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AJSS editorial: 50 years of Asian social science

With volume 50, the *Asian Journal of Social Science* (AJSS) enters its fiftieth year of publication. AJSS, formerly the *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science* (SEAJSS), was launched in 1973 as an amalgamation of the *Southeast Asian Journal of Sociology* and the *Southeast Asian Journal of Economic Development and Social Change*.¹ Between 1968–1971, the Sociology Society and Department of Sociology at the University of Singapore published four single-issue volumes of the *Southeast Asian Journal of Sociology*.² The first three volumes were edited by Mohamed Ariff (Vol 1, 1968), Choo Thim Heng (Vol 2, 1969), and Bernard Kong (Vol 3, 1970) respectively, while the fourth volume (Vol 4, 1971) featured four editors: Geoffrey Benjamin, Chong Li Choy, Fock Siew Tong, and Joseph B. Tamney. Articles in the first two volumes of the journal were mainly from University of Singapore contributors, while those in the second two volumes were more broadly international. The *Southeast Asian Journal of Economic Development and Social Change* was published by the University Education Press of Singapore. Its editors included Peter S.J. Chen, Tham Seong Chee, Riaz Hassan, and Cheng Siok Hwa. While the former journal is available in the National University of Singapore (NUS) Central Library, the library does not have any record of the latter journal.

The *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science* began publication in 1973 with two issues per year. The first volume was co-edited by Hans-Dieter Evers and Peter S.J. Chen (see Table 1). Chen subsequently took over as the sole editor of the journal through 1991. From 1992, the editorship of the journal was taken up by Chua Beng Huat (1992–1995) and Chan Kwok Bun (1993–2000). While it was consistently based in the NUS Department of Sociology, over this period from 1973 to 2000, the journal had five different Singapore-based publishers, including a period from 1981–1984, when it was a joint publication between the NUS Department of Sociology and the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS). In 2001, the journal was renamed the *Asian Journal of Social Science* and the NUS Department of Sociology entered into a publication agreement with Brill, based in the Netherlands. Beginning last year in 2021, the journal has begun publishing with Elsevier (Table 2).

The contents of SEAJSS and AJSS has tracked trends and concerns of social science in Singapore, Southeast Asia, and Asia over half a century. Since its inception, the journal has published a diverse range of

scholarship spanning sociology and anthropology – the core disciplines of both the NUS Department of Sociology and the journal. But it has also hosted contributions from social sciences more broadly, to include economics, political science, geography, communications studies, and other disciplines. An evolution of key themes can be seen in the journal over the five decades of its publication.

In the 1970s, especially early on, articles in the journal were heavily weighted toward concerns of developing societies – development economics, development communications, demographics (including issues of marriage, fertility, and family in changing societies), the role of political elites, and rapid urbanization. Analysis of ethnicity, particularly with respect to the role of different ethnic groups within the economies of plural societies such as Singapore and Malaysia featured prominently in the issues of the journal during its first decade.

Beginning in 1982, while the journal continued to publish a wide range of articles, it began to regularly feature special issues, devoted to selective topics (Table 3). From 1982 to 2000, one and sometimes both issues each year were special issues or had a special focus. As the journal moved into the 1980s, analysis of ethnicity became more prominently featured. While the roles of different ethnic groups in economic terms continued to receive attention, articles in the journal moved into more conceptual analysis of ethnicity and the relationship between ethnicity and development (of which a newsletter on “Ethnicity and Development” featured in the journal over several years).

During the 1980s, conceptual issues of ideology, religion, and language and language policy also developed in the journal’s contents. Socioeconomic issues of class and ethnicity, poverty, and income inequality built upon in the earlier tradition of “development economics.” There was a conceptual and analytical shift regarding socioeconomic issues in the mid- to late-1980s toward concerns about and analysis of foreign investment, transnational capitalism, and industrialization that carried over into the early 1990s. The 1980s also saw publication of further analysis of society and politics, particularly regarding bureaucratization and about refugees and forced migration, specifically the fate of refugees from Cambodia and Vietnam in the 1970s and 1980s.

