

## Foreword

Twenty-five years ago, in March 1970, the Department of History of the then University of Singapore published the first issue of the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, which superseded even as it expanded the *Journal of Southeast Asian History* (1960–69). Since then, the Journal has grown from strength to strength, and continues to attract articles and book reviews from scholars throughout the world. While history has remained a core area of interest, even of authors who come from other specializations, the Journal has warmly welcomed contributions from a wide range of disciplines. For this special issue the Editors have turned to scholars who represent diverse viewpoints, seeking their reflections on topics from different areas of concern to Southeast Asianists.

This year also marks the commemoration of many anniversaries of significance to Southeast Asia. These include the 50th Anniversaries of the declaration of independence of Indonesia and Vietnam; the 40th Anniversary of the Afro-Asian Conference held at Bandung; the 30th Anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Singapore; and the 20th Anniversary of the reunification of Vietnam. These events represented intense colonial, inter-state and international struggles, and were the stuff of controversy, academic or otherwise, sometimes in the pages of the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*.

Publication of the Journal reflects a continuing commitment of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the National University of Singapore to Southeast Asian Studies. In my capacity as Dean of the Faculty I am pleased to announce a new initiative which will further strengthen the University's involvement in this area, the launching of a postgraduate programme in January 1995 awarding the degree of Master of Arts in Southeast Asian Studies. It complements the Faculty's undergraduate Southeast Asian Studies Programme, established in 1991. We hope to see increasing numbers of students and staff joining these programmes, not only from Singapore but also from neighbouring countries and beyond. The MA in Southeast Asian Studies is coordinated by Associate Professor Yong Mun Cheong, a past Editor of this Journal who remains on the Editorial Advisory Committee.

**Ernest C.T. Chew**

Chairman of the Editorial Board