

WORKSHOP

# DIGITAL RELIGION

Social, Political, and Legal Futures

**16 AUGUST 2024**  
10.30am – 5.45pm

**AS8, SEMINAR ROOM 04-04**  
National University of Singapore



For more information, please visit:  
[ari.nus.edu.sg/events/digital-religion-2/](http://ari.nus.edu.sg/events/digital-religion-2/)

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**This workshop is jointly organized by the Centre for Asian Legal Studies, and the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore.**

As part of the pilot project *LaPIDoR* (Legal and Political Implications of the Digitalization of Religion) and generously sponsored by the NUS HSS (Humanities and Social Sciences) Seed Fund, the NUS Centre for Asian Legal Studies (CALs), in conjunction with the Asia Research Institute (ARI), brings together speakers representing diverse disciplines and sub-disciplines from within the social sciences and humanities. Following the first workshop dedicated to various methodological approaches to the study of digital religion, this second workshop brings together scholars based in Singapore and internationally to present empirical case studies which speak to varied aspects of digital religion across different religious communities in Southeast Asia and beyond. In doing so, we aim to get at some of the seemingly contradictory tendencies of the digitalization of religion: at times challenging and at times reinforcing authority; at times providing possibilities for inter-religious dialogue and at times facilitating a politics of exclusion. We hope to understand the social, political, and legal ramifications of these potentialities of digital religion and the possible exacerbation or acceleration of existing social trends. The workshop features several panels in which scholars of digital religion are invited to present their current research and provide feedback on each other's work. The workshop also includes a presentation of preliminary results from a survey on digitalisation of religion in Singapore and a discussion about future avenues for research on this topic.

## **WORKSHOP CONVENORS**

### **Assoc Prof Jaclyn NEO**

Centre for Asian Legal Studies, National University of Singapore

### **Mr Benjamin LOW**

Centre for Asian Legal Studies, National University of Singapore

### **Dr Erica M. LARSON**

Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore

### **Prof Kenneth DEAN**

Asia Research Institute, and Department of Chinese Studies, National University of Singapore

## 15 AUGUST 2024 • THURSDAY

16:00 – 17:30	<b>PUBLIC SEMINAR</b>
<i>Chairperson</i>	<b>DANIEL P.S. GOH</b> , National University of Singapore
16:00	When Digital Religion Unintentionally Spreads Religious Hate: Examining the Implication of Internet Memes as Communicators of Dis/Mis-Information about Religion <b>HEIDI A. CAMPBELL</b> , Texas A&M University
17:00	Questions & Answers
17:30	<b>END</b>

To attend this seminar, please register separately at <https://ari.nus.edu.sg/events/20240815-heidi-a-campbell/>.

## 16 AUGUST 2024 • FRIDAY

10:30 – 10:45	<b>WELCOME REMARKS</b>
	<b>JACLYN NEO</b> , National University of Singapore <b>ERICA M. LARSON</b> , National University of Singapore
10:45 – 12:15	<b>PANEL 1 • DIGITAL RELIGION IN ASIAN PERSPECTIVE(S)</b>
<i>Chairperson</i>	<b>JACLYN NEO</b> , National University of Singapore
10:45	Additive Religiosity: After <i>Digital Culture and Religion in Asia</i> <b>KAMALUDEEN MOHAMED NASIR</b> , Nanyang Technological University
11:05	Understanding Spiritual Diversity in Singapore <b>JONATHAN E. RAMSAY</b> , James Cook University – Singapore
11:25	Rethinking Islamicisation and Syariah-tisation? An Exploratory Study of Ruqyah Syari'ah and Social Media in Singapore <b>M.K. JAUHARI BIN ZAINI</b> , Nanyang Technological University
11:45	Questions & Answers
12:15 – 13:15	<b>LUNCH</b>
13:15 – 14:45	<b>PANEL 2 • SOCIAL MEDIA AND PERFORMANCE</b>
<i>Chairperson</i>	<b>ERICA M. LARSON</b> , National University of Singapore
13:15	Recommending Hindutva: Why Facebook is Conducive to Religious Extremism <b>DHEEPA SUNDARAM</b> , University of Denver
13:35	Born Again as Nahdhatul Ulama (NU): The Transformation of Ustadz Hanan Attaki's Islamic Teaching Approach for Indonesian Muslim Youth <b>WAHYUDI AKMALIAH</b> , National Research and Innovation Agency
13:55	Embracing Digital Transformation in Singapore's <i>Getai</i> Performances <b>QI WU</b> , Singapore University of Social Sciences
14:15	Questions & Answers
14:45 – 15:15	<b>AFTERNOON TEA</b>

