

The Newsletter is a free periodical published by IIAS. As well as being a window into the Institute, The Newsletter also links IIAS with the community of Asia scholars and the worldwide public interested in Asia and Asian studies. The Newsletter bridges the gap between specialist knowledge and public discourse, and continues to serve as a forum for scholars to share research, commentary and opinion with colleagues in academia and beyond.

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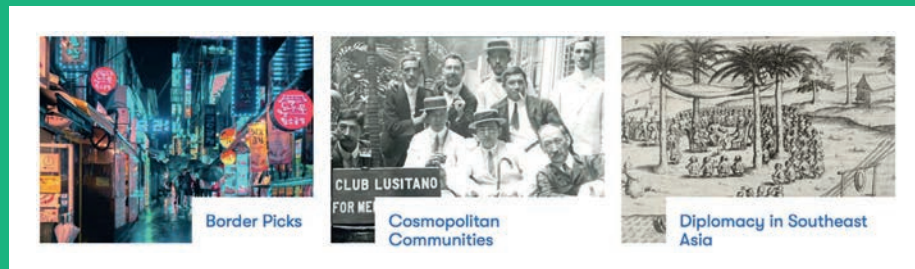
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International
Institute for
Asian Studies

Connecting worlds

Paramita Paul



As the Spring 2022 issue of *The Newsletter* goes to print, Leiden, our home base, begins its year as the European City of Science. Every two years, the European Association for the Advancement of Science and Technology in Strasbourg awards this title to a different city. As European City of Science, Leiden will host the Euroscience Open Forum (ESOF), as well as organize activities, exhibitions, and events related to science, knowledge, art, and skills. Leiden's ambition as European City of Science is to inspire curiosity, share insights, and connect science and society.¹

Inspiring curiosity, sharing insights, and connecting worlds of knowledge and people have always been central to IIAS and *The Newsletter's* endeavors. When the new editorial team, consisting of Assistant Editor Benjamin Linder and myself, took over last year, we aimed to continue to pursue those goals, as well as to explore new ways in which to do so.

We envision *The Newsletter* to be an essential site for the Asian Studies community, where Asia and its place in the world are freely discussed, debated, and redefined. *The Newsletter* responds to current issues, and it offers space for in-depth analyses and alternative perspectives. We welcome and solicit articles from underrepresented groups of authors and from underrepresented parts of Asia, and we are actively seeking institutional partnerships to ensure regional, topical, and disciplinary diversity. Moreover, the print version of *The Newsletter* serves as an anchor for multiple new digital platforms and modes of engagement. The first of these is The Blog, a forum in which scholars and practitioners can collaboratively explore a given theme in a less formal, more conversational style. Another of these new digital initiatives is *The Channel*, our first podcast, which we launch in this issue, and which features a wide variety of Asia-related content.

In this issue

This issue's diverse collection of articles reflects *The Newsletter's* commitments. In "The Study," our collection of research essays, three authors respond to recent headlines. Chris Goto-Jones elaborates on the role of the 'Mindfulness Movement' in systemic anti-Asian discrimination. He writes that the "May We Gather" event – held on 4 May 2021 by 24 different Buddhist organizations in Los Angeles in honor of the victims of the mass shooting in Atlanta on 16 March 2021 – is one of several interventions by Asian-American Buddhists to recognize themselves and their experiences in the depictions of Buddhism in the media. Richard Griffiths and Susann Handke both respond to the November 2021 UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow. Griffiths argues that the conference was condemned to failure from the start and proposes a smaller, more concentrated approach to the problem of climate change, with negotiations limited to the largest GhG emitters and conducted with a well-defined

ultimate global target and deadline. Handke investigates the climate negotiations from the perspective of the transformation of the energy system. She notes that the Asia-Pacific region will be the ground-zero of meaningful global climate action in the decades to come, and she calls for an appreciation of the contribution of women in this effort: many of the local climate change activists in the Asia-Pacific region are women, and "their voices are as important as the accomplishments of female entrepreneurs in the renewable energy business, and rural women, whose knowledge is essential to help their communities adapt to the consequences of global warming."