In the 1990s, the scope of the journal widened further. Topics of socioeconomic concern related to occupational structures, migration, and ethnicity continued to feature prominently. In the 1970s and 1980s, analysis of gender had focused on women’s role in developing societies and industrialization. In the 1990s, there was a broadening analysis of gender, including a special issue dedicated to the biographies of women across several Southeast Asian societies. In addition to the special issue on biographies of women, others included regional development, cultural studies, social constructions of death, cartoons in Southeast Asia,

¹ According to the editors’ acknowledgements in SEAJSS Vol. 1, No. 1.

² The University of Singapore merged with Nanyang University in 1980 to form the National University of Singapore; in this editorial the NUS Department of Sociology refers to the department established in 1965 at the University of Singapore. The department is currently in discussions to be renamed as the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Throughout its existence, the department has housed both disciplines.

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Table 1
SEAJSS and AJSS, Editors and co-editors.

Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science (1973–2000)	Asian Journal of Social Science (2001–2021)
Hans-Dieter Evers (1973)	Chan Kwok Bun (2001–2005)
Peter S.J. Chen (1973 to 1991)	Syed Farid Alatas (2001–2010)
Chau Beng Huat (1992–1995)	Vineeta Sinha, Deputy Editor (2001–2010)
Chan Kwok Bun (1993–2000)	Vineeta Sinha (2010–2015)
	Daniel Goh (2011–2013)
	Joonmo Son (2015–present)
	Eric C. Thompson (2016–present)

Table 2
Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science and Asian Journal of Social Science, publishers.

Years	Publisher
1973–1976	University Education Press, Singapore
1977–1981	Chopman Publishers, Singapore
1981–1984	Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS) ^a
1984–1987	Singapore University Press
1988–1992	Chopman Publishers, Singapore
1993–2000	Times Academic Press
2000–2020	Brill ^b
2021–present	Elsevier

^a 1981 (Vol.9 No.1–2) has both ISEAS and Chopman imprint; from 1982, Chopman is no longer printed in the issues. In NUS Library copies of the journal, there are stickers for “Chopman Publishers” inserted in volumes from 1982 (Vol.10 No.1) to 1983 (Vol.1 No.1) but not from 1983 (Vol.1, No.2) onward. From 1988 to 1992, Chopman became the main publisher again.

^b The Brill imprint first appears in 2000 (Vol.28 No.1) along with Times Academic Press and exclusively from 2001.

science technology and society, reconceptualizing Southeast Asia, aging, and alternative discourses in the social sciences.

From its inception, SEAJSS included contributions from NUS faculty within and beyond the Department of Sociology while also featuring the work of international scholars (Table 4).³ In other words, it was never solely nor even primarily an outlet for the work of scholars from NUS alone. A further internationalization of the journal’s scholarship is seen in the period from 2001 when it was rebranded as the *Asian Journal of Social Science*. From 2001 to 2010, among 278 articles published, 34 (or 12.2%) were authored by scholars based at NUS. From 2011 to 2020, among 252 articles, 16 authors (6.3%) were from NUS. In both cases, about half of these authors were based in the Department of Sociology and the others from elsewhere in the university. As the SEAJSS from 1973 to 2000, nearly a quarter of articles were authored by NUS scholars (23.1%), again with about half of these from the Department of Sociology and half from other departments or units within the university. Similarly, the editors and organizers of special issues and special focus sections of the journal shifted toward more international representation. From 1982 to 2000, over half of these sections and issues were organized by NUS scholars (almost all from the NUS Department of Sociology). From 2001 to 2010, the ratio was just over one-third and from 2011 to 2021 only one-fifth.

