

Editorial Foreword

The Journal of Asian Studies has played an important role in the shaping and development of Asian studies for nearly eight decades. It was founded in 1941 as the journal of The Far Eastern Association with the title *The Far Eastern Quarterly* (*FEQ*). In its first decade of publication, the category of the “Far East” certainly appeared porous, with articles examining topics as diverse as the foreign policy of Australia, Confucianism in Europe, and the Chinese diaspora in Mexico. Most articles covered research on China, Korea, and Japan, while a number of issues were devoted to work on Southeast Asia: Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, Vietnam, and the Philippines. The book review section further expanded the geographical scope of *FEQ* by including reviews of publications on Siberia, Central Asia, the “Soviet Far East,” and the “Pacific area.” By the early 1950s, book reviews on South Asia also started to appear in the journal, with the first article on India appearing in 1955.

In the mid-1950s, a larger intellectual shift was taking place in the US academy with the growth of South Asian studies. The directors of The Far Eastern Association invited a group of South Asianists to discuss the expansion of the Association’s geographic coverage to include South Asia. In 1956, the name of The Far Eastern Association was changed to The Association for Asian Studies (AAS), and its journal became *The Journal of Asian Studies* (*JAS*). The first issue with the new title was published in November 1956. However, the rethinking of the meaning of Asia—and by extension Asian studies—took place against the background of a larger context in this period, especially the 1955 Bandung Conference and its global impact. The idea of establishing new solidarities (or reestablishing old ones) was not only an intellectual project, but also a political one in the age of decolonization. In retrospect, it is also possible to suggest that the legacies of pan-Asianism were also important at this moment, especially the various intellectual movements that brought South Asia together with East Asia and Southeast Asia.

As the new editor, I am honored to be given the opportunity to contribute to this long history. It is also a reminder that the founding of *JAS* (with its new title) was meant to question the very idea of Asia itself—geographically and epistemologically—as a way to be more inclusive in the spirit of solidarity. My plan is to continue to build on this spirit by being committed to a pluralism of ideas. To my mind, the priority is to publish excellent scholarship across the multiple areas, disciplines, and methodological approaches that make up Asian studies for *all* periods of time—ancient, medieval, early modern, modern, and so on. That being said, I recognize that the geographic category of “Asia” is fluid at one level, and penumbral at another. However, I see this as an opportunity for scholars to contribute research to the long-standing debates on the spaces, boundaries, and borders of Asia. I also welcome the opening of Asian studies to new intersections with the important theoretical developments in gender and sexuality

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studies, critical theory, decolonial studies, visual studies, geography, digital humanities, big data and statistics, film and media studies, political theory, and literary studies. The list is not exhaustive, but the main point is to welcome *all* scholarship that expands our knowledge about Asia.

Most of the articles included in the current volume were reviewed under the editorship of Jeff Wasserstrom, who deserves exceptional accolades for his leadership of the journal for the past ten years (2008–18). He managed his duties as editor with grace, diligence, and thoughtfulness. I appreciate all of his assistance and guidance in the transition process.

This issue brings together seven articles that reflect the diversity of intellectual thought in Asian studies. NAVYUG GILL's work on agrarian studies considers the politics of conversion in the north Indian countryside, while rethinking the caste question within the framing of Karl Marx's "On the Jewish Question." VLADIMIR TIKHONOV writes about the transnational basis of Korea's nationalism by examining the reception and impact of the histories of revolution in China. The focus of YOUNJUNG OH's article is on Japanese consumer culture of art and artifacts from other parts of Asia in the early decades of the twentieth century, while ELMO GONZAGA considers the consumption of capitalist modernity in the media culture of the Philippines to assess its revolutionary potential. BEN WHALEY's examination of a video game in which players must escape an earthquake disaster zone offers an alternative analysis to the rhetoric of national trauma, following the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami in Japan. JULIAN GEWIRTZ studies the transnational movement of ideas about futurism and its impact on Chinese policies of science and technology in the late twentieth century, and VICENTE RAFAEL considers conceptions of sovereignty and power in his study of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte by engaging with the ideas of Michel Foucault and Achille Mbembe.

In this volume, readers will see some aesthetic changes to the journal. *JAS* has only had three different cover designs (four if we count the original cover of *FEQ*) in its history, and this issue introduces a new cover and a new paper color. Marcus Hinds and the design team at Cambridge University Press worked hard to provide a cover that reflects a contemporary design.

Finally, a special thanks to Michael Paschal, Executive Director of the AAS, who will be retiring later this year. His work has helped to strengthen Asian studies for more than two decades—this is no small feat.

—Vinayak Chaturvedi