<b>15:15 – 16:45</b>	<b>PANEL 3 • DIGITAL CHRISTIANITY</b>
<i>Chairperson</i>	<b>MICHEL CHAMBON</b> , National University of Singapore
<i>15:15</i>	The Digital Entanglements and Futures of Southeast Asian Megachurches <b>DANIEL P.S. GOH</b> , National University of Singapore
<i>15:35</i>	Digital Christianity: How Digitalization Affects the Christian Beliefs and Practices of Young People <b>WAYNE CHOONG</b> , Nanyang Technological University, and Singapore University of Social Sciences
<i>15:55</i>	Lived Religion in a Digital Age: Technology, Affect and the Pervasive Space-Times of ‘New’ Religious Praxis <b>ORLANDO WOODS</b> , Singapore Management University
<i>16:15</i>	Questions & Answers
<b>16:45 – 17:30</b>	<b>DISCUSSION • PRELIMINARY SURVEY RESULTS ON DIGITALIZATION OF RELIGION IN SINGAPORE</b>
	<b>JACLYN NEO</b> , National University of Singapore <b>ERICA M. LARSON</b> , National University of Singapore <b>BENJAMIN LOW</b> , National University of Singapore
<b>17:30 – 17:45</b>	<b>CLOSING REMARKS</b>
	<b>JACLYN NEO</b> , National University of Singapore <b>ERICA M. LARSON</b> , National University of Singapore
<b>17:45</b>	<b>END OF WORKSHOP</b>
<b>18:00 – 20:00</b>	<b>WORKSHOP DINNER</b> (For Presenters, Chairpersons and Organisers Only)

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PUBLIC SEMINAR

**When Digital Religion Unintentionally Spreads Religious Hate:  
Examining the Implication of Internet Memes as Communicators of  
Dis/Mis-Information about Religion**

**Heidi A. CAMPBELL**  
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This presentation will explore internet memes and memetic culture as a site of production and spread of religious bias and disinformation. Some of the most popular internet memes focused on religion often use meme characters, taken from digital media culture, and image templates that implicitly rely on historical stereotypes or explicit popular misrepresentations about core religious beliefs and practices. Also because memes use distinct forms of humor to communicate, such techniques may obscure to a broad general audience the stereotypes about religion memes spread and promote. By looking at examples of popular meme characters used to discuss Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism this talk illustrates how viral memes can be intentionally and unintentionally used to spread hate and religious misinformation.

**Heidi A. Campbell** is Professor of Communication, Affiliate Faculty in Religious Studies, and Presidential Impact Fellow at Texas A&M University. She is also the director of the Network for New Media, Religion and Digital Culture Studies, and a founder of Digital Religion studies. Her award-winning research focuses on the intersection of technology, religion and digital culture, with emphasis on Jewish, Muslim and Christian media negotiations. She is the author of over 100 articles and 13 books including *When Religion Meets New Media* (2010), *Digital Religion* (2013, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 2021) and *Digital Creatives and the Rethinking Religious Authority* (2021). She has also been widely quoted in international news outlets such as ABC Radio-Australia, *USA Today*, *The Guardian*, *Wall Street Journal*, and on the *BBC*.