Throughout its publication history, the journal has welcomed contributions by scholars based in and beyond Asia, with the quality and importance of the scholarship always being our guiding princi-

³ In the following discussion, we can report on the institutional affiliation rather than nationality or place of birth of authors. Only the former can be determined with any confidence based on available information. To simplify data collection, discussion of authors and special issue editors refers to the first author or first editor in the case of co-authored or co-edited work.

ple. The journal has always been concerned to maintain a high level of inputs from Asian and Asia-based scholars. During the preceding five decades, just over half (51%) of our authors have been based in Asia (Table 4). By comparison, in leading American-based sociology journals from 2001 to 2010, 85% of authors were based in the United States and less than 3% from Asia. For American-based anthropology journals of the same period, 76% of authors were from the United States and 3.2% from Asia. In both cases, the largest number of Asian contributions were from Israel. For Asian countries other than Israel, the contributions were less than 2% in sociology and less than 1.5% in anthropology. Hong Kong (5), China (4), and Singapore (3) combined for slightly less than one percent (0.84%) of contributions to the sociology journals. India (5), Thailand (3), Taiwan (3), and Japan (2) combined for 1.4% of the contribution to the anthropology journals.⁴

The rebranding of the journal from *Southeast Asian* to *Asian Journal of Social Science* was in part an intentional broadening of the scope of the journal. The exact parameters of the journal’s scope were always subject to some flexibility. The purpose of the journal has always been to feature social science research relevant to Asia. Leading journals named *American Anthropologist* or *British Journal of Sociology* are conceived as being global in scope. The names indicate where they are based and published rather than the limits of their research sites and relevance, though they tend to exhibit parochial biases. Through its first three decades as the *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science* the journal featured research based on research in East as well as Southeast Asia and occasionally beyond (see Tables 5 & 6).

At its inception, the material published in the journal was particularly weighted toward research conducted in Malaysia and Singapore. Over the 1980s and 1990s, the research featured in the journal became more broadly Southeast Asian in scope, particularly regarding research conducted in Indonesia and Thailand. Since the renaming of the journal, research based in South Asia and the Middle East has appeared more regularly in the journal. And in the past ten years, articles based on research in East Asia have become more frequent (Table 7). Southeast Asia based research has remained prominent in the journal but is not so heavily weighted toward Malaysia and Singapore based research as it was in the past (see Tables 5 & 6).

Along with the change of name, the *Asian Journal of Social Science* expanded from two issues per year to three per year in the early 2000s and 6/year by mid-decade. In the 1970s through 1990s, the journal published about 120 articles per decade. In the 2000s and 2010s, AJSS published 278 articles and 252 articles respectively. The increased quantity of articles was also reflected in the increasing diversity of research topics. Under the editorship of Syed Farid Alatas (ed. 2001–2010), particular attention was paid to alternative discourses in the social sciences, with a large number of contributions that were more conceptual and theoretical in nature (reflected in the “not applicable” category of research sites in Table 6). These included critiques

⁴ These figures are from an analysis of *American Journal of Sociology*, *American Sociological Review*, *Social Forces*, and *Theory and Society* for sociology and *American Anthropologist*, *American Ethnologist*, *Cultural Anthropology*, and *Current Anthropology* for anthropology.

Table 3
SEAJSS and AJSS Special issues, focus and sections, 1973–2021.

