

FOREWORD

We are honored and grateful to present to you this special issue. The three papers were originally keynote speeches given at the 14th International Conference on Thai Studies (ICTS14), which was held online from Kyoto University on April 29–May 1, 2022. ICTS is held every three years, alternating between conferences in Thailand and in other countries. So far, the latter has been mainly in English speaking countries such as the US, England, and Australia. It was a great opportunity to hold it in Japan this time, and we were looking forward to meeting scholars coming from Thailand and from different parts of the world. Unfortunately, due to COVID19, we delayed the schedule once, and then finally had to hold it online. Even so, there were 381 participants from 20 countries who joined us in the three-day conference.

We would like to thank the Japanese Society for Thai Studies for co-sponsoring the conference, and also Kyoto University and the Kajima Foundation for generously supporting the conference and the post-conference editing process. The Conference theme was “Thailand at a Global Turning Point.” Indeed, globally shared issues such as global warming and environmental degradation, soaring prices and growing disparities, unstable or failing democracies, transnational migration, and plural coexistence, these were some of the topics discussed during the sessions as they are poignant in Thailand too. We are truly grateful to the three distinguished scholars, Professor Suehiro Akira, Professor Saichol Sattayanurak, and Professor Kasian Tejapira for inspiring us with their respective speeches at the conference. Each gave a concerned interpretation of the current economic and socio-political condition in Thailand, from the perspective of an economist, historian, and political philosopher, respectively. Furthermore, they provided us with the manuscripts to be printed in this special edition of the journal *Southeast Asian Studies*.

We apologize for the delay in making this publication available, and are glad to be able to present this just as Thailand is entering a new era in its political leadership. Finally, we are grateful to the editorial staff for pulling through with this extra work.

Hayami Yoko, ICTS14 Conference Secretariat
Nathan Badenoch, *SEAS* Editor-in-chief