Southeast Asia is a region in rapid economic, social, political and cultural transition. In this region, diverse forms of community-level cooperation over land and natural resources such as fisheries and forests can be easily seen. They appear to be common practices among local communities. As such, they have moved beyond the dichotomy of state-led development versus liberalized market economy: ordinary people should be central actors when it comes to decision-making on matters that affect their lives.

At the state level, Southeast Asian governments, with a deepening commitment to regional collaboration, have been attempting to cooperate with one another through the 2015 ASEAN Economic Community’s blueprint, which involves issues of regional economic integration, shared skilled labor resources, comprehensive regional security, shared norms and values on the protection and promotion of human rights, good governance and environment sustainability. At the same time, civil society in the region has often challenged or engaged with the ASEAN governments, pushing for stronger regional norms, such as on political and civil rights and addressing the social and environmental costs of economic growth.

In this volume of *Journal of Social Sciences*, scholars and practitioners who are interested in and concerned about the commons in ASEAN and beyond share their insights and experiences. Each article offers innovative and transformative perspectives on development, international relations and human rights. As a whole, these nine articles provide greater focus on local, national and regional issues that will help enlarge our understanding of ASEAN and beyond, promote deeper public participation in decision-making, strengthen political accountability and ensure social and environmental justice. Thematically, they can be divided into articles that deal with political, economic, social and environmental issues.

Beginning with the political theme is *Associate Professor Sida Sornsri’s* book review of Amitav Acharya’s *The Making of Southeast Asia* in which she critically examines the concepts of regionalism and regional identity as well as the international politics of Southeast Asia and its efforts to create a common identity. Comparison between European Union and ASEAN regionalism is also broached in this review essay.

Second in this theme is “*Revisiting democratization in Myanmar and Indonesia from a comparative perspective*” by *Nguyen Thi Anh Thu*. This article assesses the transition from authoritarian rule to democracy in the region by using Myanmar and Indonesia as case studies. It provides a comparative and historical study of the dynamism of democratization in contemporary Southeast Asia, which further enriches our knowledge of authoritarian regimes in Southeast Asia.
The third and fourth articles deal with energy security in the economic sphere. Yeji Yoo’s “Renewable energy development and environmental justice in Thailand: A case of biomass power plant in Roi-Et” assesses the policies and practices of renewable energy development and biomass power projects in Northeast Thailand from the perspective of environmental justice. In comparison, Thita Orn-in’s “The emergence of Public-Private-Social Partnership (PPSP) in Very Small Power Producer (VSPP) industry: A case study of Mae Jo Micro-Hydro Power project: The implication for Environmental Governance” explores a micro-hydro power project and its implication for environmental governance at the community level. She examines the challenges caused by government policy that excludes local participation and civil society’s engagement with energy policy.

The fifth article tackles human-trafficking and migration. Fatimana Agustinanto’s “Social enterprise and promotion of safe migration among returned migrants: Case study of a credit union in Bone district of South Sulawesi province” analyzes the involvement of civil society groups in promoting safe migration and the role of a credit union in providing better economic security. This article proposes that four important factors, namely economic security, marital status, age and gender, deeply impact returned migrants’ decision on whether they will continue to migrate in the future or reintegrate back into their respective community.

The sixth article by Yee Kai Ling (Phoebe) is on social movements, civil society and the public sphere. It is entitled “Christian faith-based development: A case study of World Vision Foundation of Thailand in Karen hill tribe communities.” It examines faith-based development organizations, how their religious identity, values and beliefs impact development practice, and how transformational development’s concept influences development programs, organizational culture as well as social and cultural contexts.

The remaining three articles are related to education. In “Thailand’s move from a pity to a rights-based understanding of disability” Michelle Proyer observes the role disability plays in Thailand’s recent educational policy development. She looks at how it affects children in elementary school settings, conditions for legislation changes, general perception and social attitudes in relation to policy changes from a pity-based understanding to a rights-based approach in educational policy.

In ‘Transformative pedagogy: An evaluation of the use of the Learning to Live Together (LTLT) principles in higher secondary schools in Thailand” Maura Cusack evaluates the implementation of UNESCO’s concept of Learning to Live Together in the social studies classroom. She does this by examining the curriculum texts as well as the teacher’s style of pedagogy.

Lastly is Claudine Claridad Tanvir’s “Education for disaster risk reduction toward change: The case of the ‘Climate Change Academy’ in Albay province, Philippines.” She examines the contribution of the government-led education program on climate change adaptation and
disaster risk reduction and management training for community resilience building. Relying on a socio-ecological model of change and organizational behavior concepts, this article evaluates the factors that contribute to people’s behavioral changes. It also examines how the concept of Education for Disaster Risk Reduction (EDRR) was carried out, especially in relation to the process of building capacities and skills in reducing disaster risks in the community resilience building effort.

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