

Editorial Foreword

OUR COVER

Untitled Poster, featuring Shivaji, Rana Pratap, Subhas Chandra Bose (center), Bhagat Singh and Chandrashekar Azad. Purchased in Lucknow, 1998. With permission, J.B. Khanna, Chennai. Author's Collection. See Kama Maclean, "The Portrait's Journey: The Image, Social Communication and Martyr-Making in Colonial India," in this issue of the *JAS*.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE ISSUE

November has long been a time for big picture writing at *JAS*, since this is when we traditionally carry a printed version of the Presidential Address delivered at the springtime Annual Meeting of the AAS. Presidents of the Association have the freedom to take any approach they want in their contribution to the issue, but they tend to cast a wide net, thematic and conceptually, while generally focusing on the region they were elected to represent. This year's Presidential Address, K. SIVARAMAKRISHNAN'S "Environment, Law, and Democracy in India" is no different. It provides a sweeping look at a general subject (law and the environment) that is of intense contemporary concern throughout Asia and indeed the world, and in the process it grapples with other subjects of wide interest (such as the forces that work to strengthen or undermine civil society). It is a bracing look at the "processes that make Indian democracy work" that stands up impressively on its own, but that is also worth reading in tandem with several essays that have run in these pages in recent years, including both those that comprised the forum on the rule of law in China and India in *JAS* 68 (1): 55–133, and the Asia Beyond the Headlines contribution by Pranab Bardhan in *JAS* 68 (2): 347–57.

Last year, we built on the long standing tradition of November issues by publishing something along with the Presidential Address that was ambitious in scope and had already had a "test run" in oral form at the Annual Meeting: namely, our first "*JAS* at AAS" forum. It began with a lead essay on modern visions of Asia as a region by historian and theorist Prasenjit Duara, and included a diverse set of responses by scholars working on different locales and in different disciplines, with a final rejoinder by Duara. This year, in addition to continuing the venerable tradition of carrying presidential addresses in the November issue, we also extend the newly invented tradition, just described, with a second *JAS* at AAS symposium exploring the nature of region(s)—this time, considerations by VICTOR LIEBERMAN, ERIC TAGLIACOZZO, CAROLYN CARTIER, JOHN E. WILLS, JR., ROBERT HELLYER,

VICTOR H. MAIR, RAMYA SREENIVASAN, and LEONARD Y. ANDAYA of Lieberman's important books on the historical parallels between Asia and Europe; further details about this forum to be found in the Special Editor's Note in the main body of the issue.

Interestingly, as has happened before since I took over as Editor, I have discovered again with these *JAS* at AAS forums that something I imagined to be a novel innovation is better described as a revival with a twist or a reboot. As noted in a previous Editorial Foreword, the "Asia Beyond the Headlines" genre had a precursor of sorts in some of the topical essays published in very early editions of the *JAS*, back when it was known by its original title of *The Far Eastern Quarterly*. Similarly, since the *JAS* at AAS forum ran, I have learned that in August 1964, a "Symposium on Chinese Studies and the Disciplines" ran in these pages. This forum was based on a panel discussion held at the previous Annual Meeting, and the "Editor's Note" by Rhoads Murphey that opens the set of papers and responses that made up the symposium refers to the fact that presenters who made oral remarks in the spring did so knowing a written version would be forthcoming in August. This was, then, in a sense, a case of *JAS* at AAS *avant la lettre*.

Going back to examine the August 1964 issue, I discovered as well that at that time, there was a two-part description of participants in editorial work. First came a section called "Editors of the Journal:" along with Murphey, described simply as "Editor," the names listed were Marius Jansen ("Associate Editor"), Susanne Rudolph and Harry Benda (each dubbed an "Assistant Editor"), and Ardath Burks and Richard C. Howard (listed as responsible for "Book Reviews" and "Bibliography," respectively). Then came a masthead section called "Advisory Editorial Board." We now have a quite different structure, with the Advisory Editorial Board having disappeared at some point. I bring this up because in yet another "innovation" that has turned out to be not quite as novel as I thought, I am adding two "Advising Editors" to the *JAS* editorial board, Ian Johnson, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist who has published books on China and on Islam in Europe, and Angilee Shah, a freelance writer and former editor of the UCLA-based *AsiaMedia* online magazines, who has written on Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and various other parts of the continent. Their role at the *JAS*, which begins with this issue, is to provide the Editor with guidance on "Asia Beyond the Headlines" and "Trends" pieces.