Year	Vol.	Title	Type ^a	Editor	Country	Institution
1976	4(2)	Communication and Social Development in Asia	Issue	P.R.R. Sinha	Singapore	Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre
1982	10(1)	Ethnicity in Southeast Asia	Issue	Victor T. King	United Kingdom	University of Hull
1983	11(2)	Ideology in Southeast Asia	Issue	Chua Beng Huat	Canada	Trent University
1984	12(1)	Religion and Modernization	Issue	John Clammer	Singapore	National University of Singapore
1985	13(1)	Sociolinguistics in Southeast Asia	Issue	Eddie C.Y. Kuo	Singapore	National University of Singapore
1986	14(1)	Wealth and Poverty in Contemporary Southeast Asia	Issue	W.D. Wilder	United Kingdom	University of Durham
1987	15(1)	Social and Political Change in Contemporary Indonesia	Issue	Riaz Hassan	Singapore	National University of Singapore
1987	15(2)	The Public Bureaucracy and Policy Implementation in Asia	Issue	Jon S.T. Quah	Singapore	National University of Singapore
1988	16(2)	On Singapore and Minority Cultures in Asia	National Policy and Minority Cultures in Asia	David Y.H. Wu	United States	East-West Center
1989	17(2)	Work in Asia	Issue	Hing Ai Yun	Singapore	National University of Singapore
1990	18(1)	Indochinese Refugees 15 Years Later	Issue	Chan Kwok Bun	Singapore	National University of Singapore
1991	19(1-2)	Regional Development in Asia	Issue	Won Bae Kim	United States	East-West Center
1992	20(1)	On Singapore Historiography (Special Section)	Section	Not Applicable	N/A	N/A
1993	21(2)	Social Constructions of Death in Southeast Asia	Issue	Tong Chee	Singapore	National University of Singapore
1994	22(1-2)	Cultural Studies in the Asia Pacific	Issue	Kiong		
1994	22(1-2)	Cultural Studies in the Asia Pacific	Issue	David Birch	Australia	Central Queensland University
1995	23(1)	The Ethnic Chinese of Thailand	Issue	Chan Kwok Bun	Singapore	National University of Singapore
1996	24(1)	Strategies for Survival: Lives of Southeast Asian Women	Issue	Judith Nagata	Canada	York University
1997	25(1)	Cartooning and Comic Art in Southeast Asia	Issue	John A. Lent	United States	Temple University
1997	25(2)	Transformations of Ethnic Identity in Malaysia and Singapore	Issue	Lian Kwen Fee	Singapore	National University of Singapore
1998	26(1)	Science, Technology and Society in the Asia-Pacific Region	Focus	Zaheer Baber	Singapore	National University of Singapore
1999	27(1)	Reconceptualizing Southeast Asia	Focus	Amitav Acharya	Canada	York University
1999	27(2)	The Social and Economic Consequences of Ageing in Asia	Issue	Angelique Chan	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2000	28(1)	Alternative Discourses in the Social Sciences in Asia	Focus	Syed Farid	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2000	28(2)	A Changing Indonesia	Focus	Alatas		
2000	28(2)	A Changing Indonesia	Focus	Maribeth Erb	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2001	29(1)	Politics and Environment	Focus	Habibul Haque	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2001	29(2)	Orientalism, Literature and Identity	Focus	Khondker		
2001	29(2)	Orientalism, Literature and Identity	Focus	John	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2001	29(3)	Contestations of Memory in Southeast Asia	Focus	Whalen-Bridge		
2001	29(3)	Contestations of Memory in Southeast Asia	Focus	Roxana	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2002	30(1)	Southeast Asian Urban Futures	Focus	Waterson		
2002	30(1)	Southeast Asian Urban Futures	Focus	K.C. Ho	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2002	30(2)	The Internet and Social Change in Asia and Beyond	Focus	Zaheer Baber	Canada	University of Saskatchewan
2002	30(3)	Research on Southeast Asia in Nordic Countries	Focus	Eldar Bråten	Norway	University of Bergen
2003	31(1)	Travel and Text	Focus	Srilata Ravi	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2003	31(2)	Asian Development and Welfare Crisis	Focus	Yasser Mattar	Australia	Australian National University
2004	32(2)	Religion and the Local-Global Matrix	Focus	Joseph	Canada	Mount Saint Vincent University
2004	32(3)	Arab Communities and Networks in South and Southeast Asia	Focus	Tharamangalam		
2004	32(3)	Arab Communities and Networks in South and Southeast Asia	Focus	Omar Farouk	Japan	Hiroshima City University
2005	33(1)	The Modern Prince and the Modern Sage: Transforming Power and Freedom	Focus	Bajudin		
2005	33(1)	The Modern Prince and the Modern Sage: Transforming Power and Freedom	Focus	Ananta Kumar	India	Madras Institute of Development Studies
2005	33(3)	Islam between Holism and Secularism	Focus	Giri		
2005	33(3)	Islam between Holism and Secularism	Focus	Georg Stauth	Germany	Bielefeld University
2006	34(1)	The Modern Prince and the Modern Sage (II): Power, Resistance and Non-Violence	Focus	Ananta Kumar	India	Madras Institute of Development Studies
2006	34(2)	Transnational Religions: Intersections of 'Local' and 'Global'	Focus	Giri		
2006	34(2)	Transnational Religions: Intersections of 'Local' and 'Global'	Focus	Vineeta Sinha	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2006	34(3)	Violence in Southeast Asia	Focus	Hélène Bouvier	France	Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique
2007	35(1)	Islamic-Euroasian Paradoxes	Focus			
2007	35(1)	Islamic-Euroasian Paradoxes	Focus	Ataullah Bogdan	Malaysia	International Islamic University Malaysia
2007	35(4-5)	Arabs in Asia	Focus	Kopanski		
2007	35(4-5)	Arabs in Asia	Focus	Frode F. Jacobsen	Norway	University of Bergen
2008	36(1)	State, Culture and the Economy	Focus	Jennifer Jarman	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2008	36(2)	Transnationalizing Southeast Asia	Focus	Hing Ai Yun	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2008	36(3-4)	Ibn Khaldun	Focus	Recep Sentürk	Turkey	Faith University
2009	37(1)	Religious Syncretism and Everyday Religiosity in Asia	Focus	Daniel P.S. Goh	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2009	37(2)	Media, Religion and Society	Focus	Hamid	Iran	University of Tehran
2009	37(3)	Beyond Sociology	Focus	Abdollahyan		
2009	37(3)	Beyond Sociology	Focus	Ananta Kumar	India	Madras Institute of Development Studies
2009	37(5)	Themes in Social Development	Focus	Giri		
2009	37(5)	Themes in Social Development	Focus	Hing Ai Yun	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2009	37(6)	Revitalization of Tradition and New Forms of Religiosity: Perspectives from Southeast Asia	Focus	Alexander	Germany	Max-Planck Institute
2009	37(6)	Revitalization of Tradition and New Forms of Religiosity: Perspectives from Southeast Asia	Focus	Horstmann		
2010	38(2)	Localities of Value: Ambiguous Access to Land and Water in Southeast Asia	Focus	Laurens Bakker	Netherlands	Radboud University Nijmegen
2010	38(3)	Suicide Terrorism	Focus			
2010	38(3)	Suicide Terrorism	Focus	Riaz Hassan	Australia	Flinders University
2010	38(4)	An Agenda for Nursi Studies: Towards the Construction of a Social Theology	Focus	Syed Farid	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2010	38(4)	An Agenda for Nursi Studies: Towards the Construction of a Social Theology	Focus	Alatas		
2010	38(5)	East-West Counterpoints: Orientalism and its Inversion	Focus	Michael Hill	New Zealand	Victoria University of Wellington
2010	38(6)	Bonded Labor in Southeast Asia	Focus	Annuska Derks	Switzerland	Bern University
2011	39(1)	Social Stratification Studies in East Asia	Focus	Koichi Hasegawa	Japan	Tohoku University

