

Preface

This is a special issue of the Social Science Review, Saitama University, Japan. The publication is majorly collection of papers presented at the Mekong Economy Workshop on September 25th at Saitama University, adding an overview and special papers. Mekong economy comprises countries located along the international river 'Kong' mostly known as 'Mekong'¹. These countries or region comprise the southern part of China PRC specifically Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam respectively. In our workshop, we have invited authors from the Mekong countries to present analysis on a wide range of topics. We have also invited discussants to provide their comments. We had also obtained comments from audiences as well. The papers comprise a country study as well as a regional approach to the Mekong region. The contents range from analyzing the growth potential of the Mekong economy with several interesting topics. They comprise in-depth country study on economic development experiences of Thailand by Bowonthumrongchai (2018) on 'Lewisian turning point' in Thailand, and Ketsawa.,(2018) on sources of industrial growth and deviation from balanced growth path of Thailand in her past experiences; on macroeconomic impact of foreign direct investment in Mekong region by Uttama and Rapipong (2018); the impact of dollarization of exchange rate by Samreth and Sok (2018); the spatial inequality of urbanization by Puttanapong et al. (2018); the trade creation as result of road linkage in Mekong region by Ruankham et., al (2018); how Vietnam has tried to climb up the GVC in her trade and industrialization by Taguchi et al. (2018); the overall Mekong convergence hypothesis was tested by Bunnag (2018) respectively. Finally, a very specific issue on education, the out-of-school has been attempted by Ni Lar et al. (2018). As the editor of this special issue, we felt that it may be able to add many other important issues of Mekong development. However, time and resources constraint did not permit us to do so. Nevertheless, there was a coincident of Japan-Mekong Summit in Tokyo, October 2018. The editor felt that our current publication may miss important issues. We, therefore, add the role of "Official Development Assistance" (ODA) by Limskul (2018). The paper has applied a CGE model to analyze the economic impact of ODA flow to the Mekong on social infrastructures such as education, health, and environment respectively. Finally, we have further decided to request a short note on Environment of

1 'Me' stands for 'Menam' or literally 'river'. 'River-Kong' is, therefore 'Mekong'.

the Mekong economy from Asaeda (2018). All presentations are followed by valuable comments from designated discussants and audiences. The workshop had a lively discussion and fruitful contributions. Last but not least, we would like to thank all authors, discussants, audiences and the Saitama University.

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