

Deadline for manuscript proposal

15 December 2019

Deadline for final manuscript

01 March 2020

International
Quarterly for



**Asian
Studies**

Call for Papers

“Governing (In)Securities. Politics and Securitization in Asian Context”

Guest Editor: Werner Distler, University of Marburg

Recently, pragmatic approaches to securitization integrating the focus of speech acts with practices of security (Balzacq / Guzzini 2015) have presented innovative studies with a focus on security as a “key mode of governing” (Bonacker 2019). Here, security speech acts and security practices are strategic moves and actions in an ongoing political process (Stritzel / Chang 2015, Van der Borgh / Savenije 2015). Constructing other groups or communities, ideas, or behavior of actors as threatening for a referent object (for example stability, peace, the state, or the society) is not only a call for extraordinary security measures in the “traditional” sense of the Copenhagen School (Buzan / Wæver / De Wilde 1998). Instead, such securitizing moves are part of a broader political strategy, in which political actors defend government actions, claim legitimacy and authority in a political struggle – or position themselves as alternative authorities, even counter or resist previous securitizations. So-called de-securitizing moves can fulfill the similar strategic goals. With such a perspective, the political process of governing is non-linear, creative, and always relational. Statehood itself, the monopoly of violence, or the nation are not set and given, but instead defined by spatial scales, emerging and disappearing agency and permanent (re)negotiations and (re)constructions.

In the line with the widening of Critical Security Studies beyond the OECD-world (Kapur / Mabon 2018), recent studies also focus on the role of securitization in political conflicts in Asia. They analyze the securitization of China by India and Japan (Chand / Garcia 2017, Schulze 2016), the South China Sea dispute (Zhang / Bateman 2017), the regional Mekong crisis of 2010 (Biba 2016), the securitization of youth in Timor-Leste (Distler 2019), or new perspectives on regional security in South Asia (Barthwal-Datta / Basu 2017). IQAS – the International Quarterly for Asian Studies broadened the debate with a highly innovative Special Issue in 2018, focusing on everyday security practices, social processes of security, and the voices of the marginalized. The upcoming Special Issue picks up the debate and consequently carries the frameworks of Critical Security Studies further in the realm of political and governing processes. While the observation that “everybody thus ‘does’ security in his or her everyday life” (Von Boemcken 2018: 10) is true, the analysis of rule and decision-making will benefit greatly by critical, non-essentialist, and non-rationalist studies.

The aim is to gain new comparative understandings of security as the driving forces of politics and of attempts to govern by and through the construction of (in)security in Asian cases. The Special Issue embraces pragmatic and methodologically innovative studies, which overcome the divide of speech or practice of securitization. The articles shall focus on the following dimensions:

- 1) How and why do political actors, respectively ruling authorities, in Asian states frame social groups, communities, neighboring states, or behavior of citizens as a threat – on a communal, national, or international level? Which policies and practices do they implement to institutionalize and routinize these threat constructions? How do securitizing and de-securitizing moves interrelate?
- 2) What is the role of public audiences in the process of such (de)securitizations? In how far can political actors refer to and embrace established threat constructions? How is the politics of security defined and shaped by entangled stratifications of race, class, and gender?
- 3) How and why do opposition actors, civil society, or individuals react, resist and/or counter such securitizing moves and practices? Do they use a different language (grammar of security) or political action to distinct themselves from governing actors?
- 4) What are the boundaries and limitations of securitization frameworks in the Asian context? How can new studies help to inform the conceptual debate on securitization?

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Prospective contributors to the Special Issue are invited to send a short 300-500-word proposal to Werner Distler at:

werner.distler@uni-marburg.de by **15 December 2019**

The proposal should detail the empirical focus and main research questions addressed. Selected contributors will be invited to submit their full article for peer review by **01 March 2020** with a prospective publication in IQAS in fall 2020.