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## **Additive Religiosity: After *Digital Culture and Religion in Asia***

**Kamaludeen Mohamed Nasir**  
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In his seminal book, *A Secular Age* (2007), Charles Taylor argued that the study of religion has been punctuated by multiple *subtraction stories*. One of the most impactful experiences in contemporary society has been the collision between religion and digital technology. In this talk, I discuss my explorations of digital religion over the last decade or so. My preliminary ruminations on digital religion started from two talks that I gave in the UK called “Muslim Consumer Ethics in a Globalised Age” (2012, University of Leeds) and “Digital Religious Revivals in Southeast Asia: Transnational and Comparative Perspectives” (2013, Oxford University). These reflections fed into an ambitious project on *Digital Culture and Religion in Asia* (with Sam Han, 2016), where my colleague and I embarked on exploring what an online religion looks like from the vantage point of comparative religion. Looking at Christianity in Korea, Hinduism in the US, Islam in Southeast Asia, the Falun Gong movement, neo-Shintoism in Japan, and hyperreal and millennial religiosities, we argued that the digital platform has transformed not just how people practice religion but how religion is understood among significant sections of the populace. Since *Digital Culture and Religion in Asia*, I have written on how religious populism is mobilized online and how digital religion has been harnessed in protest movements and enmeshed with forms of popular culture. I will discuss some of these projects in the workshop.

**Kamaludeen Mohamed Nasir** is Associate Professor of Sociology at Nanyang Technological University Singapore. He is the author of seven books, including *Globalized Muslim Youth in the Asia Pacific* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) and *Representing Islam: Hip-Hop of the September 11 Generation* (Indiana University Press, 2020). His writings reflect an enduring interest in the sociology of religion and social theory, and his last few books examine the intersections of popular culture, piety and state management. From 2023 to 2024, he was Professor and the Malaysia Chair of Islam in Southeast Asia at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. He is finishing a book called *Football and Islam: Negotiating Identity in the Global Game* (under contract with Oxford University Press).

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## Understanding Spiritual Diversity in Singapore

**Jonathan E. RAMSAY**

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“Spiritual but not religious” (SBNR) is an increasingly important social categorisation in developed nations: almost 30% of U.S. adults identify as SBNR while estimates of prevalence among American adolescents are as high as 60%. Similar trends have been documented in European nations, and while some preliminary research on the impact of SBNR affiliation has been conducted, the phenomenon remains poorly understood, with no research having been conducted in Singapore or the wider Southeast Asian region. The present research therefore sought to enhance understanding SBNR individuals by comparing them to both religious and neither religious nor spiritual (NRNS) individuals along several important demographic, psychological, and behavioural dimensions. One thousand Singapore residents were recruited via a purposive quota sampling method to ensure roughly equally sized groups of religious, SBNR, and NRNS individuals while also ensuring that the overall sample was as reflective as possible of the Singaporean population. Results indicated that SBNRs tend to be more affluent and educated, with an identity centrality than falls between religious and NRNS individuals. Spiritual but not religious individuals are more similar to religious individuals in terms of well-being, but more similar to NRNS individuals in terms of values. Importantly, SBNRs are an extremely diverse group, with many simultaneously adopting religious labels and identities. Future research should seek to identify different forms of non-religious spirituality in Singapore while characterising their specific beliefs, practices, and sources of spiritual leadership.

**Jonathan Ramsay**, originally from the United Kingdom, came to Asia in 2009 and is now Associate Professor of Psychology and Associate Dean for Student Engagement at James Cook University (JCU), Singapore. He received his PhD in psychology from Nanyang Technological University in 2014, and BA in psychology and physiology from the University of Oxford in 2005. Prior to joining JCU he was a lecturer and then a senior lecturer at the Singapore University of Social Sciences. His research interests span areas of personality and social psychology, with a particular emphasis on the psychology of religion and spirituality. His current research projects examine the ways in which religion influences supernatural explanations of events, as well the ways in which scared experiences and their consequences differ across religious, spiritual, and non-religious groups. Jonathan has published in many international peer-reviewed journals, such as *Nature Human Behaviour*, *Journal of Personality*, *Political Psychology*, and *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*. He is an editorial board member for *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, and *Frontiers in Psychology*. He is also the recipient of several internal and external research grants.

