

## Editorial

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Since we published our last issue, global attention has moved to the Ukraine war. While geographically distant, the violent upheaval in Europe has led to tens of thousands of civilian deaths, a massive refugee crisis involving nearly 7 million people fleeing Ukraine, disruptions in global oil and gas supplies, and major disturbance in the global food supply-chain, which now threatens livelihoods and food security in many parts of the Global South, including the Himalayan region. But while we can learn a great deal from what we read on screens, about the interconnected nature of geopolitical and economic systems, these constitute forms of knowledge that remain detached to us because they ultimately exteriorize our epistemic positionality. Indeed, our understanding of the Ukraine war and its broader implications is far from an embedded understanding. Computer models, and digital representations, of troop and refugee movements, oil and gas pipelines, and disrupted wheat production, produce what Donna Haraway calls a 'god trick'; a technique of 'seeing everything from nowhere' (1988: 189). One

is thus standing outside, far above and sterilized from the exigencies of its messiness, thus rendering the viewer both disaffected and dis-implicated.

It is perhaps this same kind of detachment - from embedded, embodied everydayness - that has contributed to myopic political visions of inclusion and belonging, whether clothed in secular-pluralist garb, or indeed carried by the fervor of religious nationalism. Minority communities bear the brunt of unimaginative states in all their unsavory incarnations, and this special issue seeks specifically to address the historical, political, economic, and cultural dynamics and contingencies as they relate to Darjeeling in the Eastern Himalayas. We, thus, are very proud to publish this special issue, guest edited by Dipti Tamang, Rinzi Lama and Sarah Besky, bringing together an exceptional group of scholars that proceed to analyze many of these problems, offering new insight into the ways local communities in Darjeeling speak, wrestle, envision, and articulate their own aspirations, understandings of place, belonging, and indeed inclusion

and exclusion in the broader political fabric.

### **Knowledge production and Open Access**

Before we say a few words about our new editorial team members, our upcoming Himalayan Studies conference in Toronto, and the launch of the Edinburgh Himalaya Collective (EHC), we would like to talk a little bit about knowledge production and our commitment to open access. Academic colleagues invest significant labor in editing journals and reviewing manuscripts. It is widely recognized that publication paywalls are withholding research from its users. Plan S, an initiative launched by a consortium of national research agencies and funders from twelve European countries in 2018, put forward the commitment to open access as: with effect from 2021\*, all scholarly publications on the results from research funded by public or private grants provided by national, regional, and international research councils and funding bodies, must be published in Open Access Journals, on Open Access

Platforms, or made immediately available through Open Access Repositories without embargo. Universities, particularly, those based in the North, are responding to make their research open-access by putting forward policy and support for paying Article Processing Charge (APC) or by signing Read-and-Publish agreements. While these shifts and support for open access are broadly welcome, such open-access policy raises some concerns regarding our commitment to ethical and equitable international partnerships. It is possible that such an approach to open-access policy is likely to perpetuate global inequities in knowledge production i.e., Northern Universities making their research open while doing nothing for collaborators and partners, particularly those based in resource poor contexts.

At HIMALAYA, our approach has been informed by a strong motivation to pursue and cultivate an inclusive research agenda that honors ethical commitments to the equitable distribution of labor, transparent governance, collaboration, and inclusivity. Hosting, editing, publishing, and circulating open-access journals and books through collaborative labor generates solidarity, collegiality, and accessibility of scholarship across disciplines.

## **A few special announcements**

We are very pleased to welcome Stefan Lueder (Humboldt University) as our new managing editor, and Jessna Brar (Dartmouth College) as our newest editorial assistant. Stefan has already accomplished a great deal by designing a new logo for HIMALAYA, updating the journal's overall layout and moving our archives from the old Digital Commons system hosted by Macalester College to our new Open Journals System (OJS) hosted by the University of Edinburgh. The Macalester team has been very supportive in this transition, and much of what they have developed over the course of ten incredibly productive years, under the wonderful leadership of Jacki Betsworth, will now be the core editorial and production materials, templates, and guides used by a new generation of editorial and production team members based in-region at various ANHS and HIMALAYA partner institutes in Nepal, Bhutan and India.

We are also very excited to announce the launch of the EHC on 28 June 2022 at the University of Edinburgh. Stefan, Michael, and Jeevan will organize the event and will welcome a community of students and scholars working in and on the

Himalayan region, from various disciplinary backgrounds, and based at various UK universities and research institutes, with the aim of developing a community of support in Europe and UK for HIMALAYA. The EHC will help strengthen the journal's institutional base, including opening further funding opportunities, and expand the journal's editorial and review capabilities. With strong support from the Centre for South Asian Studies and Social Anthropology, the EHC will host seminars, represent HIMALAYA in Europe and the UK, and work in close partnership with the ANHS in the United States in expanding the global readership and subscription base of the journal. We very much look forward to updating everyone on the EHC launch and sharing about its activities in future issues.

Finally, we look forward to meeting the HIMALAYA and broader ANHS community at the Himalayan Studies Conference in Toronto (October 13-16, 2022), where we hope to present more of what is in store for the journal, as well as celebrate the journal's 50-year legacy. And we look forward to expanding our readership, our subscription base, and hearing from authors, reviewers, and readers about ways we can continue to improve our esteemed publication.