

Letter from the Editor

The idea to create a journal dedicated to supporting early-career researchers along their academic path came from a student assistant working at NIAS Library and on the InFocus Blog. There were many well-written and innovative blogs submitted by early career researchers, so together with the head of the library and a small group of PhD students at NIAS, the University of Copenhagen and other Nordic academic institutions, we developed the idea of a journal that published shorter articles written by Master and PhD students from the humanities and social sciences whose studies were focused on Asia.

The project was to be volunteer based, but the idea was so well received by lecturers and students at the Nordic NIAS Council member institutions that a year later, NIAS decided to dedicate some financial resources to the project. Over the course of the last four years, we have been able to establish an official remunerated role for a Managing Editor, create a modern user-friendly website, register an ISSN number, and join the Danish Royal Library's national portal for the digital publication of scholarly scientific and cultural journals, Tidsskrift.dk. We have published eight regular issues and one special issue of the journal, given feedback and support to over 150 Master and PhD students in the Nordic Region and Europe, and we have achieved level 1 ranking in Norway, which is a major achievement in light of the fact that the articles we publish are half the length of those in regular scientific journals.

Unlike mainstream scientific journals, Asia in Focus has regarded itself as a learning platform as well as a source of innovative high-quality evidence based knowledge on Asia. We have thus measured our success not only on the number of students (and issues) that we have published, but also on the amount of students we have been able to give in-depth feedback and guidance to regarding their academic writing – a role that increasingly time-pressured lecturers understandably have little time to dedicate to. In an era where researchers are judged and measured by the number of publications produced in high-ranking journals, the founding and successive editorial teams have taken great pride in being able to deliver this academic service to such a great number of early career researchers across Europe.

Our goal is to reach Master and PhD students worldwide, but for now we have a different challenge ahead. As a result of an ongoing restructuring process at NIAS – Nordic Institution of Asian Studies, Asia in Focus is in search of a new institutional home in Denmark or the wider Nordic region. The journal has thus far been such a great success, the Director of NIAS, Duncan McCargo and the Editorial Committee are in agreement that it should live on and continue to provide guidance, support and this opportunity

to become a published researcher for PhD and Master students studying at European institutes of higher education.

Our Facebook page and website will remain live while we establish ourselves elsewhere. Please do not hesitate to get in touch via Facebook, or contact Inga-Lill Blomkvist (ilb@nias.ku.dk) if you know of an institution or department that would like to hear more about us and potentially be our new home.

In this issue, we take you to Kyrgyzstan to learn about how traditional institutions affect political voting and mobilisation patterns, to Korea to learn about the importance of cultural memory when looking at the outcome of the Inter-Korean Summit in 2018, to China to look at what managerial strategies are used to control and manage agency workers mobility and finally to Thailand and an exploration of the social consequences of an ethnic migrant community radio station and its role for the Shan migrant community in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Enjoy the read, and do share the journal with your peers and networks both inside and outside of academia!

Nicol Foulkes Savinetti

Managing Editor of Asia in Focus