

Asia Research Institute
National University of Singapore

LAW & GEOGRAPHY IN URBAN ASIA

18-19 February 2025



<https://ari.nus.edu.sg/events/law-and-geography/>

How can Asia be understood by the law? Like innumerable other disciplines, the law has long sought to encapsulate Asia’s unique contours in a variety of ways (e.g. Hirschl, 2020; Fukurai, 2018; Eckert, 2004). Taking place in the subdiscipline of legal geography, this workshop – which aims to bring together scholarship on law and geography in urban Asia – wishes to further the *legal* exploration of the region while simultaneously paying attention to its unique *spatiality* (Bennett and Layard, 2015). It therefore invites scholars from across a range of disciplines and sub-regions to reflect on the co-relation and co-production of law and urban space in the region.

This workshop, which we believe is the first of its kind, correlates well with recent regional-specific scholarship in the subdiscipline (e.g. Ojeda and Blomley, 2024; Gillespie, Robinson, and O’Donnell, 2024; de Witte, 2022) as well as calls to employ a comparative or even ‘transplantational’ approach to the field in order to pay attention to its diverse pluralities (e.g. Nicolini and Poncibó, 2024; Kedar, 2014; Robinson and Graham, 2018). Although there is no dearth of such scholarship situated in Asia, there has hitherto been no concentrated attempt at bringing its multivarious strands together to understand what makes Asian legal geography unique.

Advancing on these invitations, we deploy legal philosopher Hans Lindahl’s (2013) concept of *a-legality* or spatiolegal *strangeness* as a starting point to investigate Asian law and geography. If, as Lindahl proposes, certain unusual spatial practices or behaviours (e.g. the recent climate protests) can produce ‘fault lines’ in a legal order and necessitate its recalibration (e.g. laws criminalising glueing oneself to roads), how do certain entanglements of law and space in urban Asia call into question established conventions and understandings of spatio-legality as historically defined by North American and European scholarship? Concurrently, how do such entanglements also reveal the *plurality* of legal orders and spatial typologies within Asia? And in doing so, how do they reiterate or interrogate the ability of the law to function as a tool of power and governance at a range of local, regional, and global scales?

To help answer these questions, this workshop remains deliberately open to a range of disciplines and to scholars engaged in diverse understandings of law (e.g. constitutional, property, international, historical, jurisprudence, religion, norms, customs, culture) and Asian urban space (e.g. through geography, urban studies, international relations, architecture, migration studies, infrastructure studies).

Though the focus of the workshop remains on *urban* Asia, we also wish to highlight that this call for spatio-legal strangeness includes how the *non-urban* defines the urban. That is, we feel it is equally prudent to pay attention to the hinterlands, the suburbs, or the peri-urban settings that contribute to the construction of the urban, and how the law supports or resists these constructions. We also wish to include the relationship of the urban to global flows and circulations of capital, trade, commerce, technology, and migration, which in turn has led to the creation of economic corridors, special economic zones (SEZs) or exclusive economic zones (EEZs) – which have contributed to discourses on the spatialisation of law in different ways.

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

DATE	TIME (SGT)	PANEL SESSION
18 Feb 2025 (Tue)	10:30 – 11:00	WELCOME & INTRODUCTORY REMARKS
	11:00 – 12:30	PANEL 1 – INFRASTRUCTURES OF GOVERNANCE
	14:00 – 15:30	PANEL 2 – INNER CITY URBANISM
	16:00 – 17:30	PANEL 3 – STATE, TERRITORY, JURISDICTION
	18:00 – 19:30	WORKSHOP DINNER (<i>For speakers and chairpersons only</i>)
18 Feb 2025 (Wed)	10:30 – 12:00	PANEL 4 – (POST-)COLONIAL WATERS, LANDS, AND ISLAND
	13:30 – 15:00	PANEL 5 – CAPITAL AND BORDERS
	15:30 – 17:00	PANEL 6 – CARTOGRAPHIES AND ICONOGRAPHIES
	17:00 – 17:30	SUMMARY & CLOSING REMARKS

18 FEBRUARY 2025 • TUESDAY

10:30 – 11:00	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS
	<p>TIM BUNNELL <i>National University of Singapore</i></p> <p>MAITRII V. AUNG-THWIN <i>National University of Singapore</i></p> <p>DHIRAJ NAINANI <i>National University of Singapore</i></p> <p>KAH-WEE LEE <i>National University of Singapore</i></p>
11:00 – 12:30	PANEL 1 – INFRASTRUCTURES OF GOVERNANCE
	<p>Chairperson MAITRII V. AUNG-THWIN <i>National University of Singapore</i></p>
11:00	<p>Risky Roads: Speed, Governance, and Infrastructural Dispositions in Urban India</p> <p>SNEHA ANNAVARAPU <i>National University of Singapore</i></p>
11:20	<p>Zero-Waste Strategies in Singapore and Tokyo: Neoliberal Governance, Household Recycling, and Civil Society Engagement</p> <p>ATMAJA GOHAIN BARUAH <i>National University of Singapore</i></p> <p>IMMANUELA ASA RAHADINI <i>National University of Singapore</i></p> <p>SHIORI SHAKUTO <i>University of Sydney</i></p> <p>BRENDA S. A. YEOH <i>National University of Singapore</i></p>
11:40	<p>Governing Data in Urban Taiwan: A Legal-Geographic Perspective on Data Governance</p> <p>TZU-I LEE <i>National University of Science and Technology</i></p> <p>MIN-SYUAN KANG <i>National Taipei University</i></p>
12:00	<p>Discussant ORLANDO WOODS <i>Singapore Management University</i></p>
12:15	QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
12:30 – 14:00	LUNCH BREAK
14:00 – 15:30	PANEL 2 – INNER CITY URBANISM
	<p>Chairperson KAH-WEE LEE <i>National University of Singapore</i></p>
14:00	<p>Inside-Outside: The Experience of Legal Entanglement by Public Flat Owners in Singapore</p> <p>JEANETTE YEO <i>National University of Singapore</i></p>
14:20	<p>Navigating the Law in ‘New’ Geylang: A Study of Contemporary Prostitution in Clandestine Urban Zones in Singapore</p> <p>ROBIN CHEE MING FENG <i>Singapore Management University</i></p>
14:40	<p>Critical Reflectons on Urban Disasters and Legal Reforms in the Philippines through the 2009 and 2024 Metro Manila Floods</p> <p>BENIGNO (NINOY) C. BALGOS <i>Ateneo de Manila University</i></p>
15:00	<p>Discussant JIAT-HWEE CHANG <i>National University of Singapore</i></p>
15:15	QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
15:30 – 15:30	AFTERNOON TEA BREAK

