

## LETTER FROM THE EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

December 5th, 2025  
Columbia University, New York, NY

Dear readers,

It is our distinct pleasure to present the fourth issue of the *Columbia Journal of Asia* (CJA). Volume IV, Issue 1 features scholarly and creative works contributed by undergraduates and recent graduates representing academic institutions across Asia and North America. The issue is structured into two sections: Articles, comprising long-form academic research papers, and Creative Works, encompassing an array of artistic, poetic, and literary expressions.

Building on the preceding themes of our past two volumes, “Genealogies of the Orient(al)” and “Body Politics in the Orient(al),” and inspired by the questions posed by our selected works, this year’s thematic focus turns to the “Liminality of the Orient(al).” The works featured in this issue span a wide range of disciplines including history, archeology, anthropology, architecture, and the arts—and put in conversation, they illuminate the various multitudes and boundaries of liminality. These include social boundaries related to visibility, play, violence, and gender; material and metaphysical boundaries related to immortality, decay, and idealized and lived realities; and geographic and spatial boundaries, shaped by colonial and imperial metropolises and their peripheries. In light of these tensions, this issue seeks to consider what is the role of liminality within binary structures, and more specifically, within scholarly and creative discourses. Do liminal spaces subvert, reconcile, or reiterate binaries? Are they sites of contested negotiation or amorphous fluidity? And what may be the (un)productive consequences of characterizing a space as liminal? In accordance with CJA’s aim, we hope that this issue’s theme will help destabilize notions of a single, stable, and monolithic “Orient(al),” and instead, prompt readers to further engage with the complicated, and sometimes contradictory, narratives put forth by diverse voices.

We are thrilled to announce that this past year has been marked by much growth across many aspects of the journal. As an annual publication, we formally dedicated the spring semester to hosting cross-disciplinary events open to the broader Columbia University community, including film screenings, poetry readings, and moderated academic panels. As we have expanded our event capabilities, we have launched our new initiative, the [“Forum Event,”](#) a space where editorial staff record and reflect on the events. Written by Managing Editor Ethan Kuperman and Deputy

Managing Editor Shilpa Kesavan, the [inaugural article](#) of the “Forum Event” series follows the screening of “Lone Wolf and Cub: Sword of Vengeance (1972),” discussing the role of the child both in film and in its historical context. The positive reception of our events additionally allowed us to expand our editorial team and introduce new roles within the production and outreach teams. This fall, shifting our focus back to the journal publication, we organized multiple editing, copyediting, and typesetting workshops to help standardize our workflow and provide valuable, transferable skills to our editorial staff. Overall, this year strengthened both our community presence at Columbia and our internal organization as a journal.

As always, we extend our sincere gratitude to our Faculty Advisory Board for their invaluable support and guidance: Dr. Manan Ahme, Dr. Isabel Huacuja Alonso, Dr. Jungwon Kim, Dr. Timsal Masud, Dr. Manijeh Moradian, and Dr. Neferti X. M. Tadiar. Our heartfelt thanks also go to our exceptional Managing Editor, Deputy Managing Editor, and Director of Peer Review—Ethan Kuperman, Shilpa Kesavan, and Cara Wreen—along with the incredible editors who dedicate countless hours to providing thoughtful feedback on submissions, fostering a sense of camaraderie, and ensuring the success of our journal. Thank you to all the speakers and participants who graciously shared their time, insights, and expertise at our events—their contributions have greatly fostered a sense of a community centered on meaningful and inclusive representation. We are deeply grateful to the Columbia University Libraries and our graduate peer reviewers for their patience, expertise, and steadfast support throughout this semester. Finally, we express our profound appreciation to our writers and contributors, whose scholarship and creativity form the core of this publication. Your insights and ingenuity continue to inspire our mission to promote critical scholarship on Asia and the Asian diaspora. Thank you all for your dedication, hard work, and unwavering commitment to making CJA the best it can be.

**Isabel Andreatta CC’26**

**Linda Qin BC’26**

Editors-in-Chief, *Columbia Journal of Asia*