(continued on next page)

Table 3 (continued)

Year	Vol.	Title	Type ^a	Editor	Country	Institution
2011	39(2)	Eastern Indonesia under Reform: The Global, the National and the Local	Focus	Birgit Bräuchler	Germany	Goethe University Frankfurt
2011	39(4)	Post Disaster Societies	Focus	Caroline Brassard	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2011	39(6)	Divorce in Asia	Focus	Premchand Dommaraju	Singapore	Nanyang Technological University
2012	40(1)	Trade and Finance in the Malay World: Indigenous Histories Revisited	Focus	Arndt Graf	Germany	University of Frankfurt
2012	40(4)	Migrant Workers between States: In Search of Exit and Integration Strategies in South East Asia	Focus	Susan Kneebone	Australia	Monash University
2013	41(3-4)	Thinking about China and the WTO 10 Years after Accession: Rationalist Approaches	Focus	Jean-Marc F. Blanchard	China	Shanghai Jiaotong University
2013	41(5)	Rethinking Asian Media and Film	Focus	Mark Hobart	United Kingdom	University of London
2014	42(1-2)	In/Security Issues in Southeast Asia	Focus	Anne Raffin	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2014	42(5)	Muslim Religious Authority in Asia	Focus	R. Michael Feener	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2015	43(1-2)	Inter-Asian (Post) Neoliberalism? Adoption, Disjuncture, and Transgression	Focus	Emel Akçali	Hungary	Central European University
2015	43(4)	Religious Philanthropy in Asia	Focus	Khun Eng Kuah-Pearce	Malaysia	Monash University
2015	43(5)	Digital Methods in Asian Studies	Focus	Gerry van Klinken	Netherlands	KITLV
2015	43(6)	Disasters, Vulnerability and Local Governance in Southeast Asia	Focus	Ole Bruun	Denmark	Roskilde University
2016	44(3)	Becoming an Adult in East Asia: Multidisciplinary and Comparative Approaches	Focus	Hyunjoon Park	United States	University of Pennsylvania
2016	44(6)	Reframing Modern and Contemporary Southeast Asia: Transnational Connections, Comparisons and Mobilities	Focus	Loh Kah Seng	Singapore	Independent Scholar
2017	45(6)	Spaces of Violence in South Asian Democracies	Focus	Eva Gerharz	Germany	Ruhr University Bochum
2018	46(4-5)	Continuities and Ruptures in Global North Legal Pressures on Global South Societies	Focus	George Radics	Singapore	National University of Singapore
2019	47(3)	Islam and the Prospects of Pluralism in Indonesia	Focus	Martin Ramstedt	Germany	Max Plank Institute
2021	49(4)	Cultural and Socioeconomic Flows in the Era of Belt and Road Initiatives	Issue	Khun Eng Kuah	China	Jinan University-Guangzhou