16:00 – 17:30	PANEL 3 – STATE, TERRITORY, JURISDICTION <i>Chairperson DHIRAJ NAINANI National University of Singapore</i>
16:00	The Legal Chronotope of Nusantara HARISON CITRAWAN Indonesian National Research and Innovation Agency
16:20	Super-Territorialization from the SIJORI Growth Triangle to the Johor-Singapore SEZ DANIEL P.S. GOH National University of Singapore
16:40	Contending Views on Land Use and Democracy: Social Narratives of Peasant Responses to Land Recovery in Peri-Urban Hanoi MARIA IMA CARMELA L. ARIATE University of the Philippines-Diliman
17:00	<i>Discussant RITA PADAWANGI Singapore University of Social Sciences</i>
17:15	QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
17:30	END OF DAY 1
18:00 – 19:30	WORKSHOP DINNER <i>(For speakers and chairpersons only)</i>

19 FEBRUARY 2025 • WEDNESDAY

10:30 – 12:00	PANEL 4 – (POST-)COLONIAL WATERS, LANDS, AND ISLANDS
<i>Chairperson</i>	<i>Chairperson</i> MAITRII V. AUNG-THWIN <i>National University of Singapore</i>
10:30	Negotiating Boundaries: Legal Pluralism and Urban Space in Chongqing’s Treaty Port Era YUAN TIAN <i>National University of Singapore</i>
10:50	Sunken Warships and Deaths at Sea: Sri Lanka’s Trincomalee War Cemetery ANOMA PIERIS <i>The University of Melbourne</i>
11:10	Governing the Sea: The Displacement of the Bajau Laut People in Sabah under Postcolonial Legal Orders CHUN LEAN LIM <i>Chinese University of Hong Kong</i> KRYSTIE NG <i>Chinese University of Hong Kong</i>
11:30	<i>Discussant</i> IVAN LEE <i>National University of Singapore</i>
11:45	QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
12:00 – 13:30	LUNCH BREAK
13:30 – 15:00	PANEL 5 – CAPITAL AND BORDERS
<i>Chairperson</i>	<i>Chairperson</i> DHIRAJ NAINANI <i>National University of Singapore</i>
13:30	The Distinctive Relationship between Urban and Rural Legalities in the Economically Peripheral Countries of the East-Southeast Asian Regional Economy MICHAEL W. DOWDLE <i>National University of Singapore</i>
13:50	An Asian <i>Lex Mercatoria</i> (or Law of Traders): Law, Geography and the Modern Nation State JEREMY J. KINGSLEY <i>Western Sydney University</i>
14:10	Shadowy Shares: Capital Mobility, Financial Infrastructure, and the Creation of the Shenzhen Stock Exchange in China, 1980-1993 TAOMO ZHOU <i>National University of Singapore</i>
14:30	<i>Discussant</i> KEVIN YL TAN <i>National University of Singapore</i>
14:45	QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
15:00 – 15:30	AFTERNOON TEA BREAK

15:30 – 17:00	PANEL 6 – CARTOGRAPHIES AND ICONOGRAPHIES
<i>Chairperson</i>	<i>Chairperson</i> KAH-WEE LEE <i>National University of Singapore</i>
15:30	Trigonometrical Juridism in British India: Unificatory Images and Jurisdictional Rationality SABARISH SURESH <i>National University of Singapore</i>
15:40	Tsang Tsou-Choi’s Urban Calligraphy as Legal Geographical Art Practice SHANE CHALMERS <i>University of Hong Kong</i>
16:10	The Topographies of Urban Atmospheres: Law and Criminal Justice in Tokyo and Osaka PETER RUSH <i>University of Melbourne</i> ALISON YOUNG <i>University of Melbourne</i>
16:30	<i>Discussant</i> LYNETTE J. CHUA <i>National University of Singapore</i>
16:45	QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
17:00 – 17:30	SUMMARY & CLOSING REMARKS DHIRAJ NAINANI <i>National University of Singapore</i> KAH-WEE LEE <i>National University of Singapore</i> MAITRII V. AUNG-THWIN <i>National University of Singapore</i>
17:30	END OF WORKSHOP

**Risky Roads:
Speed, Governance, and Infrastructural Dispositions in Urban India**

SNEHA ANNAVARAPU

National University of Singapore
snehanna@nus.edu.sg

With increasing motorization, legislative changes, and the modernization of policing techniques in Indian cities in the past two decades, the issue of traffic indiscipline and “lawlessness” has come to feature as an important civic problem, a public health crisis, and a source of culturally intimate humor. Central to this national conversation about traffic has been the issue of speeding and road deaths – a recurring bee in the bonnet of the swanky road infrastructural projects that are celebrated as icons of a “new India”. While scholarship explores the politics of road construction and its ideological affinities, little qualitative research empirically examines how motorists in India relate to risk, safety, and pleasure on the road. In this paper, I examine how expressways, flyovers, and wide roads in the city turn into sites of emergency during road crashes and how motorists in Hyderabad relate to the risky promises of automobility. I trace how speeding laws are enforced by law-enforcement agencies and the messy negotiations around care and pleasure that constitute the contradictions of aspirational urbanism in South Asia.

Sneha Annavarapu is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and the South Asian Studies Programme at the National University of Singapore. She also holds a joint appointment in the Urban Studies programme at Yale-NUS College. An ethnographer by training, her research interests center around the politics of transportation, infrastructure, class relations, and gender in contemporary Indian cities. Her work has appeared in *Social Problems*, *Social Change*, *Journal of Historical Sociology*, and *Journal of Consumer Culture*. She is currently working on a book project titled *On the Move: The Politics of Driving in India*. She is a regular host on the New Books Network and runs *Ethnographic Marginalia*, a blog that features ethnographic writing.

Zero-Waste Strategies in Singapore and Tokyo: Neoliberal Governance, Household Recycling, and Civil Society Engagement

ATMAJA GOHAIN BARUAH

National University of Singapore
e0437662@u.nus.edu

IMMANUELA ASA RAHADINI

National University of Singapore
a.rahadi@nus.edu.sg

SHIORI SHAKUTO

University of Sydney
shiori.shakuto@sydney.edu.au

BRENDA S.A. YEOH

National University of Singapore
geoyasa@nus.edu.sg

This paper examines Singapore's and Tokyo's zero-waste agenda, particularly from the household level. In Singapore, we examine the *Resource Sustainability Act* (2019), which employs the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) framework to shift the onus of proper waste management onto producers and suppliers; and secondly, the *Zero Waste Masterplan* (2019) which aims to reduce the per capita daily waste sent to landfills by 30 percent and achieve a 70 percent overall recycling rate by 2030, adopting a circular economy model. In Japan, our focus is on the *Act on the Promotion of Resource Circulation for Plastics* and the *Waste Management and Public Cleansing Act*, which emphasize EPR and enforce strict penalties for non-compliance. These laws promote circular economy practices and recycling standards at all stages, from product design to disposal, while being complemented by the cultural principle of *mottainai* that emphasises on resource conservation.

