anhs-himalaya.org>.

Sienna Craig and Mark Turin
Editors, *HIMALAYA*



Tenzin Norbu, *Winter Caravan*, acrylic gouache on canvas, 79 cm x 58 cm, 2015.