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## Rethinking Islamicisation and Syariah-tisation? An Exploratory Study of Ruqyah Syari'ah and Social Media in Singapore

**M.K. Jauhari Bin Zaini**  
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This presentation seeks to explore an under-researched facet of the processes of islamicisation and syariah-tisation—concepts which have often been associated with political Islam, and/or the structural aspects of syariah (i.e., syariah law)—by looking at an increasingly popular Islamic healing/treatment called *Ruqyah Syari'ah* (translit.: Islamically-permissible incantations).

While there exist numerous freelance practitioners conducting *Ruqyah Syari'ah* treatments in Singapore, three publicly prominent practitioners have amassed significant following on their Instagram pages: 1. Ustaz Tamliikha Khamsani (51.1k followers); 2. Ustaz Fadhly Rosli (48k followers), who has been featured in both mainstream and alternative media in Singapore; and 3. Ustaz Ruknuddin Zainor (21.7k followers), who has similarly been featured in a show on *Suria*, Singapore's only free-to-air Malay language television channel.

Through a discourse analysis of the social media contents produced by these practitioners, and my own participation in the field over the years, I highlight how social media has become a medium through which these practitioners proselytise (*dakwah*) Islamic knowledge and practices that are endeavoured to be more (authentically) attuned to and anchored in the *Quran* and the practices of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). These contents further illuminate how the processes of islamicisation and syariah-tisation can be understood as everyday quotidian processes—or 'grounded syariah-tisation', to borrow Syafiq (2022)'s term—rather than (solely) as structural and political processes. It is also posited here that the grounded islamicisation and syariah-tisation by these practitioners is associated with the lackadaisical approach by the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS).

**M.K. Jauhari Bin Zaini** is currently a PhD candidate with the Division of Sociology, School of Social Sciences, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. His research interests include the sociology and anthropology of Islam, Islam and medicine, sociology of traditional, complementary, and alternative medicine (TCAM), and medical sociology and anthropology.



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## Recommending Hindutva: Why Facebook is Conducive to Religious Extremism

**Dheepa SUNDARAM**

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Much of the work on digital religion has focused on how online platforms impact the practice, traditions, structures, prayers, and rituals of religions. This research considers how social media's financial structures have made platforms such as Facebook a fruitful platform for far-right extremism, especially religious nationalism. I argue that Facebook's affordances which prioritize engagement over content moderation enable the influencer-oriented religious publics. Such a structure also thwarts the growth of resistant counterpublics which tend to organize through solidarity and knowledge building rather than outrage posting to build their networks. In the past year, the Facebook Oversight Board (a neutral advisory body to which Facebook posters can submit a final appeal regarding a removed post) has taken several cases involving Islam and Muslims that allege that Facebook censors particular words, media, and posts that ostensibly are related to their traditions, cultures, religious practices, and languages (e.g., censoring of "Shaheed"). In this presentation, I will discuss how Facebook's recommendation algorithm drives the formation of extremist groups because it privileges engagement and remains content neutral.

**Dheepa Sundaram** researches hate politics, performance, ritual, and digital culture in South Asian contexts. She has presented and published on the formation of Hindu and Hindu nationalist virtual religious publics through online platforms and emerging technologies (e.g., social media, apps, virtual reality, and artificial intelligence). Her current monograph project, *Globalizing Dharma: The Making of a Global Hindu Brand*, examines how commercial ritual websites fashion a digital canon for Hindu religious praxis, effectively branding religious identities and marketing caste-privileged religious norms as a default, cosmopolitan Hinduism that anchors the Hindu nationalist political project. She is also a contributor for *Religion News Service* on Hindu perspectives, a founding member of the US-based South Asia Scholar Activist Collective (SASAC), and a trainer for Sacred Writes (public scholarship training program for religion scholars).

