A Note on the Passing of IJBS Co-founder James Scott, 1936-2024

The IJBS editorial board would like to recognize and honor the great contributions of our friend and colleague, the late Professor James Scott. His work starting and supporting this journal over its fifteen years of history has been generous and inspiring. It is fair to say that without Jim, there would be no IJBS.

Jim not only identified the original funding for the journal but also provided an institutional anchor for its fledgling steps. The Department of Political Science at Yale University hosted the journal's first meetings during a time of fierce optimism about Myanmar's slowly liberalizing public and civic space, which crucially included the relaxation of censorship by the entrenched military regime. Jim had spent years speaking with Tun Myint and other board members about the legacy of the old Journal of the Burma Research Society (JBRS), which thrived in newly independent Burma when Jim first studied at the University of Rangoon in 1958-1959. The JBRS was shut down by military dictator General Ne Win, who opposed independent or critical voices and stifled public and scholarly debate. After the first IJBS issue was launched in 2016, the journal took some time to find its feet, but thanks to Jim, it managed to overcome many challenges. These related not only to the wrinkles that any new journal faces in a rapidly changing technological environment, but also the effects of the 2019-2023 COVID-19 pandemic, and the 2021 military coup that cut the ability for free, independent publications like IJBS to operate openly in the country.

Jim's family requested after he passed away that anyone feeling condolences for their loss should not send flowers but instead send support to those affected by the coup in Myanmar. Jim was a true friend of Burma and left a huge mark in many fields. We aim for IJBS to continue honoring his legacy and the legacy of all those who struggle for a freer and more just Burma.

Tun Myint and David Thang Moe pay tribute to Jim with articles later in this issue. May he rest in peace.