^a For Special Issues (20), the entire issue is devoted to the topic. For Special Focus (54), the majority of the issue is devoted to the topic. For Special Section (1), several articles are devoted to the topic.

Table 4
Institutional affiliation of first authors by region.

Region	1973–1980	Percent	1981–1990	Percent	1991–2000	Percent	2001–2010	Percent	2011–2020	Percent
Southeast Asia	44	0.54	58	0.47	56	0.41	68	0.25	52	0.21
East Asia	6	0.07	3	0.02	9	0.07	26	0.09	53	0.21
Middle East	1	0.01	0	0.00	1	0.01	19	0.07	5	0.02
South Asia	0	0.00	2	0.02	1	0.01	15	0.05	25	0.10
Americas	20	0.24	28	0.23	35	0.26	50	0.18	38	0.15
Europe	5	0.06	20	0.16	11	0.08	72	0.26	47	0.19
Australia/New Zealand	6	0.07	13	0.10	22	0.16	26	0.09	29	0.12
	82		124		135		276		249	

of Orientalism and the impact of colonialism on the social sciences along with extensive treatments of non-Western sociological traditions and thinkers such as Ibn Khaldun. Other articles examined the role of memory and social constructivism in society, history, and the social sciences.

This shift to conceptual, theoretical work did not mean that empirically grounded research was neglected in the journal. In the 2000s, many topics developed in the previous three decades continued to feature in *AJSS*, often reframed in contemporary terms. Socioeconomic issues were increasingly critiqued in terms of neoliberalism, capitalism, inequality, and labor relations. Other key, ongoing themes of articles in the journal included religion and modernity, politics, democratization, citizenship, gender and sexuality, and migration and diaspora. Critiques of media and society increasingly featured work on the impact of the internet and networked societies. Newer themes also included analysis of social capital and the social dimensions of environmentalism.

From 2010, Vineeta Sinha assumed editorship of the journal, having served as deputy editor over the previous decade. In 2011–2013, Daniel PS Goh served as co-editor of the journal. When Sinha became Head of

Department in 2015, editorship of the journal transitioned to Joonmo Son and Eric C. Thompson.⁵ During this period *AJSS* has seen further developments in its editorial policies and contents. The frequency of special issues and special focus sections organized by guest editors has gradually declined and more of the contents of the journal derives from open submissions and an anonymous peer-review system. These trends in the journal's review and publication processes have been supported by wider shifts in the landscape of Asian research universities and universities elsewhere increasingly demanding publication in high-impact journals from their scholars.

From 2010 and especially since 2015, the shift away from special focus sections toward open submission has produced an increasingly eclectic range of articles published by the journal. Trends in multi-sited ethnography and the availability and analysis of large data sets have yielded an increasing number of articles in the journal involving com-

⁵ In addition to research articles, *SEAJSS* and *AJSS* has featured a robust book review section. During most of the *AJSS* period, Anne Raffin has been the lead book review editor assisted by numerous NUS faculty from sociology and other departments.