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## **Born Again as Nahdhatul Ulama (NU): The Transformation of Ustadz Hanan Attaki's Islamic Teaching Approach for Indonesian Muslim Youth**

**Wahyudi Akmaliah**

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This paper explores Ustadz Hanan Attaki (UHA)'s changing approach to Islamic teaching for young Indonesian Muslims. Employing long observations both online and offline (2018-2024) and interviews with significant informants, it poses three key questions: Why did UHA convert to traditionalist Islam as a part of the NU community in 2023? What method did he adopt to teach Islamic principles to young Indonesian Muslims? How was this new approach perceived by his audience? The paper contends that when UHA delivered religious recitations in mosques and was perceived as a radical ustad, he faced persecution from members of the NU community in certain Indonesian provinces. To avoid this, he converted from advocating Islamic revivalism to embracing traditionalist Islam through *bai'at*. This shift enabled him to evolve his da'wa strategy from solely utilizing social media to employing the platformization of Islamic teaching in two ways. Firstly, under the *Sharing with UHA* program, he collaborated with *Ayah Amanah's* event organization to conduct regular of Islamic teaching in person in urban areas across multiple Indonesian provinces. Participants were charged a SGD 14 entrance fee. Secondly, he established the *Kata UHA* program (The UHA's Words) through the Zoom platform, connected to YouTube, hosted every two weeks. Interested individuals were required to pay an entrance fee (a minimum of SGD 2) to join these sessions, which covered various topics relevant to the challenges faced by young Muslims as the precarious generation under the neoliberal conditions that caused instability of their path future. This da'wa approach successfully captured the attention of a significant number of young Indonesian Muslims.

**Wahyudi Akmaliah** is a researcher at the Research Centre of Society and Culture, National Research and Innovation Agency (PMB-BRIN), and a PhD candidate at the Department of Malay Studies, National University of Singapore. His research interests include the sociology of knowledge and cultural studies, focusing on Islam, identity, social movement, and popular culture. His current research project focuses on Indonesian Muslim societies and their religious orientations in adopting digital platforms. Some of his works have been published in *Journal of Indonesian Social Sciences and Humanities*, *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, *Al-Jāmi'ah*, *Studia Islamika*, *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, *Southeast Asian Social Science Review*, and *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*. He has also contributed articles to edited volumes of ISEAS-Yusof Ishak, Obor Press, and Sunway University Press.

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## Embracing Digital Transformation in Singapore's *Getai* Performances

**Qi WU**

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This study examines LEX Entertainment Production, a company renowned for providing *Getai* performances to religious groups in Singapore. *Getai* culture, deeply intertwined with temple celebrations, represents a significant facet of Singapore's cultural milieu. Historically, Chinese religious organizations and their predominantly elderly participants have been reluctant to embrace the internet. However, the COVID-19 pandemic imposed unavoidable obstacles to their traditional offline engagement, compelling these organizations and individuals to adopt digital tools to maintain operations. Various groups leveraged internet platforms to conduct activities remotely. During the pandemic, LEX aggressively expanded into online live performances, allowing temples to continue their celebratory events. This digital transformation, while initially seen as a necessity, opened new opportunities for cross-regional interactions and involved the audience directly in the production process. This shift fundamentally altered the relationship between performers, viewers, and the production company, as well as the methods of producing and disseminating performances. This research delves into LEX's strategies for enabling this digital transition and explores the broader implications for the cultural and religious landscape during the pandemic.

**Qi Wu** is Lecturer in the Chinese Studies Department at the Singapore University of Social Sciences. She previously served as a research fellow at the Asia Research Institute of the National University of Singapore (NUS) and as an adjunct lecturer in the Department of Chinese Studies at NUS. Dr Wu's research focuses on overseas Chinese society and Chinese religions, with a keen interest in the transregional network of Chinese religious and charity organizations. Recently, her work has concentrated on Chinese religions, community, and cyberspace in Singapore. Her new project on Kampong heritage and local Chinese temples in Singapore has been funded by the National Heritage Board. Dr Wu's book, *Looking at the Flying Clouds from the South: Transregional Network of the Dejiào Charity Organization in Southeast Asia*, has just been published in 2024.

