

Editorial Introduction

What is the role of a journal and indeed of academic production in the ever-changing world of scholarly publishing? At a time when the EU is putting a deadline of 2020 for all publicly-funded research to be published on open-access platforms, prominent journals have begun to offer the option of paying to make one's work freely available online, and researchers increasingly offer versions of their work on peer-sharing oriented websites such as academia.edu and researchgate.net. From Aaron Swartz's efforts to Alexandra Elbakyan's Sci-Hub, the call to free the hold that large publishing houses have over outputs resulting from largely publicly-funded research so that they can reach a wider audience has continued to grow louder.

As fledgling researchers, we at Asia in Focus are acutely aware of the complementary concerns of early-career and well-established scholars alike: to publish in respectable forums that can hopefully create positive real impact but also further one's career at a time when competition for research funding has reached unprecedented levels. In recent months, the prospect of a 'Brexit' with the 23rd June EU referendum has prompted a good deal of debate on potential implications for researchers' access to funds and mobility within Europe. These conversations are a sobering reminder of how living in a world increasingly defined by national borders and identity politics categorically limits a large number of people's access to cutting-edge research and thereby their opportunities to engage as informed global citizens and fellow academics in a structurally unfair and discriminatory world.

Now into its second year and third issue, Asia in Focus seeks to do its bit by providing emerging researchers in the Nordic countries a freely accessible online platform to showcase their work on a variety of Asia-related topics, while simultaneously providing a valuable window into research on Asia to interested audiences worldwide. This issue, for instance, ranges from analyses of humour in Finnish-Chinese negotiations and Indian literature in English, to scrutiny of Japanese cinematic genres and how Chinese schoolchildren are taught a particular version of history. In autumn, we shall publish our first Special Issue, on the theme of family and gender in a globalising India. This marks a modest attempt by Asia in Focus to not only seek to capture the breadth of concerns relevant to the study of Asia with its astonishing diversity, but also to plumb in-depth the endless complexity of the broached issues. The upcoming special issue is in addition to the regular winter issue, for which a call for articles and book reviews is now open.

Over the course of the past three issues, we have grown as a team, learning about the

ins and outs of running a smooth ship, plagiarism checks and online presence, and refining our review process. Happily, we have retained most of the founding editors, lending us continuity and a strong sense of collegiality. A few have moved on (geographically) with their careers, and others have been welcomed aboard. We are fortunate enough to have a steady stream of quality articles coming our way, which is a mark of the need for platforms like this. Notably, we have acquired an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN), and a new logo and layout which we think are fabulous – we hope you like them too! We remain grateful to our reviewers, who have contributed efficiently and substantially to enable us to present some fine work on Asia by early-career Nordic researchers. Enjoy the read, and as always, we look forward to your comments and suggestions.

On behalf of the Editorial Team,
Siddharth Sareen