The remaining four articles in "The Study" are dedicated to various forms of representation. Amal Chatterjee asks whether former colonial languages are now really of the formerly colonized regions themselves. Are they fundamentally an imposition or alienation, or might we think otherwise? Naoko Adachi explores the exotic in visual representation, through the complex meanings of souvenir photographs from 19th-century Japan. These photos are often described as "fake images of Japan," but Adachi's essay shows that there are other, more nuanced ways of looking at images for foreign viewership. In Aditya Kiran Kakati's article, we find out how the Second World War in Manipur and Nagaland is memorialized through war tourism. A once "forgotten war" in a "remote" frontier region has recently attracted state interest and has become tied to regional aspirations of inter-Asian and global connectivity. Finally, in "Marginal Yet Free," Catherine Chan considers the self-representation of Macanese in 19th-century Hong Kong. What did it mean to be a "true" Macanese? How does a community make its own history under pre-determined circumstances?

"The Focus," our guest-edited special section, has been compiled by Gregory Bracken and brings together five articles that deal with Asian migrations. Migrations are of all times, but the current global waves of migration are unprecedented. The five papers of "The Focus," which have all been written by recent graduates of the Masters of Urbanism track at Delft University of Technology (TU Delft), investigate relationships between different types of cities and migrants across Asia and Europe, and some include planning and design proposals.

New sections in the printed newsletter and new online platforms

This issue's "The Portrait" section is the last of its kind. It showcases an online exhibition by 14 Indonesian artists, who reflect on the importance of diversity in the Indonesian archipelago.

Starting from the Summer issue, we introduce "The Tone." While "The Portrait" detailed museums, exhibitions, or installations that concerned Asia, "The Tone" begins with



Left: Featured collections from The Blog.
Above: Leiden European City of Science 2022.

a more open conception of artistic output. It will feature works of creativity and curation in the broadest terms: from film and literary festivals to street art, digital media, musical recordings, crafts, and more. Curators, artists, and third parties are invited to pitch an article for "The Tone" by reaching out to the editorial team.

In "The Region" pages of this issue, editors from the Center for Global Asia at NYU Shanghai and the Asia Research Center at Fudan University, The Asia Institute of the University of Melbourne, and the ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute in Singapore, bring us the latest research in Asian Studies from their respective regions. We are also happy to introduce Tallinn University, a new regional connection. Tallinn University is a young university and its Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies presents its four research units: Japanese Studies, Chinese Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, and Border Studies.

The Newsletter, and IIAS, are also expanding online. Many readers will be familiar with The Blog, our online platform where scholars and practitioners are invited to discuss topics in their field or weigh in on a special theme. The Blog is regularly updated with new collections of conversations, and may be accessed here: <https://blog.iias.asia>.

In addition, in this issue, we are delighted to launch our new podcast, *The Channel*, with the goal of connecting scholars, activists, artists, and the broader public through a mixture of interviews, lectures, discussions, readings, and more. On pp. 42-43, we introduce *The Channel* through excerpts from two different interviews: (1) Caroline Grillot and Nelcy Delanoë talk to us about intertwined histories and the coincidences that shape research, while (2) Michael Herzfeld discusses the politics of culture and national heritage. The transcripts are heavily abridged. Listen to the full interviews at <https://shows.acast.com/the-channel>. New episodes on diverse topics – from Japanese pottery to Brazil-China relations – are coming soon, so be sure to subscribe to *The Channel* via ACast or on your preferred podcatcher app.

We are enthusiastic about extending *The Newsletter* into new domains, and look forward to expanding our diversity, both in terms of our authors and readership. We hope this publication and its digital extensions can inspire, share, and connect in new and different ways. Join us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to stay up to date about new initiatives, and share and connect with us by submitting your research articles and pitching your proposals for *The Newsletter* and our online platforms.

Paramita Paul,
Chief Editor of *The Newsletter*

Notes

1 <https://www.esof.eu/about-european-city-of-science>