

## EDITORIAL

Welcome to EBHR 44, which contains its usual eclectic mixture of material.

First, the renowned historian of the Central Himalaya, Maheshvar P. Joshi, presents the folk narrative known as '*Bhārata/Jāgara* of Maulā alias Jiyā Rānī' as an example of a common heritage in support of his argument that Far Western Nepal and Uttarakhand formed a single polity for several centuries under the Katyūrī dynasty. He traces the origin of the narrative to the sixth century Sanskrit drama the *Devī Chandraguptam* and examines the functional aspect of folklore and its efficacy in the articulation of ideology and political power.

Next, Laura Kunreuther of Bard College describes the ways in which some ordinary Nepalis in Kathmandu began to write, rewrite, and preserve traces of their heritage and personal history during the 1990s. Basing her discussion on a number of detailed case studies, she describes how public discourses can influence people's understanding of their possessions, their inheritance and personal selves within a social world. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the workshop on 'The Creation of Public Meaning During the Democratic Transition in Nepal' held at SOAS in July 2012, which formed a part of the SOAS-Martin Chautari International Partnership Project funded by the British Academy.

In our third article, Matthew Maycock, a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Glasgow, describes the implications of the establishment of a People's Liberation Army (PLA) cantonment for the inhabitants of a Kamaiya settlement close by. This article provides an account of the 'People's War' from the perspective of bystanders to the conflict who were actually more affected by its aftermath than they were by the conflict itself.

Finally, I have taken the liberty of adding as an endpiece my own translation of an essay by the Nepali poet Lakshmi Prasad Devkota (1909-59) on his fraught relationship with the English language, which I think speaks as much to the present day as it did to the Kathmandu in which it was first penned, some 85 years ago.

With this issue, my period of office as Managing Editor of the EBHR comes to an end. The journal now returns to the Südasien Institut of the University of Heidelberg, where it will henceforth be produced by an

editorial team headed by Professor William Sax. More senior readers may recall that Heidelberg is where the Bulletin took birth. I recently came across a letter dated 15 July 1990 from Richard Burghart, its founding editor. Richard wrote, 'I am not quite sure whether the academic world requires yet another journal, but a number of colleagues at the recent DFG/CNRS meeting in France thought a Nepal/Himalayan newsletter would be helpful'. Later in the letter he remarked, 'Depending on subscriber response, we might in two years close down, or carry on, or expand...'

Well, carry on we did, and twenty-four years later I believe the EBHR has proved its worth. Our list of subscribers now includes many university libraries, 250 hard copies are printed of each issue, and the journal now goes online after twelve months of hard copy publication. EBHR articles are cited very frequently by scholars working on many different Himalayan topics and themes, and I strongly believe we are making a real contribution to scholarship on the region.

I would like to take this final opportunity to thank all members of the UK editorial board for reading and reviewing dozens of submissions over the past four years and for giving up their time for meetings and the like. Arik Moran and Heleen Plaisier have been as generous with their time as they have been indispensable, and I must also thank our contributing editors across the world for their support and encouragement. Finally, none of this would have been possible without the vital help of Chiran Ghimire, Rita Bhujel and Deepak Thapa at the Social Science Baha in Kathmandu, to whom we should remain eternally grateful.

So *haardik dhanyavaad* everybody, and my very best wishes to Bo Sax and his colleagues for the next four years in Heidelberg.

– Michael Hutt