

## **Editor's Introduction**

Welcome to the Volume 3, Number 2 (July-December, 2025) issue of the *ASEAN Journal of Research* (AJR). This issue represents the culmination of three years of successful publishing of this academic journal, which publishes academic journals on the double-blind review basis.

In this issue, I am pleased to be able to publish papers from Vietnam, Bangladesh and Nigeria on a wide variety of subjects. Among the issues covered are market-based climate instruments for sustainable development in Vietnam, adaptability and resilience in the face of floods in Bangladesh and corruption among serving and retired police officers in Nigeria. Other papers are drawn from the fields of education, semiotics, supply chain management and the social science involved in understanding the anti-social behaviour of inmates of correctional centres. This diversity is characteristic of the AJR and is a strength. The journal was launched with the understanding that it would accept papers in all the academic disciplines that are taught at the International College of Krirk University. This will continue. However, there will be something of a change starting from the next issue. Now that the British International College (BIC) has been opened at Krirk University and I was asked to become its Dean, as editor of the AJR I will be publishing the journal in future from the BIC. This will not have any impact on authors or readers. The same academic standards will be applied that have been in use since the first issue. I will also continue to attempt to publish papers in any academic discipline subject to being able to find suitable peer reviewers.

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The world outside the ARJ has endured a fairly miserable year. Genocide in Gaza and Sudan, the re-entry of openly racist and fascist into mainstream politics and widening inequality have brought misery to many millions. In Thailand, we are now facing open warfare with our neighbours in Cambodia – the first war between two members of ASEAN. It is a result, at least in part, of colonization. As colonial rulers of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, the French drew up borders on a unilateral basis that have been subject to informal change over the years, as one side or another has made a fuss about cultural artifacts and geographical realities.

Where I write this in Roi Et in northeast Thailand, less than half a mile way is the remains of the Prang Ku temple (Ku Ban Khao), which once represented an official outpost of the Khmer Empire and functioned, it is thought, as a place of government and health management, as well as being a place of worship. It was dedicated both to Shiva and to Lokeshvera, a Bodhisattva from Mahayana Buddhism – pluralism in reality. It is part of a River Mekong region that saw state formation based on individual kingship being expressed by creating a new polity remote from its parent, as the fiefdom of an individual who had outgrown being a prince-in-waiting. The land was heavily forested and difficult to traverse. Influence could be exerted by family loyalties and trade, as well as military power. Polities were small and unable to support more than small forces of soldiers. The purpose of warfare was often to raid other states for skilled workers destined to become slaves. Borders did not exist in any meaningful way. We would be better off without them.

*John Walsh, Editor*