

Editor's Note

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The *Southeast Review of Asian Studies* (*SERAS*) continues to evolve and to become increasingly representative of the high-quality scholarship produced by members of the Southeast Conference of the Association for Asian Studies (SEC/AAS). This volume includes contributions by twenty-seven Asianists (pp. xvi–xx)—nineteen of whom are publishing in the *SERAS* for the first time. The nine articles and eight scholarly notes address East, Inner, South, and Southeast Asia from the perspectives of business, comparative literature, economics, education, history, political science, religion, and sociology. Reflecting the origins of this journal as the proceedings of the annual meeting, I have organized the articles thematically into these three transdisciplinary sections:

Interactions & Reactions: Asia & the West

Sociopolitical Dynamics in Asia

Language: Construction & Interpretation

You are invited to read within and across these sections, pulling from the articles and scholarly notes various approaches and content that will inform and expand your disciplinary and geographical understandings of Asia. Pay attention, also, to the reviews of twenty-one recently published literary translations, monographs, and edited volumes on aspects of Asian anthropology, cultural studies, history, literature, philosophy, religion, and sociology. As with earlier volumes of the *SERAS*, which have served to record the history of the SEC/AAS and its activities, this one also includes the program of the annual meeting and minutes of the annual business meeting held during the year of publication—in this case, the 47TH Annual Meeting hosted by the University of South Carolina that convened in Hilton Head, South Carolina, in January 2008.

“The Volume at a Glance” (pp. xii–xv) is a new component of the front matter; it provides abstracts and synopses of the invited essay, articles, and scholarly notes included in this issue. Inspired by a similar section in the journal *Academic Questions*, this section also recalls previous issues of the *SERAS* that included abstracts of papers presented at the Annual Meeting.

After the front matter, you will find an invited essay, a second new component in this volume of the *SERAS*. The invited piece is a retrospective essay by Howard Federspiel (pp. 1–4), the founding editor of the *Annals*

of the Southeast Conference, the journal that is today the *SERAS*. Howard edited the first five volumes, from 1979 to 1983; and I solicited his piece in commemoration of the thirtieth volume. I hope his piece is the first in what will become a series of reflective essays by former editors of this journal. (In Volume 31 [2009], look for a contribution by Hal French, editor of the *Annals* from 1984 to 1988.) With this volume of the *SERAS*, then, in addition to expanding your knowledge of Asia within its pages, you can also see what three decades have done to an Asian studies journal. The variety of articles in this volume should confirm that the *SERAS* has successfully resisted what William Pell referred to thirty-five years ago as “the increasing trend to overspecialization” in his “Facts of Scholarly Publishing” study for the *PMLA* (88 [1973]: 639–70, 643).

Editing the *SERAS* is far from a solo operation. As with Volume 29, I appreciate the advice and counsel of past editor (and present associate editor) Daniel A. Métraux. Ronnie Littlejohn, also associate editor, rose to the occasion and gathered the strongest collection of scholarly notes and book reviews yet published in the *SERAS*. Members of the Editorial Advisory Board, listed on the inside front cover, provided useful, detailed comments to authors and therefore increased the quality of the pieces presented here. In addition, eight special reviewers provided helpful comments for manuscripts submitted for inclusion in this volume: David Blaylock (*Eastern Kentucky University*), William Head (*Robins Air Force Base*), Li-ling Hsiao (*University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*), Tom Pynn (*Kennesaw State University*), Eric Reinders (*Emory University*), Michael Rich (*Georgetown College*), Meenu Tewari (*University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*), and Brent Whitefield (*Valparaiso University*). I have learned a lot about Asia from these specialists, and I thank them all for their involvement, attention, and interest in the *SERAS*.

At the 2008 annual business meeting in Hilton Head, Mark Ravina, 2007–8 SEC/AAS president, invited attendees to send the *SERAS* engaging manuscripts, to ask their institutional libraries to order it, and to tell their students and colleagues about it. I second his views and encourage you to consult the Instructions for Authors (pp. viii–xi) and to consider submitting your own articles, scholarly notes, and book reviews for the next volume. As with this volume, I will aim in Volume 31 to offer a balanced look at Asia, providing both historical and contemporary pieces that address the different regions of Asia from a variety of both disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches. I therefore seek a range of submissions reflecting the wide scope and nature of the diverse and exciting field that is Asian studies.

Enjoy reading—and learning from—this volume. Finally, I would appreciate receiving your comments, suggestions, and offers to volunteer with the journal. Most importantly, I look forward to receiving your manuscript submissions. You can reach me at sgump@illinois.edu.