On the surface, both cities seem to have similar policies on material circularities. However, we contend that both countries' local cultures, customs, and environmental histories produce slight but crucial differences; Singapore's circularity aims to design out waste altogether, whereas Tokyo's is rooted in a deep respect for resources. Such differences manifest in the distinct spatio-legal arrangements pertaining to material circularity. On the one hand, Tokyo's model, aligned with national objectives, intertwines historical and cultural perspectives on recycling with locally and globally focused efforts to establish a "sound material-cycle" society that honours resource value. On the other hand, Singapore's approach blends brute pragmatism and cutting-edge technoscientific strategies to produce locally targeted solutions for waste elimination.

Examining 75 household interviews conducted in both cities, we first observe how these arrangements affect the everyday instances of (non)compliance with the zero-waste agenda, thus underscoring how variations in regulations can develop distinct environmental spaces and practices. Second, we discovered how both cities lack civil society involvement, indicating a gap in regulation and practice, where individual compliance with zero-waste goals is expected to "scale up" to achieve state or national-level impact. This points to possible shortcomings in both countries' current environmental governance strategies and highlights opportunities for stronger community engagement to bolster zero-waste initiatives.

Atmaja Gohain Baruah is a joint PhD student at the Comparative Asian Studies Programme at the National University of Singapore and the Geography Department at King's College London (KCL). Atmaja is interested in issues of political ecology and intersectionality, disaster resilience, climate-related migration including displacement and planned relocation, systems thinking, environmental governance in Asia, and Indo-Pacific relations. She is currently working with the Asia Research Institute at the Asia Migration Cluster as a Research Assistant.

Immanuela Asa Rahadini is a Research Assistant with the Asian Migration Cluster at the Asia Research Institute. She completed her BSocSci (Hons) in Political Science at the National University of Singapore. She is also part of the “Plastic Waste and Women’s Household Practices in Asia and Australia” project team. She also assists in various research work done in the cluster.

Shiori Shakuto is a Lecturer at the Department of Anthropology in the University of Sydney. Her research addresses gender and environment in contemporary Japan through the lens of mobilities of people and things between Japan and Southeast Asia. She applies emerging insights in feminist anthropology to longstanding debates about how global political economy and the state’s economic policies affect the most intimate domains of our lives in transnational arena. Her current research documents how women, in different roles as homemakers, career professionals and workers, migrant domestic workers and environmental activists, are shaping the management of household plastic waste in plastic sending countries in Asia Pacific

Brenda S.A. Yeoh FBA is Raffles Professor of Social Sciences, Department of Geography, as well as the Research Leader of the Asian Migration Cluster at the Asia Research Institute. She has a DPhil in Geography from the University of Oxford. Professor Yeoh was awarded the Vautrin Lud Prize for outstanding achievements in Geography in 2021 for her contributions to migration and transnationalism studies. Her research interests include the politics of space in colonial and postcolonial cities, and she has considerable experience working on a wide range of migration research in Asia, including key themes such as cosmopolitanism and highly skilled talent migration; gender, social reproduction and care migration; migration, national identity and citizenship issues; globalising universities and international student mobilities; and cultural politics, family dynamics and international marriage migrants. She has published widely in these fields.

Governing Data in Urban Taiwan: A Legal-geographic Perspective on Data Governance

TZU-I LEE

National University of Science and Technology
tlee@mail.ntust.edu.tw

MIN-SYUAN KANG

National Taipei University
s811251102@webmail.ntpu.edu.tw

The development of data and AI governance in Taiwan presents opportunities and challenges, particularly in urban settings where legal and spatial dynamics significantly shape access and control over data. Taiwan's legal framework for data governance is built on policies like *The Freedom of Government Information Law*, the *Open Data* initiatives, and the *Personal Data Protection Act*. Still, the legal apparatus has yet to address the implications of spatial and socio-political power dynamics fully. This study examines Taiwan's data governance landscape through a legal-geographic lens, exploring how existing laws interact with the spatial arrangements and power structures in urban areas. It investigates how Taiwan's data governance may inadvertently create "digital enclaves" — segregated spaces where data access is limited by legal and technological barriers, exacerbating urban inequalities. Through legal-geographic analysis, we examine how data governance interacts with urban space, particularly in the context of open government and smart city initiatives, and how these dynamics perpetuate or challenge existing socio-economic divides. It aims to propose legal reforms and policy recommendations to create a more inclusive and equitable data governance framework, focusing on transparency, public participation, and spatial justice in Taiwan's urban development. This study also offers broader implications for data governance across Asia.

Tzu-I Lee is an Assistant Professor at the Graduate Institute of Patent, National Taiwan University of Science and Technology. She holds an LLM from UC Berkeley, a JD from the University of Illinois Chicago, a PhD in Geography from National Taiwan University, and an MA from the University of Warwick. Her research focuses on IP Law, Tech Law, and Policy. She leads the project "Constructing Localized Legal Geography of IP: The Interplay of Law, Technology, and the Taiwanese Pop Music Industry" and co-leads "Regulatory Frameworks for Artificial Intelligence: A Human-Centered Approach," both funded by Taiwan's National Science and Technology Council.

Min-Syuan Kang is a PhD candidate in Law at National Taipei University. Her research interests include Constitutional Law, Administrative Law, and Information Law and Policy. She serves as a research assistant for the project "Regulatory Frameworks for Artificial Intelligence: A Human-Centered Approach."

**Inside-Outside:
The Experience of Legal Entanglement by Public Flat Owners in Singapore**

JEANETTE YEO

National University of Singapore
e0545178@u.nus.edu

Legal theory conceptualises property in various forms: an object, a set of relations between actors and an object, and as an idea which has the power to distribute practices in relation to itself. These conceptualisations do not recognise the spatial aspect of property which is a tangible part of how property is experienced in the world. Using ethnographic vignettes constructed from historical research and fieldwork, this study engages with the spatial aspect of property by looking at situations involving breaching rules associated with the daily use and enjoyment of spaces inside and outside Singapore's public flats. In these examples, the outcome of breaching the rules does not involve their interpretation and application per se, but is interconnected with the resolution of, what I term, legal entanglement – the phenomena where legal and non-legal aspects (in this case, the spatial aspect) of an arrangement are enmeshed when it is operationalised in real-world situations.

Jeanette Yeo is in the final year of the PhD programme in law at the National University of Singapore. Her research interests lie in understanding the concept of property at work in the world through a socio-legal perspective, the impact of legal regimes which regulate land use and housing, and investigating the social histories which underpin legal structures and systems in use today. Her current research examines how ownership is experienced by leaseholders of public flats in Singapore. Prior to this, she spent ten years as legal counsel dealing with public and private sector corporate real estate and property-related algorithmic technology.