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## The Digital Entanglements and Futures of Southeast Asian Megachurches

**Daniel P.S. GOH**

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This paper builds on the co-authored piece exploring the varied digital responses of megachurches in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore to maintain and enhance their pastoral care and outreach during the COVID-19 pandemic (Chong and Goh, “The Disruption of Charisma in Southeast Asian Megachurches”, 2023). Two years on, have the megachurches returned to the past of pre-pandemic digital engagements, institutionalized their digital entanglements, or pushed on to new visions of digital Christian futures? After surveying the post-pandemic trajectories of megachurches that took on what we called “defensive local virtuality”, “expansive celebrity virtuality”, “emergent ‘phygital’ hybridity”, I discuss the new visions of Christ’s Commission Fellowship in the Philippines and New Creation Church in Singapore as seeking to grow transnational corporate megachurches leveraging digital platforms. I discuss the social, political and legal implications of these digital Christian futures.

**Daniel P.S. Goh** is Associate Professor of Sociology, Associate Provost (Undergraduate Education), and Vice Dean (Special Programmes) at NUS College, National University of Singapore (NUS). He specializes in comparative-historical and cultural sociology and studies state formation, race and multiculturalism, urbanisms, and religion. His publications include the co-edited books, *Urban Asias: Essays on Futurity Past and Present* (JOVIS Verlag, 2018) and *Regulating Religion in Asia* (Cambridge, 2019). He is the co-editor of *Current Sociology*, a flagship journal of the International Sociological Association, and principal investigator of *Capitals of the Future: Place, Power and Possibility in Southeast Asia* at the Asia Research Institute, NUS.

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## **Digital Christianity: How Digitalization Affects the Christian Beliefs and Practices of Young People**

**Wayne CHOONG**

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Digitalization drives emergent patterns of social life while disrupting well-established orders of societies around the globe. The sphere of religion is no exception, resulting in the expanding academic field of digital religion.

Unfortunately, the relationship between Christian youths and digitalization in Singapore has yet to be a subject of sufficient academic inquiry. Based on extensive original field data and digital textual analysis, this ethnographic research examines Digital Christianity: the effect digitalization has on the beliefs and practices of Christian youths in Singapore. Drawing theoretical and empirical research from both communication studies and sociology, this research contributes to the field of digital religion and the sociology of religion.

The data reveals that young people's religious identities evolve within an ecosystem of direct and indirect digitalization. Indirectly, their Christian beliefs and practices change with the digitalization of faith-based communities and religious authority. Directly, the digitalization of their beliefs and practices is observable in their faith-based employment of social media and communication and messaging apps.

For this conference, the data presented will focus on the digitalization of religious authority. By way of conceptualizing three distinct but overlapping spheres of authority, the effect digitalization has on each domain will be explored in turn. A discussion on the resultant evolution and outcome of religious authority will follow. The limits of this presentation, however, prevent further elaboration on how this consequently affects the young people in the study. Nevertheless, the findings adequately highlight the consequences of a persistently digitalizing world in which religion is not exempt, and leaves ample room for further discussions on the digitalizing futures of faith, people of faith, and their faith-based communities.

**Wayne Choong** is an adjunct lecturer at Nanyang Technological University and Singapore University of Social Sciences, specializing in digital Christianity and its impact on young people in Singapore. With a decade of experience in youth pastoral ministry, he combines practical knowledge with academic research. Currently, he works in the CEO's office as a strategic planning executive and is pursuing a Master of Arts in Leadership Studies at Vanguard University.

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## **Lived Religion in a Digital Age: Technology, Affect and the Pervasive Space-Times of ‘New’ Religious Praxis**

**Orlando WOODS**

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This paper explores how Christian practices of prayer are being reconfigured through digital media in Singapore. Although digital technologies are an area of burgeoning interest amongst social and cultural geographers, the ways in which these technologies reconfigure the space-times of religious praxis and engender new affective relations or subjectivities of religion have not yet been embraced. This paper fills the lacuna by bringing existing studies on religion, technology and affect into constructive conversation with each other. By elaborating on digital prayer as an affective assemblage of religious practice, we show how digital technologies blur institutional boundaries and create new affordances for lived religious subjectivities beyond the ‘officially sacred’. Then, we consider how digital media may produce *new* atmospheres that shape the affective formation of religious subjects. We outline four dimensions of affect that constitute the digitally-mediated affective atmospheres, which structure how prayer is felt and performed. Altogether, this article contributes an understanding of ‘digital prayer’ as a form of religious practice that enables an integrative, if at times ambiguous and politically-charged, experience for connecting religious belief with the rhythms of everyday life.

