

## **Preface**

### **In Commemoration of Our Dear Colleague and Friend**

### **Steen Fryba Christensen**

On April 9, 2018, Steen Fryba Christensen, our closest and dearest colleague and friend, suddenly left us forever. His departure is a great loss to me, our research group, our department, and Aalborg University. In particular, it is a great loss to Brazilian studies in Denmark, an area to which Steen had made significant contributions.

Steen Fryba Christensen was Associate Professor at the Research Centre on Development and International Relations (DIR), Department of Culture and Global Studies, Aalborg University, Denmark. His teaching and research interests and areas included development studies, foreign policy studies, international relations, international political economy, emerging powers, Latin American studies, and the world order. His main research focus was on Brazilian and Latin American engagement in global political economy, China-Latin America relations, and analyses of the changing global order. He acted as advisor to the Danish Foreign Ministry and received a grant from the Danish Agency for Science, Technology, and Innovation for research collaboration between Brazilian and Danish scholars. This same Agency invited him to participate in research network activities in São Paulo. He had been very active in the Danish media, giving expert commentary on Brazilian and other Latin American issues.

This special issue is thematically about China-Brazil relations. Although Steen was not directly involved in this issue (he was involved in the previous special issue on China-Latin American Relations in 2016), in recent years he had been working extensively on China-Latin America relations in general, and China-Brazil relations in particular. I wanted to find a way to honour Steen as Editor in Chief. Therefore, I decided to add a preface to this Special Issue of the JCIR to express both my sorrow for Steen's passing away, and my sincere thanks for his partnership, cooperation, loyalty, support, and love for me and other DIR members over the past two decades we had been working together.

Steen was such a good and invaluable partner, and together we had accomplished a lot. During my Professorship inaugural reception on April 5, 2018, Steen made a very sweet speech – a gift I will treasure – in which he presented a chronological evolution of our personal and professional relationships, including some funny stories about our international conference trips. I still have difficulty in believing the fact that Steen has left us forever, and that I have lost my closest colleague and dearest friend.

Steen was a senior and important member of the DIR research group. DIR colleagues will miss him and love him always. As the saying goes, death leaves a heartache no one can heal, while love leaves a memory no one can steal.

The memory of Steen will always be in the hearts and minds of all his DIR colleagues.

This special issue on China-Brazil relations is dedicated to Steen's memory. May his spirit remain with us and encourage us to continue our work and lives.

Li Xing, on behalf of the DIR group.