Navigating the Law in “New” Geylang: A Study of Contemporary Prostitution in Clandestine Urban Zones in Singapore

ROBIN CHEE MING FENG

Singapore Management University
robin.chee.2024@cis.smu.edu.sg

As a highly developed metropolis with a squeaky-clean image, Singapore is not often known for the pockets of deviant spaces submerged in its underbelly. These areas are often painstakingly shielded from prying eyes by strict zoning laws which have relegated them to less prominent arenas. One industry which has predominantly feature in these deviant locales is the flesh trade. While Singapore has implemented strict laws to prohibit streetwalkers from roaming the city-state, licensed brothels are still allowed in certain designated areas like Geylang. Until the early 2010s, illegal streetwalkers and licensed prostitutes co-existed in blurred zones of legality within the lanes of Geylang. Due to the escalation in enforcement actions clamping down on streetwalkers since the early 2010s, and the emergence of COVID-19 which almost decimated the licensed brothels since 2020, both legal and illegal workers in the flesh trade had little choice but to start moving to “undesigned zones” to ply their trade. Through semi-structured interviews with 15 sex workers, this paper attempts to illuminate their challenges in navigating the law, while transforming these zones into clandestine deviant locales with strictures, hierarchical frameworks and enforcers very different from those in Geylang.

Robin Chee Ming Chee is currently a PhD student and a research scholar at the College of Integrative Studies at the Singapore Management University. He was previously the owner of an enrichment centre and was a teaching assistant in Sociology at the National University Of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University. He holds Honours and Master of Research degrees in Sociology from the National University of Singapore as well as a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from Singapore Management University. He has published broadly in areas such as migration, religion, leisure, ethnicity, work identities, deviance, sexuality, popular culture and social theory. His current research interests include migration and diasporic spaces, leisure and consumption, performativity, third places, ethnography and qualitative research methods, workplace cultures and identities, new media and society and Singapore society.

Critical Reflectons on Urban Disasters and Legal Reforms in the Philippines through the 2009 and 2024 Metro Manila Floods

BENIGNO (NINOY) C. BALGOS

Ateneo de Manila University
ninoybalgos@gmail.com

Birkland's "focusing event" theory posits that disaster events often set the agenda for significant public policy changes (1997, 2006, 2017). This is evident in the Philippines, where the devastating 2009 flood in Metro Manila led to the enactment of two landmark laws: the Climate Change Act of 2009 and the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010. Despite previous efforts to shift disaster management laws from reactive to proactive, these initiatives only gained traction after the urban catastrophe. Notably, disaster-induced legal reforms seem primarily driven by events in highly urbanized areas like Metro Manila, whereas rural disasters rarely prompt similar responses.

Fifteen years later, the 2024 flood once again ravaged the same communities in Metro Manila, albeit with even greater impact. While the government's disaster response capabilities had improved since 2009, the flood exposed weaknesses in the urban master plan, despite substantial investments in flood control. The economic and social consequences of the flooding have reignited calls for legal reform and a reassessment of the urban flood migration budget. This paper explores the intersection of law and urban disasters in the Philippines, highlighting how legal attention and reform are often reactive to urban disasters, particularly in the National Capital Region.

Benigno (Ninoy) C. Balgos is a lecturer in Disaster and Humanitarian Studies at the Department of Development Studies, Ateneo de Manila University. His research focuses on disaster and climate governance, with an emphasis on exploring and evaluating public policies and development interventions related to disasters and climate change. He is particularly interested in examining the role of communities in these processes, with a focus on their participation and agency within both formal and informal structures.

The Legal Chronotope of Nusantara

HARISON CITRAWAN

Indonesian National Research and Innovation Agency
harison.citrawan@brin.go.id

This study examines the way the ongoing mode of spatialization of Indonesia's new capital, Nusantara, represents an internal temporal conflict within law and governance. Nusantara—hailed to be a new “smart and modern”, “sustainable” and “national identity” urban space in Indonesia—is an assemblage of spatiotemporal scales shaped by the country's today's collective memory, perception and expectation. Working with Valverde's Bakhtinian *chronotope* in critical legal studies, I argue that this mode of spatialization is unique in Asia's post-colonial context, suggesting contending temporal narratives of acceleration towards modernity and trauma of colonial dispossession reflected in and facilitated by law. Moreover, the spatiotemporal scales of Nusantara—in terms of administrative, ecological and political—may amount to a peculiar machinery of jurisdiction that navigates the dynamic tensions between traditional (*adat*), local and national moods and affects. As Nusantara's jurisdiction appears to be fluid, this might recount the trajectory of the country's constitutional governance of space in the future.

Harison Citrawan is a junior researcher at Research Center for Law under the Indonesian National Research and Innovation Agency. His main interests lie in the interdisciplinary studies of law and reasoning, legal epistemology and critical theories. He is the author of *Law, Time and Historical Injustices: A Critical Analysis of Intuitive Judicial Reasoning* (Routledge, November 2024).

Super-Territorialization from the SIJORI Growth Triangle to the Johor-Singapore SEZ

DANIEL P.S. GOH

National University of Singapore
socgohd@nus.edu.sg

The Singapore-Johor-Riau (SIJORI) Growth Triangle was established as an economic partnership between Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore in 1994 to synergize land-scarce Singapore's advanced industrialization and capitalization with the land and labour resources of neighbouring Johor and the Riau Islands. This was a consequence of the moving of labour-intensive industries to Johor and Batam from Singapore since the 1980's. After thirty years, in 2024, Malaysia and Singapore proposed to partner for a Johor-Singapore SEZ to strengthen economic links within SIJORI and streamline regulation to meet intensifying competition for investment in the region. This article critically evaluates the current understanding of special economic zones as extra-territorialization or transnational instances of graduated sovereignty. It discusses the evolution of the SIJORI Growth Triangle to the proposed Johor-Singapore SEZ as the super-territorialization of modern corporate sovereignty that fuses the socio-legal institutions of state and corporation. Rather than positing new international divisions of labour and exploitative inequalities between states, a thesis that has its lineage in theories of imperialisms of free trade and world systems, or the formation of new transnational contact zones of hybridizing practices and flexible citizenship, I argue we are seeing new super-territorial institutional arrangements that supersede anything "national" in form or substance.

Daniel P.S. Goh is Associate Professor of Sociology, Vice Dean (Special Programmes) at NUS College, and Associate Provost (Undergraduate Education), National University of Singapore. 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 co-editor of *Current Sociology*, a flagship journal of the International Sociological Association, and principal investigator of the *Capitals of the Future: Place, Power and Possibility in Southeast Asia* at the Asia Research Institute, NUS.

Contending Views on Land Use and Democracy: Social Narratives of Peasant Responses to Land Recovery in Peri-Urban Hanoi

MARIA IMA CARMELA L. ARIATE
University of the Philippines-Diliman
mlariate@alum.up.edu.ph

In 2013, Vietnam passed a new Land Law aimed at addressing rising tensions and increasing disputes resulting from compulsory land recovery since 2000. The Land Law's reforms to land tenure policy were shaped by grievances collected through institutionalized policy feedback mechanisms at the commune, district, and provincial levels. Vietnam Landa, a coalition of registered CSOs and individuals advocating for land-use rights, supported grassroots consultations in the amendment process. They recommended that the government seek the consensus of 70% of the peasant population affected by compulsory land acquisition. One provision addressing these concerns was the requirement for approval from both the Prime Minister and the National Assembly before large parcels of land could be recovered for socio-economic development (Article 62). However, peasants perceived this provision as further centralizing authority, reducing their negotiating power.

