IIAS Publishing

20 years of publishing at IIAS: from in-house distribution to publishing with a global reach

Paul van der Velde

THE FIRST PUBLICATION of the IIAS was the IIAS Newsletter (renamed The Newsletter in 2009; see page 6 of this issue for "The Evolution of The Newsletter"). While The Newsletter became our most visible publication in Asian Studies, we also, in the early years, published two Yearbooks in 1994 and 1995, which included numerous research articles by IIAS fellows, four Working Papers and the outcome of IIAS conferences and seminars (1993-1996); and the IIAS Lecture Series based on the texts of the IIAS Annual Lectures (1993-1998).

The above-mentioned publications could all be considered in-house publications since no external publisher was involved. That changed in 1996 when the "Studies from the International Institute for Asian Studies" series was started in cooperation with the publisher Kegan Paul International (1996-1999), which gave the series a global distribution. For the publication of the Guide to Asian Studies in Europe (1998) we engaged Curzon Press; it was the first of the Curzon-IIAS Studies Series (1998-2003), reflecting the scope of studies at the Institute. After the turn of the millennium IIAS started two series with ISEA in Singapore (2002-2010) and subsidized multiple books with publishers worldwide.

In 2007, all IIAS' efforts were concentrated in the two series: the IIAS and ICAST Publications Series published by Amsterdam University Press (AUP). While the former series was to promote interdisciplinary studies on Asia and comparative research on Asia and Europe, the latter wanted to stimulate dialogue among scholars and society groups at the local, regional, and international levels. In all, nearly 50 monographs and edited volumes were published in these two series.

In 2013, in order to bring its publications more in line with the IIAS research agenda, it was decided to discontinue both series. The streamlining coincides with the restructuring of AUP's publishing strategy. In view of the volume of books in the IIAS/ICAST Series, AUP agreed to turn Asia into one of its five foci. It will publish five to ten new series on Asia with the aim of publishing approximately 50-75 books a year on Asia, thus becoming one of the main publishers in the field worldwide.

Needless to say, this will reinforce the visibility of the IIAS series and the titles published by AUP itself. IIAS will start three new series with AUP: Global Asia, Asian Cities and Asian Heritages. Global Asia addresses contemporary issues related to transnational interactions within the Asian region itself, as well as Asia's projection into the world through the movement of goods, people, ideas, knowledge, ideologies and so forth.

Asian Cities aims to explore the long-standing Asian urban 'tradition' by discussing the origins of urbanism and urban culture in different parts of Asia, and by linking the various elements of city cultures and societies, from ancient to modern (colonial and post-colonial) times.

Asian Heritages explores the notion of heritage as it has evolved from a European concept associated with architecture and monumental architecture to incorporate a broader diversity of cultural forms and values. This includes the contested distinctions of 'tangible' and 'intangible' heritages, and the importance of cultural heritage in framing and creating various forms of identity. In Asia, the notion is often associated with the construction of post-independent nation-state models, the definition of national 'traditions' and 'authenticity' and the idea of post-colonial historical national continuity.

While I will remain in charge of the series, Series Editors are in the process of being appointed and Editorial Boards are being put into place for each of the series. The Series Editor for the Asian Heritages Series has already been selected: Adèle Esposito (Institut Parisien de Recherche Urbanistique Société, IPRUAS), former IIAS fellow and current lecturer at Leiden University and coordinator of the MA program 'Critical Heritage Studies' (IRAS/Agden University).

The Editorial Board for this series will include, among others, Prof. Michael Herzfeld (Harvard University).

On a personal note I would like to thank all the publishers, authors, editors, contributors and members of the editorial board who collectively enabled the publication of the fruits of our research, at IIAS and other institutes around the world in the past 20 years.

Paul van der Velde, IIAS Publications Officer