

## EDITOR'S NOTE

In the fall of 2008, my adviser, Mark Bender, called me into his office. "Kevin Stuart is starting a journal," he said. "You should write to him and say you're willing to help in any way." It was never really a suggestion, and I did not take it as one. I am glad. It is no overstatement to suggest that it changed my life. I met students and scholars who would later become some of my best friends. I learned to appreciate the value of collaborative research, and new ways to engage in such collaborations.

Since I began working with the journal, *Asian Highlands Perspectives* has published forty volumes of collected essays and manuscript-length special issues. For seven years, we as an editorial staff have worked with authors to publish articles and manuscripts that push the bounds of "conventional scholarship" and build a multinational research community that speaks to the diversity of the Asian Highlands region, broadly construed. We have published articles of uncommon length, featuring plenty of images, and collaborative research efforts. We have published papers on small folk groups and languages, on literature, and emergent cultural practices. Their disciplinary orientations include folklore, history, anthropology, and linguistics.

In many ways, the present volume is representative of our work. Featuring six articles, four are the fruit of collaboration. It includes two collections of translated oral traditions, and twenty-one book reviews. The articles of Volume Forty examine populations from two different countries and several different ethnic groups. Tsering Bum's contribution, for example, analyzes the changing roles of mountain deities in a pastoral community in Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture.

Gerald Roche and Limusishiden, meanwhile, introduce the Monguor Bog ritual in context. Next, Jacqueline Fewkes and Abdul Nasir Khan look at moments of change in Ladakhi trend as evidenced through manuscripts and ephemera. Rdo rje bkra shis and CK Stuart then examine Tibetan naming practices in A mdo. In doing so, they provide only the second English-language study of Tibetan naming practices, and the first on naming in China. Next, Libu Lakhi

continues his efforts to document and preserve rapidly fading linguistic and cultural practices of the Namuyi Tibetans of Sichuan Province's Daliangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture. In the final article, Gary Sigley focuses not so much on a group or culture, as on the transcultural practice of "lifestyle migration" in southwestern China's Dali City.

The folklore section provides two sets of texts: the first a bilingual edition of a Tibetan wedding speech (placing Tibetan and English side-by-side). It is the product of several years of collaboration between myself and Dr. Caixiangduojie of Qinghai Normal University. The second folklore section is an intriguing collection of folktales, oral historical accounts, and personal experience narratives collected in Nyag rong by Bkra shis bzang po.

The twenty-one book reviews, meanwhile, introduce recent book-length publications on the Asian Highlands region.

Over these eight years, I have been proud of this association with *AHP*. It has grown from a publishing endeavor to a full-fledged community that crosses national, linguistic, and cultural borders. In recent years, *AHP* has also created the Asian Highlands Research Network (AH-RN) a moderated mailing list bringing like-minded scholars into contact. The list sends out regular roundups of Open Access publication journals, and provides access to "Pre-print Reviews" - book reviews from *AHP* contributors.

Our work has also centered on the work fostering cross-cultural scholarly communication. So far, however, the communication has largely been unidirectional, bringing the cultures of the Asian Highlands region to Western academics. It is hoped that future volumes of the journal - some of which are already underway - will begin to facilitate work in the other direction as well.

In recent years, concerns about the influence of for-profit publishers like Elsevier and about shrinking library budgets have grown. I believe that true, free, open access written, reviewed, and edited by volunteer academics is a remedy to the current publishing malaise and to producing novel, participatory ways of documenting, preserving, and disseminating human knowledge. In light of this, my hope is that you all will continue to support *Asian Highlands Perspectives* not only through reading, but through agreeing to peer

review articles, review books, and submit articles for consideration in this entirely volunteer enterprise.

Unfortunately, after eight years and forty volumes with the journal, I must leave the future of *Asian Highlands Perspectives* and these important projects to others. I am deeply grateful to Kevin Stuart, Gerald Roche, Tshe dbang rdo rje, and Rin chen rdo rje, all of the peer reviewers, and the many scholars who have submitted articles, literature, book reviews, and folklore for consideration.

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