ASIA BEYOND THE HEADLINES

In addition to the Presidential Address, the Symposium on Strange Parallels, and the usual complement of book reviews and research articles, this issue includes an "Asia Beyond the Headlines" essay and a "Trends" debate, the first time we have included such a back-and-forth. The ABH essay is by historian GEOFFREY ROBINSON, reflecting on East Timor. He revisits the dramatic events that took place there roughly a decade ago and surveys what has been accomplished and what still needs to be done as the tenth anniversary of the country's independence nears. The "Trends" debate looks at the flurry of

recent writings on the political implications of new media. Focusing on the case of China, which now has the largest number of Internet users in the world, the participants, JAMES LEIBOLD and YANG GUOBIN, stake out contrasting positions on whether, or rather, how the existence of cyberspace has been transforming Chinese politics. Leibold expresses great skepticism about the notion that the Chinese Internet has the potential to liberalize China, directing our attention to the amount of apolitical or even illiberal activity engaged in online; Yang's rebuttal strikes a much more optimistic tone, while accepting the need to be mindful of the phenomena Leibold brings up and the importance of resisting an extreme form of what is sometimes called cyberutopianism. The exchange seemed very timely when the essays were being written early in the year, and it now seems even more of the moment, after a summer that has seen an explosion of political commentary in Chinese cyberspace, especially in the wake of the mid-July high-speed train crash, as well as calls by the Beijing government to rein in the spread of "toxic rumors" online—calls that were issued around the same time that, in the wake of the London Riots, David Cameron was making the case for tighter policing of new media in Britain.

RESEARCH ARTICLES

The articles section takes us back in time and from East Timor and China to very different locales: India and the Karen State in Burma. In the first of these two articles, historian KAMA MACLEAN's "The Portrait's Journey: The Image, Social Communication and Martyr-Making in Colonial India," we learn of the creation and dissemination of a photograph (later reproduced in drawn and painted formats) that has had a richly varied life as an "icon of defiant nationalism and a symbol of imperial injustice." This representation of Bhagat Singh, which was as immediately recognizable in many settings as photograph of Che are today, is shown to have had a "decisive impact on the charged political landscape" of 1930s India.

The other article in this section, YOKO HAYAMI's "Pagaodas and Prophets: Contesting Sacred Space and Power among Buddhist Karen in Karen State," offers a textured picture of an important aspect of Burmese religious life. The author, who draws on fieldwork conducted in the region, introduces readers to the area as a whole and in particular to a community of believers led by the young charismatic figure Phu Taki. The article also explores change over time, emphasizing the impact on local religion of the "Myanmification" of Buddhism that the authorities have tried to carry out since the 1980s.

—JNW

Forthcoming Articles in *JAS* 71:1 (February 2012)

Asia Beyond the Headlines

Reflections on Situating Taiwan in Modern Chinese Cultural Studies

CHRISTOPHER LUPRE

Trends

Finding a Place: Mainland Chinese Fiction in the 2000s

JULIA LOVELL

Sino-speak: Chinese Exceptionalism and the Politics of History

WILLIAM A. CALLAHAN

Research Articles

Mobile-izing: Democracy, Organization and India's first "Mass Mobile Phone" Elections

ROBIN JEFFREY AND ASSA DORON

Choosing to Collaborate: Yi Kwang-su and the Moral Subject in Colonial Korea

JOHN TREAT

Hesitating before the Judgment of History

TIMOTHY BROOK

Response to John Treat "Choosing to Collaborate: Yi Kwang-su and the Moral Subject in Colonial Korea"

MICHAEL SHIN

Rethinking Missionaries and Medicine in China: The Miracles of Assunta Pallotta, 1905–2005

HENRIETTA HARRISON

Resurrecting *Seva* (social service): Dalit and Low-caste Women Party Activists as Producers and Consumers of Political Culture and Practice in Urban North India

MANUELA CIOTTI

Heartfelt Driving: Discourses on Manners, Safety, and Emotion in Japan's Era of Mass Modernization

JOSHUA HOTAKA ROTH
