

**LETTER FROM THE EDITORS-IN-CHIEF**

**APRIL 29, 2022**

**Columbia University, New York, NY**

Dear all,

It is an honor to present our inaugural issue of the *Columbia Journal of Asia* (CJA), an initiative that has been nearly one year in the making. Volume I, Issue 1 of CJA features eighteen creative and scholarly pieces by undergraduates and recent graduates from across the United States, Europe, and Asia, presented in three sections: creative works, which include art, poetry, and translations; notes, which are brief academic essays; and articles, which are long-form research papers. These works, spanning the arts, history, political science, and literature, illuminate a plurality of Asian and diasporic narratives—of imperial domination and paths to decolonization, of assimilation and integration amidst diasporas, and of wartime and anticolonial resistance, mediated through the lens of gender. In so doing, they invite an inclusive view of Asia itself, that brings together highly-specialized research and experiences with a sense of Asia and diaspora transcending postcolonial nation-states and Cold War regional divides.

CJA is the first—and thus far, the only—undergraduate publication at Columbia to focus on Asia and the Asian diaspora. Certainly, we have come a long way since last summer, when the two of us first imagined a journal that would center Asian histories and narratives, urgently needed on a campus such as ours where these narratives are too frequently sidelined in favor of a limited canon and an exclusive view of history. We did not, however, want this journal to become a silo: a means of marginalizing Asia and separating it from ‘the West,’ which remained at the center while Asia was relegated to the periphery. Instead, what we have sought to foster here is an inclusive space, one that is defined not by absence—by the lack of Asian narratives in Western academic and artistic circles—but by the integral role they have played in broader global and transnational contexts, of decolonization, of globalization, of immigration and migration, among other important themes that are addressed by our authors.

This issue reflects the combined efforts of an inspiring team of undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and Columbia community members whom Suan and I are honored to have worked alongside. We would firstly like to thank our Managing Editor, Jacqueline Yu, and our Director of Peer Review, Karuna Vikram, both of whom have been with us and have believed in this journal since we were a six-person team last fall. They have been tremendous, and this issue would not have been possible without them. We are also so grateful for our amazing editorial board of Columbia and Barnard undergraduates, including our articles editors, creative editors, production editors, and outreach team; and to our graduate peer reviewers from Columbia

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University, Harvard University, Yale University, New York University, and other peer institutions, who put in such hard work this past semester to provide edits on all notes and articles.

Finally, we would like to give a very special thank you to Michelle Wilson, our Digital Publishing Librarian who led our partnership with Columbia Libraries, and to the members of our faculty advisory board, whose scholarship, insights, and support were truly invaluable to us—Professors Manan Ahmed, Isabel Alonso, Neferti X.M. Tadiar, Manijeh Moradian, Jungwon Kim, and Timsal Masud.

We sincerely hope that you enjoy reading this inaugural issue of CJA, and are excited for what the future holds in store for our journal's growing community.

**Mrinalini Sisodia Wadhwa CC'24 & Suan Lee CC'24**

Co-Founders and Editors-in-Chief, *Columbia Journal of Asia*