This research examines the range of resistance among hold-out peasants from the initial notification of government land recovery intentions up to 2015. It also considers the legal responses from commune and district authorities to these resistance campaigns, shedding light on how such responses influenced peasants' perceptions of jurisdiction, equity, and authority. The analysis is informed by Kerkvliet's concept of 'everyday resistance,' O'Brien's 'rightful resistance,' and White's definition of resistance as actions aimed at decisively changing state policies, with data collected from firsthand accounts of hold-out peasants.

Findings reveal individual motivations behind the peasants' resistance, highlighting the limits of democratic engagement in Vietnam. The government's varied applications of jurisdiction and authority have led to a fracturing of relations between the State and peasants, with resistance movements challenging established notions of social justice and equity.

Maria Ima Carmela L. Ariate is a graduate of MA Asian Studies from the Asian Center of the University of the Philippines in Diliman. She has specialized in Vietnamese studies, social movements, and peasant resistance in Southeast Asia. She is a development worker experienced at engaging with civil society organizations in Asia Pacific and multilateral organizations on development effectiveness and business and human rights. She is a mobilizer encouraging local communities to adapt positive health-seeking behaviors, integrating lessons from movement building and social behavior change principles on field. Recent published works include "People's Resistance in a Multipolar World: Research Conference and Militarization and Conflicts in Asia Pacific" (March 2020) and "Scoping Research on the Participation of Civil Society Organizations and People's Organizations in Asia Pacific (October 2019).

Negotiating Boundaries: Legal Pluralism and Urban Space in Chongqing's Treaty Port Era

YUAN TIAN

National University of Singapore
yuantian@nus.edu.sg

While much of the existing scholarship on extraterritoriality and treaty port has focused on the coastal region, this study examines the unique legal and spatial dynamics that emerged in Chongqing after its designation as a treaty port in 1891. As an inland city far from China's coast, Chongqing presents a compelling case study of how colonial legal frameworks adapted to and transformed urban spaces in Asia's hinterland. I argue that Chongqing's status as an inland city and a latecomer to the treaty-port system created a complex legal landscape characterized by overlapping jurisdictions and contested spaces. Unlike coastal treaty ports with announced colonial influence and clearly delineated foreign concessions, Chongqing's colonial geography was fluid and ambiguous. This ambiguity gave rise to a distinctive form of legal pluralism, where multiple legal orders coexisted and often clashed within the urban fabric. Drawing from both Chinese and English archives, particularly legal cases, I explore three key themes: 1. The malleability of extraterritorial boundaries in Chongqing's urban context; 2. The emergence of legal opportunism as local actors navigated competing jurisdictions; 3. The impact of Chongqing's mountainous geography and anti-foreign sentiment on its legal-spatial configuration. This paper aims to expand understanding of how law and urban space have interacted and co-evolved in Asian cities, particularly in areas where colonial influence took on unique forms.

Yuan Tian is a postdoctoral fellow at NUS's Department of Chinese Studies. A global historian of late imperial and modern China, Yuan focuses on legal history, business history, Christianity, and colonialism. She earned a PhD from the University of Chicago. Currently, she is working on her monograph *Uncharted Jurisdiction: Law, Imperialism, and Global Trade in Modern China*, which investigates how extraterritoriality became deeply embedded in the legal and socioeconomic fabric of Chinese society. This project shifts scholarly attention from the well-studied coastal treaty ports to the Chinese interior, particularly the Upper Yangtze region, offering a fresh perspective on imperial legal encounters and Sino-foreign trade. Her recent work will be published in *Late Imperial China* and *Journal of Chinese History*. Yuan's research has received grants and fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies, the Hoover Institution, the Association for Asian Studies, the Nicholson Center for British Studies, and the China Times Cultural Foundation, among others.

Sunken Warships and Deaths at Sea: Sri Lanka's Trincomalee War Cemetery

ANOMA PIERIS

The University of Melbourne
apieris@unimelb.edu.au

The Trincomalee War Cemetery is a micro signifier of Sri Lanka's precarity during World War II, and seaward extension of its embattled territory. Of its 314 casualties, 171 graves are dedicated to deaths at sea, 307 from Britain's first, purpose-built aircraft carrier - HMS Hermes. The warship's submerged wreckage was discovered in 1967, embedded in the ocean floor, and forming an artificial reef. This paper studies the bodies entombed in its carcass as encircled by several legislative instruments: The UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001); The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982) and related bilateral treaties; and articles granting sovereign immunity for foreign war ships in the internal waters of a third state. The preservation *in situ* of World War II wrecks relates in turn to the 1949 Geneva Convention's emphasis on respectful burial of deceased service personnel. The wreck is treated as a collective military grave, individualised in cemetery markers, significant for transnational commemoration, but increasingly, also, a feature of underwater maritime heritage, and a marine habitat attracting diving tourism. Its sovereignty is moot as a foreign flag ship in its former colony's territorial waters, a test case for 'intertemporal heritage'.

Anoma Pieris is a Professor of Architecture and Associate Dean Research at the Melbourne School of Design. She is trained in architectural history and geography and her research focuses on issues of postcolonial nationalism and territorial sovereignty. Anoma's most recent publications include the anthology *Architecture on the Borderline: Boundary Politics and Built Space* (2019) and *The Architecture of Confinement: Incarceration Camps of the Pacific War* (2022), co-authored with Lynne Horiuchi. A multi-authored publication by Pieris, Lozanovska, Dellios, Saniga and Beynon, titled *Immigrant Industry: Building Post War Australia* is forthcoming in 2024 (Berghahn Books). Anoma was guest curator with Martino Stierli, Sean Anderson and Evangelos Kotsioris of the 2022 MoMA exhibition, *The Project of Independence: Architectures of Decolonization in South Asia, 1947-1985*.

**Governing the Sea:
The Displacement of the Bajau Laut People in
Sabah under Postcolonial Legal Orders**

CHUN LEAN LIM

Chinese University of Hong Kong
1155204040@link.cuhk.edu.hk

KRYSTIE NG

Chinese University of Hong Kong
krystie712@yahoo.com

Hundreds of Bajau Laut in Sabah were evicted from their homes in June 2024. Human rights groups accused the law enforcement unit of violating the Bajau Laut's rights to residence, security, economic activity, education, and cultural preservation and demanded home restoration, compensation, and legalization of the Bajau Laut. The indigenous communities who have historically resided in and around the sea across the East Malay Archipelago for centuries have been facing displacement and marginalization due to their undocumented status.

This article proposes a legal geographical framework of the Bajau Laut issue in Sabah. The legal geography scholarship offers important insights into this controversy: it has established a Fourth World consensus to struggle for indigenous rights (Fukurai, 2018); it raises critical awareness of the Eurocentric nature of national border demarcation (Ojeda & Blomley, 2024); and it brings the dimension of spatiality to reflect on the existing legal system (Bennett & Layard, 2015). By analyzing reports, legal acts, and the Bajau Laut's ways of life, this study asks: (a) what spatial relationship the Bajau Laut have with the sea; (b) how the legal framework for sea and coastal nomads has changed from the pre- to post-colonial era; and (c) how the lack of laws concerning maritime settlers results in the displacement of the Bajau Laut.