Table 5
Articles by research site, 1973–1980, 1981–1990.

Research site (1973-1980)	Number	Percent	Research site (1981-1990)	Number	Percent
Malaysia	25	0.34	Malaysia	21	0.20
Singapore	22	0.30	Singapore	20	0.19
Not Applicable	11	NA	Not Applicable	19	NA
Thailand	8	0.11	Indonesia	18	0.17
Hong Kong	7	0.09	Thailand	15	0.15
China	4	0.05	Philippines	6	0.06
Multiple	3	0.04	Multiple	6	0.06
Philippines	2	0.03	China ^a	4	0.04
Indonesia	1	0.01	Hong Kong	3	0.03
Brunei	1	0.01	Japan	2	0.02
Papua New Guinea	1	0.01	Other Southeast Asia	4	0.04
	85		Other	2	0.02
Not including "NA"	74		South Asia	2	0.02
				122	
			Not including "NA"	103	

1981–1990: Other Southeast Asia (4) = Vietnam (2), Myanmar/Burma (1), Cambodia (1); Other (2) = Australia (1), Canada (1); South Asia (2) = Bangladesh (1), India (1)

NA = “Not Applicable”, generally conceptual, theoretical articles.

Multiple = Articles drawing on empirical data from two or more countries.

No. = Number of Articles; Per% = Percent of Articles, not including “NA” articles.

^a Figures for China include Taiwan (1)

Table 6
Articles by research site, 1991–2000, 2001–2010, 2011–2020.

Research site (1991-2000)	No.	Per%	Research site (2001-2010)	No.	Per%	Research site (2011-2020)	No.	Per%
Not Applicable	25	NA	Not Applicable	91	NA	Indonesia	46	0.19
Singapore	22	0.21	Indonesia	33	0.18	Multiple	33	0.14
Indonesia	18	0.17	Singapore	26	0.14	China ^a	27	0.11
Malaysia	15	0.14	Malaysia	23	0.12	Malaysia	25	0.10
Thailand	15	0.14	India	17	0.09	India	22	0.09
China	7	0.07	Philippines	11	0.06	South Korea	15	0.06
Multiple	5	0.05	Other	10	0.05	Japan	11	0.05
Philippines	4	0.04	Hong Kong	8	0.04	Philippines	11	0.05
Australia	3	0.03	Other Southeast Asia	8	0.04	Not Applicable	9	NA
Hong Kong	3	0.03	China ^a	7	0.04	Pakistan	8	0.03
Vietnam	3	0.03	Iran	7	0.04	Singapore	8	0.03
Brunei	2	0.02	Japan	7	0.04	Middle East	7	0.03
Cambodia	2	0.02	Other Middle East	7	0.04	Bangladesh	6	0.02
India	2	0.02	Other South Asia	7	0.04	Vietnam	6	0.02
Japan	2	0.02	Thailand	5	0.03	Other Southeast Asia	5	0.02
Taiwan	2	0.02	Multiple	4	0.02	Thailand	5	0.02
Myanmar (Burma)	1	0.01	Vietnam	4	0.02	Hong Kong	4	0.02
South Korea	1	0.01	South Korea	3	0.02	Other	4	0.02
Total	132		Total	278		Total	252	
Not incl. "NA"	107		Not incl. "NA"	187		Not incl. "NA"	243	

NA = “Not Applicable”, generally conceptual, theoretical articles.

Multiple = Articles drawing on empirical data from two or more countries.

No. = Number of Articles; Per% = Percent of Articles, not including “NA” articles.

2001–2010: Other (10) = United States (3), Australia (2), New Caledonia (1), Canada (1), France (1), Sweden (1), Tanzania (1); Other Southeast Asia (8) = Timor Leste (3), Cambodia (2), Myanmar (2), Lao PDR (1); Other Middle East (7) = Israel (2), Palestine (2), Turkey (2), Saudi Arabia (1); Other South Asia (7) = Bangladesh (4), Pakistan (2), Sri Lanka (1)

2011–2020: Middle East (7) = Iran (4), Turkey (3); Other Southeast Asia (5) = Cambodia (4), Myanmar (1); Other (4) = United States (2), Australia (1), Uzbekistan (1)

^a Figures for China include Taiwan (2, 5)

Table 7
Research sites, percentage^a of articles by region.

