

## Editorial Foreword

IKAT is a journal cited for Southeast East Asian Studies, and it is also a journal that is based in one of the Southeast Asian countries, in the country of Indonesia. For a long time, we understand social formation and social changes from societies in Southeast Asia relying heavily on journals in the western world. For this reason, it was very welcoming to see that the Center for Southeast Asian Social Studies (CESASS) at the Universitas Gadjah Mada initiated an academic journal, taking efforts to contribute the knowledge production of social sciences in Indonesia and beyond. This year the IKAT already celebrated its second birthday.

I am currently a visiting scholar staying at CESASS of Universitas Gadjah Mada. During my research stay at CESASS I was impressed that all the staff here engaged extensively in exchange programs between students and scholars. They offer summer language and cultural programs for students from Thailand. Besides, they also host master and PhD candidates from Italy and Austria and other parts of Indonesia. Moreover, this center continues having guests and scholars coming for discussions of cooperation and/or exchanging ideas from all over the world such as professors from Leiden University in the Netherlands or from nearby institutes in the campus. Most exciting, at the center every one or two weeks, they host guests for a discussion forum on current emerging issues in social sciences. From those activities, we see that the journal IKAT is edited and embedded in an academically rich environment.

This volume includes six papers. The first paper was by Neak Vibol focusing on the relation between the United States and Cambodia. It examines the political constellation and its changes between the two states during the Cold War. The author pointed out that Cambodia, though as a small country in the region of Southeast Asia, was able to develop an important relationship with the US, which was a superpower in the 1950s, mainly because of its specific geographic location. However, the containment of the expansion of communism from the US during the Cold War and the strong desire of Cambodia to survive as a nation brought the two nations from allies to enemies. The second paper by Ram Hlei Thang draws attention to the relationships between secularism and religious nationalism by taking

Myanmar as an example. The author shows Myanmar has had religious tensions and ethnic conflicts because the clash of religious nationalism. Thang pointed out that the adaptation of principles of secularism might be the very root which led to the ethnic conflicts between the Buddhist majority and the Christian minority in Myanmar.

The third paper by Ferth Vandenstein Lusung Manaysay deals with the issue of the Rohingya refugee crisis in Myanmar through Erik Thurman comics. Being widespread read, the series of political comics by Erik Thurman has represented some of the most pertinent political and security discourses surrounding the issue of the Rohingya refugee crisis. The fourth paper by Nyoman Wijaya deals with one of the forgotten episodes in the 1965 tragedy in Indonesia. He discussed the case of the first Bali governor Anak Agung Bagus Sutedja who disappeared in 1965 and believed to have a connection with the Soeharto regime. The author shows that the process of systematic forgetting on the individual memory of Sutedja was strongly connected to the official narratives of the New Order on the 1965 tragedy.

The fifth paper by Abdur Rozaki et al. deals with the growth of the Muslim middle class in Southeast Asia. These authors compare the rise of the Muslim middle class in three major cities of the Southeast Asian nations of Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. The authors found that while electoral democracy and regional autonomy policies in the post New Order era turned Indonesia to be a big Muslim market and brought huge opportunities for their individuals, the rise of the Muslim middle class in Malaysia was mainly driven by the state, particularly by ethnicity-based policies, intellectual mobility and the global market. Regarding the case of Thailand, while Muslims in Nakhon Si Thammarat province benefitted from government's soft power provided with wider access to education, banking, employment and other economic opportunities, Muslims in the southern part of Thailand were being put under harsh military control provided with limited economic resources. The authors showed that the Muslim middle-class growth trajectories, although with different patterns were strongly shaped by the state. The final paper of this volume by Justisio Adiprasatio and Annisa Winda Larasati deals with the modern transformation of social roles in Indonesia through the representation of two favorite television advertisements. The ideology of "State Ibuism" has been long rooted in

the Indonesian society for decades and make the female role to take responsibility in the most domestic spheres. However, those kinds of divisions of labor in families are changing. Through the analysis of two Kecap advertisement the authors showed how the gender dichotomy is challenged and the renegotiation of domestic work is possible. All these six papers above help a deeper understanding about the past and present of Southeast Asian countries and therefore contribute to construct a common understanding for a better future of the Southeast Asian societies.

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