Chun Lean Lim is a PhD student majoring in Cultural Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. His field of interest is Science and Technology Studies in Southeast Asia. Currently, he is working on his dissertation on genetic science and identity politics in Malaysia. He also conducted research on mobile healthcare in post-coup Myanmar. Prior to this, Chun Lean received his BA and MPhil from Nanyang Technological University and Lingnan University. He also participated in ARI's 19th Singapore Graduate Forum on Southeast Asian Studies.

Krystie Ng is a Malaysian researcher and curator based in Hong Kong. Her research interests include contemporary art practices, cultural activism and ethnic relationships in the postcolonial context of Southeast Asia. She graduated with a master's degree in Inter-Asia Cultural Studies from National Chiao Tung University and is currently a PhD student in the Cultural Studies Department at The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

The Distinctive Relationship between Urban and Rural Legalities in the Economically Peripheral Countries of the East-Southeast Asian Regional Economy

MICHAEL W. DOWDLE

National University of Singapore
michael.dowdle@nus.edu.sg

My paper will seek to locate an “Asian urban legality” not in a distinct urban legality per se, but in a particular relationship that legality has with its surrounding rural legalities. Drawing on studies of “Asian capitalism” – a particular form of regional industrial-economic ordering that is distinct to East-Southeast Asia – my paper will argue that what is distinct about Asian urban legalities is that in Asia’s more peripheral national economies, there is a disconnect between that legality and that nation’s rural legalities. Simply put, most commonly, peripheral rural legalities largely reflect the particular legalities of their urban cores, due to the economic symbiosis of the local core-periphery ordering. But Asian capitalism is peculiar in that its distinct reliance on transnational production chains causes peripheral rural legalities to be much more disconnected from their local peripheries due to the pronounced economic and social influence of the *foreign* locales to which they are connected via these production chains. This causes the legality of the urban core to have a much greater difficulty penetrating its rural periphery, at least in comparison with its counterparts in the more traditionally industrialized regional economies of the North Atlantic. Examples from Thailand and Indonesia will be used to support this thesis.

Michael W. Dowdle is an Associate Professor in the Law Faculty of the National University of Singapore. His research focus includes what he called ‘regulatory geography’ – the study of how space shapes regulatory capacity. His publications along these lines include the edited volume, *Asian Capitalism and the Regulation of Competition: Towards a Regulatory Geography of Global Competition Law* (Cornell University Press, 2014); and, most recently, “The COVID Pandemic and the Regulatory Geography of Rule of Law: Putting ‘Rule of Law’ in Its Place” in *Law and Development Review* (2024). He is presently working on a monograph tentatively entitled *Regulatory Geography: How Space Effects Regulatory Effectiveness*.

**An Asian *Lex Mercatoria* (or Law of Traders):
Law, Geography and the Modern Nation State**

JEREMY J. KINGSLEY

Western Sydney University
j.kingsley@westernsydney.edu.au

At the heart of legal research and practice are two key theories - jurisdiction and sovereignty. Both are intricately connected to state boundaries and modern notions of statecraft. Therefore, geography lies at the heart of legal thinking. However, this geographic orientation to law has clear flaws. For example, in the case of global scams – where legal problems jump boundaries, can occur simultaneously in more than one place, or can begin in one jurisdiction and conclude in another. In these circumstances where is jurisdiction or sovereignty to be found?

Over the past decade, the discussion of InterAsian connections poses significant challenges to traditional legal imagination, where boundaries (jurisdiction) and the application of legal authority (sovereignty) are typically confined to the boundaries of a state. Therefore, how does a vision of the world based on state boundaries deal with interconnected global realities?

In considering a possible answer to this question I undertake an analysis of Asian networks of merchants as architects of transnational business relationships. These business networks, and transactions link people, goods and capital from the Gulf states through to Singapore and onto Hong Kong to create a new, or at least re-imagined, body of law known as *Lex Mercatoria* (the law of merchants).

Jeremy J. Kingsley is an Associate Professor and Associate Dean (International) at the Western Sydney University - School of Law (WSU-SOL). He is a transnational law scholar and anthropologist. His academic work is published in both public affairs and academic journals. His book, *Religious Authority and Local Governance in Eastern Indonesia*, was recently published by Melbourne University Press. Kingsley is currently working on a research project on 'Inter-Asian Legalities', funded by the Social Science Research Council (US) and the National University of Singapore, and is a member of the InterAsia Partnership (Arab Council for the Social Sciences, Secretariat). Kingsley is also foundation editor of the Asia Law and Society Series, Melbourne University Press. He is a Chief Investigator on an Australian Research Council Discovery Project on contract enforcement in Indonesia. He is also the coordinator of the Transnational Lawyering Consortium, a partnership between Deakin Law School and WSU-SOL, to provide student mobility programs directly connected to our law curriculum.

**Shadowy Shares:
Capital Mobility, Financial Infrastructure, and the
Creation of the Shenzhen Stock Exchange in China, 1980-1993**

TAOMO ZHOU

National University of Singapore
tmzhou@nus.edu.sg

As the first stock market in the People's Republic of China (PRC), the opening Shenzhen Stock Exchange was a milestone in China's economic reform as well as in the global financial history in the post Bretton Woods era. Yet the birth of the Shenzhen Stock Exchange's was imbued with questionable legality. Not only did it start trial operation in December 1990 without official approval from Beijing, but it also continued to develop in the absence of national companies and securities laws or accounting standards in mainland China. This paper shows how the Shenzhen Stock Exchange was established in response to widespread illicit, over-the-counter transactions on the streets of Shenzhen, with individual speculators negotiating under lychee trees along the Red Lichee Road, the so-called "Wall Street of China." Stock market creation in early reform era was a bottom-up phenomenon in which the Chinese state was constantly under urgent pressure to engage in belated financial infrastructure building and legislation to curb black market activities and extreme market volatility. In this process, ordinary investors and local policymakers pushed for greater capital mobility across the dual borders of Shenzhen—one between the Special Economic Zone and inland China, another between Shenzhen and Hong Kong.

Taomo Zhou is an Associate Professor in the Department of Chinese Studies and Dean's Chair in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore. Her first book, *Migration in the Time of Revolution: China, Indonesia and the Cold War* (Cornell University Press, 2019), won a *Foreign Affairs* "Best Books of 2020" award and an Honorable Mention for the 2021 Harry J. Benda Prize from the Association for Asian Studies. Taomo is currently working on her second book project entitled "Made in Shenzhen: A Global History of China's First Special Economic Zone," which is under advance contract with Stanford University Press. She is also researching on motherhood during the Cold War.