Region	1973-1980	1981-1990	1991-2000	2001-2010	2011-2020
Southeast Asia	79.7%	81.6%	76.6%	58.8%	43.6%
East Asia	14.9%	8.7%	14.0%	13.4%	23.5%
South Asia	0%	1.9%	1.9%	12.8%	14.8%
Middle East	0%	0%	0%	7.5%	2.9%
Other	1.4%	1.9%	2.8%	5.3%	1.6%
Multiple ^b	4.1%	5.8%	4.7%	2.1%	13.6%

^a Percentage based on all articles with relevant research sites.

^b Research conducted in two or more countries.

parative, multi-sited research spanning several countries. The themes of the past decade of articles in *AJSS* are also somewhat difficult to characterize because analysis has become increasingly intersectional in that most articles cut across and examine the interrelationship among different aspects of social life such as gender, religion, socioeconomic conditions, politics, and other domains of society and culture.

While not as emphasized as it was in the previous decade, *AJSS* has continued to feature articles on alternative discourses in the social sciences. Related to these have been a body of articles critiquing colonialism and postcolonial conditions in Asia. Politics, including but not limited to governance, political identities, democracy, voting, and decentralization have been the focus of many articles in the journal. Developing national sentiments have been an important theme in the politics of Asian societies as have been ethnicity and ethnic identities. With respect to the latter, a greater emphasis can be observed in analysis of multiculturalism and diversity along with critiques of race and racism.

Of all the topics that have grown in prominence in the past decade, the most noticeable are articles on gender, sexuality, and the changing Asian family. These range broadly from the intersection of gender with other aspects of social life to transgenderism and alternative sexualities, to marriage, divorce, and changing family values. Nearly as prominent have been articles about religion and society in Asia, from the revitalization of traditional religions to new religious movements to increasing secularization in some Asian societies. Along with politics, gender, and religion, a continued examination of socioeconomic conditions in Asia has been a common theme of articles in the journal. Compared to the first decade of the journal, which focused largely on development economics, the articles of the past decade have been much more diverse. Economic inequality has continued to be a central concern including the social effects of the ever-increasing influence of neoliberalism across Asia. But the range of articles on socioeconomic conditions has spanned analysis of business-government relationships, trade networks, capital flows, labor relations, and precarious livelihoods, to name just a few common topics. While these themes of gender, religion, politics, and socioeconomic conditions account for a majority of article over the past decade, many other topics have been covered by multiple articles: in-

cluding media studies, particularly with regard to the social impacts of the internet and social media, cultural studies, migration and immigration issues, social movements, disaster management, and environmental issues.

Since commencing publication with Elsevier and going forward, *AJSS* will be publishing four issues per year rather than six. We do not expect that this will reduce the number of articles published annually. Constraints of resources and time has meant that since the 2010, the six issues each year regularly included two combined issues. Quarterly rather than bimonthly publication will be a more reasonable publication schedule. Moreover, *AJSS* has moved with the times to exclusively online publication rather than producing physical paper journals, which provides more flexibility in terms of the number of pages any issue can contain. At the same time, we are committed to high-quality, peer-reviewed work. With the open submission system, we receive an extraordinary number of submissions every year, of which only around five percent eventually appear in the journal.⁶

As we enter our fiftieth year of publication, *AJSS* remains committed to publishing research relevant to the ever-changing conditions of Asian societies and advancing social science scholarship in Asia. We are pleased to be able to reflect on the increasing diversity and internationalization of *AJSS* over the past five decades, most of which is to the credit of the authors who have chosen to submit their work to the journal and to the general flourishing and maturation of social science research and scholarship across Asia. We look forward to the coming decade – and we hope the next fifty years – in which *AJSS* can continue to be a vital part of Asia's social science community.

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⁶ For much of the past decade, Zarine Rocha has served as Managing Editor of the journal. Without her excellent and consistent work on the journal, managing this large quantity of submissions would be impossible.