

President's Letter

I am very pleased to be invited by the new Editors of HIMALAYA (Jeevan Raj Sharma, University of Edinburgh and Michael Heneise, UIT, Norway) to contribute a letter in their first issue. I take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to the new Editors and to express deep gratitude to our former Editors, David Citrin and Mona Bhan, for their commitment and dedication to editing the journal from 2018 through 2020.

Since early 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact throughout the world, including South Asia and the Himalayan region, and on ANHS members and other scholars. During this time, many have drawn upon their scholastic skills to document what is happening and help gain a deeper understanding of the experience in these communities. Despite the challenges, ANHS has managed to move forward. During the last year, the ANHS/Kathmandu Research Center (KRC) has formed a collaboration with Social Science Baha (SSB), closing the Baluwatar office and moving, including the library, to SSB. We are grateful to SSB for their continued commitment to ANHS and for facilitating the transfer of the KRC to SSB. Once we are clearer about the on-going impact of Covid-19, the ANHS Executive Council will reach out to members for input in developing services to meet members' needs. Therefore, your feedback and suggestions will be extremely helpful.

Although the Executive Council (EC) has not been able to meet in

person since the 2019 South Asia Conference in Madison, Zoom has enabled us to hold regular meetings. We are pleased to add three new members to the Executive Council (Sienna Craig, Ariana Maki and Anna Stirr) and look forward to nominations from the Membership for future openings. We are planning to host an in-person Himalayan Studies Conference in Toronto in 2022, where the next Membership Meeting will also be held. The Dor Bahadur Bista Graduate Paper Prize Committee reviewed the submissions for 2020–2021 and awarded the prize to Phuwa Dhondup Gurung for his paper “Coercing participatory conservation? Caterpillar fungus and cartographies of slow dispossession in the Himalayas.” The James Fisher prize for a first book was awarded to Karine Gagné’ (University of Guelph) for *Caring for Glaciers: Land, Animals and Humanity in the Himalayas*. We very much look forward to receiving submissions for both prizes in 2021.

In early 2021, members of the Executive Council (Galen Murton, Dinesh Paudel and Milan Shrestha) organized two Webinars: “Research and Scholarship in the Himalayas: Emerging Challenges and Opportunities” and “Reflections on the Forty Year Anniversary of the Status of Women in Nepal Report,” which were very well attended and generated much discussion. Current and former members of the EC also worked together on efforts to mobilize vaccine diplomacy for Nepal.

A major accomplishment this year has been the revamping of the ANHS

Website, led by Milan Shrestha. The former website has been transferred to a new secure web server, which also provides a seamless integration of the ANHS membership portal and the ANHS web pages. This newly redesigned website reflects the ANHS community's identity and style, making it easier for current and new members to keep their membership up-to-date, and to get information and advice on upcoming events, awards and prizes, as well as other professional development opportunities—all in one place. ANHS members are the central focus of this new site, and it will not only enable you to more easily access information about ANHS, but also to contribute details about activities and accomplishments in Himalayan studies. Please do log into the new website (www.anhs-himalaya.org/), update your profile, and start interacting with other colleagues with similar interests, get exclusive (member-only) access to professional development resources (in progress), use the membership profile to upload pictures from recent fieldwork and events, and connect with other members through the ANHS social media presence.

We look forward to your feedback and suggestions for moving forward together, including how ANHS can best meet your needs as members. Please stay well and keep in touch.

Judith Justice
President, Association of Nepal and Himalayan Studies