Trigonometrical Juridism in British India: Unificatory Images and Jurisdictional Rationality

SABARISH SURESH

National University of Singapore
s.suresh@nus.edu.sg

This paper engages with two aspects of how cartography enabled law and jurisdictional ordering in a specific historical context. First, by interrogating the ways in which the great trigonometrical surveys of the British colonial enterprise and the *Atlas of India* entrenched 'India' as a distinct, coherent, continuous, and contiguous geographical entity, this paper will demonstrate how an epistemology rooted in scientific rigour and a civilising impulse produced the perception of India as a thoroughly refined British legal territory. Second, by engaging with the maps and records of colonial cadastral and revenue surveys, this paper will show how maps played a critical role in the visualisation of British Indian territory in terms of police-networks, and how such a visualisation paved the way for the rationalisation and systematisation of horizontal jurisdictions, with vertically aligned hierarchies, across the territory. Taken together, this paper engages with how British colonial cartography, with an apparent scientific force, visually produced Indian territory as a unified legal entity, constituted by juridical institutions with neatly organised jurisdictional rationalities, which were laid down based on an antecedent imagination of such a framework through cartographic picturing.

Sabarish Suresh is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore, where he teaches criminal law. His research revolves around law and humanities, legal history, constitutional law, and criminal law.

Tsang Tsou-Choi's Urban Calligraphy as Legal Geographical Art Practice

SHANE CHALMERS

University of Hong Kong

chalmers@hku.hk

From the 1950s until his death in 2007, a man known as the Kowloon King covered Hong Kong with calligraphy. Not all of Hong Kong: just government property. And not with beautiful script, but with a vulgar style “recognisable for its lack of grace” (Lim). As *vandalism*, Tsang Tsou-choi's calligraphy involved an unrelenting defacement of colonial structures. As *proclamation*, it involved an equally unrelenting counter-claim to sovereignty, with the walls of text setting out a genealogy that traced Tsang's title over twenty generations to a legendary first King of Kowloon. But what was the calligraphy doing as *art*? Despite his reputation as one of Hong Kong's most important artists, Tsang himself would say: “I am not an artist – I am simply the King!” What, then, to make of this art which was not art, made by a king who was not a king, which was once an omnipresent part of colonial Hong Kong but which has left few visible traces? To answer that question, I read Tsang's work as a *legal geographical art practice*, which re-appropriated the “blank” geographical spaces that were central to the colonial projection of sovereignty – what Joseph Conrad called the “white patches for a boy to dream gloriously over” – and used them to project a pre-colonial sovereign imaginary that anticipated a post-colonial future.

Shane Chalmers is an Assistant Professor at the University of Hong Kong, Faculty of Law. He is a scholar of law and humanities, with a critical focus on the legacies of European colonialism for laws and societies today. His work has contributed to the sub-fields of law and colonialism, international law and development, and critical legal theory. He is also a long-standing member, and currently a Vice President, of the Law, Literature and Humanities Association of Australasia. He is currently completing a monograph on *Colonial Legal Imaginary: A Carnavalesque Jurisprudence of the Antipodes*. He is also the author of *Liberia and the Dialectic of Law: Critical Theory, Pluralism, and the Rule of Law* (Routledge, 2018); editor (with Desmond Manderson) of “Colonial Legal Imaginaries | Southern Literary Futures”, *Law & Literature* (2024); and editor (with Sundhya Pahuja) of *The Routledge Handbook of International Law and Humanities* (Routledge, 2021).

The Topographies of Urban Atmospheres: Law and Criminal Justice in Tokyo and Osaka

PETER RUSH

University of Melbourne
p.rush@unimelb.edu.au

ALISON YOUNG

University of Melbourne
ayoung@unimelb.edu.au

The topographies of law and criminal justice are plural, crafting the associations and inclinations of democratic relations of authority. In Kasumigaseki Tokyo, the legal precinct takes place according to a plan, 7m above sea level. In Osaka, law bends with the river. *Koban*, or police boxes, stretch across the Japanese city, nodes in a governmental network.

In this paper, our approach is situated at the crossroads of jurisprudence and humanities, criminology and urban studies. We pay attention to spatial affordances constituting the lawful atmospheres through which law is generated, crime governed, and justice inscribed, while members of the public are interpellated as subjects in and of law in a city organised around the topographies of law and its enforcement. Through a *geometry of lines*, law can form networks or congregate in legal precincts. Urban design, mascots and iconography come together in a *signifying assemblage* in places of policing, adjudication and governance. Each of these spatialised *dispositifs* are generative of atmospheres of place-based relations of law and criminal justice. Hard to pin down, atmospheres are corporeal and affective: our sensorium is engaged. We might say this is another Japan, another law.

Peter Rush is an Associate Professor in the Law Faculty at the University of Melbourne. He has been a youth worker, an artist, a filmmaker and a scholar. He is the author of several books on criminal law and edited collections on jurisprudence and poststructuralist legal theory. He was the Karl Loewenstein Fellow in Jurisprudence and Political Thought at Amherst College. He has made a short documentary film concerning justice, aesthetics and colonialism in the city of Melbourne, and is an Associate of the Melbourne Centre for Cities. His current research concerns the formation of legal precincts in Australian and international cities, and has a longstanding interest in Japanese criminal law. Together with Alison Young, he is co-writing a book about urban atmospheres of law and criminal justice in Japanese cities.

Alison Young is the Francine V. McNiff Professor of Criminology in the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Melbourne. She has researched graffiti and street art for many years, and her ongoing research engages with the ways in which we live in and govern city spaces. She is currently researching the relationship between the built environment and urban governance in Australia and Japan, in respect of issues such as graffiti and urban creativity, politics and protest, homelessness, and the night-time economy and street crime. Alison is the Deputy Director (Research) of the Melbourne Centre for Cities, a cross-Faculty multi-disciplinary research group engaged in researching cities in Australia and globally. She has also been a visiting research fellow at the Humanities Research Centre at the Australian National University and a visiting professor at the Manheim Centre for Criminology at the London School of Economics in 2018. She is conducting a three-year ARC-funded study of spatial justice in the context of public homelessness and public dissent, and a three-year funded study of night work in contemporary Australian cities. Together with Peter Rush, she is co-writing a book on urban atmospheres of law and criminal justice in Japan.

ABOUT THE ORGANISERS, MODERATORS & CHAIRPERSONS

Maitrii V. AUNG-THWIN is Associate Professor of Myanmar/Southeast Asian History at the National University of Singapore. His research is concerned with nation-building, heritage, identity-politics, knowledge production and resistance in Myanmar. His publications include *A History of Myanmar since Ancient Times: Traditions and Transformations* (2013), *The Return of the Galon King: History, Law, and Rebellion in Colonial Burma* (2011), and *A New History of Southeast Asia* (2010). Dr Aung-Thwin is currently a trustee of the Burma Studies Foundation (USA), board member of the SEASREP Foundation, convener of the Comparative Asian Studies PhD Programme and editor of *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*.