**Orlando Woods** is Professor of Geography at the College of Integrative Studies, Singapore Management University (SMU), where he serves as Associate Dean (Research and Postgraduate Programmes). Concurrently, he also serves as the Inaugural Director of the SMU Urban Institute. His research interests span urban, cultural and political geography, and coalesce around thematic questions concerning multiculturalism and superdiversity, digital technologies and infrastructure development. Empirically, his work focuses on South and Southeast Asia.

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## ABOUT THE ORGANISERS & CHAIRPERSONS

**Benjamin Low** is completing his doctoral studies in the Department of Sociology at University of Oxford. A National Arts Council Arts Scholar and practicing jazz musician, his master's thesis project explored the social dynamics of intercultural learning in jazz music through focusing on processes through which knowledge and practice in jazz performance are diffused in peer-to-peer online learning environments. His master's thesis work provided the basis for his doctoral research project where, using the Singapore jazz musician community as a case study, he investigates the network bases through which genre evolution and emergence occur in communities of cultural producers. Currently affiliated with the Centre for Asian Legal Studies as a postdoctoral researcher, his research interests include cultural production, innovation, symbolic boundary-work, and valuation.

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**Erica M. Larson** is Research Fellow in the Religion and Globalisation Cluster at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. She holds a PhD in Cultural Anthropology from Boston University, USA. Her research interests include education, religion, ethics, and politics in Indonesia and Southeast Asia more broadly. She has examined how education becomes an arena of deliberation about the ethics and politics of plural coexistence through ethnographic research in North Sulawesi, Indonesia. Her current research engages Indonesian youth active in religious organizations and their attitudes and beliefs about corruption as a lens on normative state-society relations and notions of ethics, piety, and responsibility.

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**Jaclyn Neo** is Associate Professor and Director of the Centre for Asian Legal Studies in Faculty of Law at the National University of Singapore (NUS). She graduated from the NUS Faculty of Law (LLB) and Yale Law School (LLM and JSD) on multiple academic scholarships from NUS. An award-winning scholar of comparative constitutional law, as well as law and religion, Jaclyn has held several visiting positions, including at the Princeton School of Public and International Affairs, the University of Münster, Melbourne Law School, the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity; and The University of Texas-Austin School of Law. Jaclyn serves on multiple advisory boards of overseas academic institutions, including the Academy of International Affairs at the North-Rhein Westphalia, Germany, the Chinese University of Hong Kong's Centre for Comparative and Transnational Law, and the University of Otago's Centre for Law and Society. As Professorial Fellow of the Singapore Attorney-General Chambers (AGC) Academy, Jaclyn provides training to government lawyers. She has also served on the SAL Law Reform Committee and is an executive committee member of the ASEAN Law Association, Singapore.

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**Kenneth Dean** is Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Professor in Yale-NUS College, Research Cluster Leader for Religion and Globalisation in Asia Research Institute at National University of Singapore (NUS), and Director of Wan Boo-Sow Centre for Chinese Culture in Department of Chinese Studies at NUS. He is the author of several books on Taoism and popular religion in Southeast China. He has published several volumes of epigraphic sources on the history of religion in Fujian and Singapore. He directed *Bored in Heaven: A Film about Ritual Sensation* (2010) and has developed websites and digital platforms including the Singapore Historical GIS and the Singapore Biographical Databases.

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**Michel Chambon** is a French theologian and a cultural anthropologist working on Christianity in Chinese worlds. As a research fellow at the Asia Research Institute in National University of Singapore, he coordinates the Initiative for the Study of Asian Catholics (ISAC), an international scholarly network developing and promoting social scientific research on Asian Catholics in contemporary societies.

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