E | maitrii@nus.edu.sg

Tim BUNNELL is Professor in the Department of Geography and Director of the Asia Research Institute, where he is also Leader of the Asian Urbanisms cluster. The primary focus of his research is urbanisation in Southeast Asia, examining both the transformation of cities in that region and urban connections with other parts of the world. Tim's publications include *From World City to the World in One City: Liverpool through Malay Lives* (2016) and *Urban Asias: Essays on Futurity Past and Present* (2018; co-edited with Daniel P.S. Goh). His interest in the nexus of new technology and urban development began with doctoral research on the high-tech Multimedia Super Corridor in Malaysia in the 1990s.

E | aridir@nus.edu.sg

Jiat-Hwee CHANG is Associate Professor of Architecture and Research Leader of the Science, Technology and Society Cluster at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. He is an interdisciplinary researcher working at the intersections of architecture, environment, and STS (Science, Technology and Society). He is the author of *A Genealogy of Tropical Architecture: Colonial Networks, Nature and Technoscience* (2016), which was awarded an International Planning History Society Book Prize 2018, and the co-author of *Everyday Modernism: Architecture and Society in Singapore* (2022), which was awarded the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain's Colvin Prize 2023. Jiat-Hwee is currently working on a book manuscript on the socio-cultural histories and techno-politics of air-conditioning and climate change in urban Asia.

E | jiathwee@nus.edu.sg

Lynette J. CHUA is a law and society scholar with research interest in legal mobilization, legal consciousness, and rights and resistance. She is Professor of Law and Vice Dean (Research) of the Faculty of Law at the National University of Singapore. In addition, she is an Editor-in-Chief of the *Asian Journal of Law & Society*, a former President of the Asian Law & Society Association (2022-23), and co-director of the Training Initiative for Asian Law and Society Scholars (supported by a Henry Luce Foundation grant). She has received multiple awards and recognitions for her research and writing, including the 2024 International Prize of the Law & Society Association in recognition of her significant contributions to the advancement of knowledge in the field of law and society. She is the author of *The Politics of Rights and Southeast Asia* (2022), *The Politics of Love in Myanmar: LGBT Mobilization and Human Rights as A Way of Life* (2019) and *Mobilizing Gay Singapore: Rights and Resistance in an Authoritarian State* (2014). Additionally, she is the co-editor of *The Asian Law & Society Reader* (2023, with David Engel and Sida Liu), *Out of Place: Fieldwork and Positionality in Law and Society* (2024, with Mark F. Massoud) and *Contagion, Technology, and Law at the Limits* (forthcoming, with Jack Jin Gary Lee).

E | lynettechua@nus.edu.sg

Ivan LEE is Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore. He specializes in legal history and criminal law, with a particular focus on the history of the legal ideas and practices of the 19th-century British Empire. His book on *Extradition and Empire: Sovereignty and Subjecthood in Hong Kong* is under contract with Cambridge University Press.

E | lawlwli@nus.edu.sg

Kah-Wee LEE is an interdisciplinary scholar who works on the relationships between space and power, particularly through the lenses of modern expertise such as architecture, urban planning, law and public administration. His current project, “Casino Urbanism”, examines the expansion of the casino industry across Singapore, Manila and Macau and asks how illicit and licit channels of capital are transforming these cities. Lee’s research has been published in *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *Environment and Planning A and C*, *Geoforum*, and *Cities*. He is the author of *Las Vegas in Singapore: Violence, Progress and the Crisis of Nationalist Modernity* (2019).

E | leekahwee@nus.edu.sg

Dhiraj NAINANI is Postdoctoral Fellow at the Asia Research Institute at the National University of Singapore and completed his LLB and LLM at the London School of Economics and Political Science before earning his doctorate in law at the University of Hong Kong, where he was a postgraduate scholarship recipient and was also nominated for several university awards. Upon completing his PhD, Dhiraj worked as a postdoctoral fellow at the Singapore Centre for Environmental Life Sciences Engineering at Nanyang Technological University, where he studied the legal geography, history, and bioethics of public health surveillance during the COVID-19 pandemic as part of an international multi-university interdisciplinary grant project. As a legal geographer interested in urban Asia, Dhiraj’s current research focuses on interrogating the relationship between the law and the Asian city. He is especially interested in exploring the legal concept of ‘sanctuary’ in ethnic enclaves, the aesthetics of the law in urban space, and the spatio-legality of international law. He is also interested in developing the trans-disciplinary aspects of his research through the use of diverse pedagogical methods, practices of inter-disciplinary ‘translation’, and the deployment of non-traditional research methods such as ethnographic fieldwork.

E | dhirajn@nus.edu.sg

Rita PADAWANGI is Associate Professor of Sociology at the Centre for University Core, Singapore University of Social Sciences. With academic training in sociology, urban design and architecture, Rita’s research interests span across the sociology of architecture, social movements and participatory urban development. She coordinates the Southeast Asia Neighbourhoods Network (SEANNET), a collaborative project on urban life in cities that connect academic institutions, scholars and communities for research and education. Rita’s recent works focus on the humanistic aspects of city-making, particularly place-making in city neighborhoods, through collaborative approaches in research, teaching, and community engagement. Her recent research projects include themes of vernacular heritage, urban disasters, and urban aspirations. Rita serves as an editorial board member of the *Asian Cities* book series with the *Amsterdam University Press* and journals *Asia Pacific Viewpoint* and *Area Development and Policy*. She is the editor of the *Routledge Handbook of Urbanization in Southeast Asia* (2019) and co-editor of *Cities by and for the People in Asia* (Amsterdam University Press, 2019).

E | ritapadawangi@suss.edu.sg

Kevin YL TAN specialises in Constitutional and Administrative Law, International Law and International Human Rights. He graduated with an LLB (Hons) from the Faculty of Law at the National University of Singapore and holds an LLM and JSD from the Yale Law School. He currently holds Adjunct Professorships at the Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore (NUS), as well as at the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University (NTU) where he teaches constitutional law, international law and international human rights. He is also Editor-in Chief of the *Asian Journal of Comparative Law*.

E | lawtylk@nus.edu.sg

Orlando WOODS serves as Professor of Geography; Associate Dean (Research and Postgraduate Programmes); Course Coordinator for Big Questions and Lee Kong Chian Fellow at Singapore Management University (SMU). He is also a Director and Pillar Lead (Urban Life) at Singapore Management University’s Urban Institute. His research focuses on religion, cities and urban landscapes, digital technologies, space and social and cultural geography. He also teaches Big Questions (Happiness and Suffering) and Digital Cultures at SMU.

E | orlandowoods@smu.edu.sg

WORKSHOP CONVENOR

DR DHIRAJ NAINANI

Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore

A/P MAITRII AUNG-THWIN

Asia Research Institute & Department of History, National University of Singapore

A/P KAH-WEE LEE

Department of Architecture, National University of Singapore

SECRETARIAT

Ms Valerie Yeo

Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore

AS8, 10 Kent Ridge Crescent, #04-04, Singapore 119260

E | Valerie.yeo@nus.edu.sg