

ARINEWS

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ASIA RESEARCH INSTITUTE
National University of Singapore



ARI NEWS

October 2024

Director's Foreword Focus on Southeast Asia

The past few months have seen a focus on Southeast Asia, with many of our scholars presenting at conferences in the region. Both the 13th International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) and the 2024 Association for Asian Studies (AAS) in Asia Conference were held in Indonesia in July.

Internally, ARI hosted the [19th Singapore Graduate Forum on Southeast Asian Studies](#). The Graduate Forum covers humanities and social science research relating to Southeast Asia – defined as ASEAN member countries plus East Timor – and is principally designed for scholars from the region. Comprised of a two-week virtual fellowship of skills-based sessions covering academic writing, presentation skills and publication strategies, the forum culminates in an in-person graduate student conference, where participants have the opportunity to present and receive feedback on their research.

In July, ARI also brought together established field leaders as part of a nascent [Southeast Asian Studies Collaboratory](#), an initiative that emerged from ARI's long-standing partnership with the Henry Luce Foundation, a supporter of Asian Studies for over 80 years. The event connected regional scholars, research centers, current and former Luce grantees, practitioners, and Luce representatives with ARI researchers and other Southeast Asianists from NUS. This enabled identification and discussion of current research trends and capacity needs that could benefit from future collaborative projects involving ARI and the Luce Foundation.



Alongside our events and new collaborative initiatives, ARI experienced a leadership transition, as [Professor Chong Chi Tat](#) stepped down after nearly twenty years as Chair of the Management Board. Professor Chong's commitment to excellence has been instrumental in driving ARI's success. His leadership has enabled the consolidation of a culture of research innovation, and academic rigour. We welcome [Professor Joanne Roberts](#) as the new Chair. Currently President

of Yale-NUS College, Professor Roberts brings a wealth of experience and has been an ARI Management Board member since January 2021.

We have also had the opportunity to host a member of the International Advisory Board, Professor Michele Ford, as a visitor in the Institute's Asian Migration and Asian Urbanisms clusters. A Professor of Southeast Asian Studies at the University of Sydney, Professor Ford has been an IAB member since 2017.

Finally, Professor Brenda Yeoh, Cluster Leader of Asian Migration at ARI, was a recipient of the NUS University Research Recognition Award at the [NUS Awards 2024](#) earlier this month. Following this latest acknowledgment of Professor Yeoh's groundbreaking research, we look forward to witnessing the continued impact of her work in the field.



Tim Bunnell
Director

Featured Research

Can Alternative Food Networks Fix Consumers' Trust Issues? Observations from China

ARIscope



We all want to know what we are eating but can consumers really trust the process? As observations of Alternative Food Networks (AFN) in China show, the quest to know what happens in the food supply chain is not as simple as it looks - by Dr Li Shumeng.

[Listen](#)

Featured
**The Future of
Multilateralism in
Southeast Asia**
Asian Peace Programme



ASEAN has traditionally regarded itself as the central organisation for multilateral cooperation in Southeast Asia. However, there is a growing perception that ASEAN-centric multilateralism is no longer able to address the myriad of challenges facing the region to deliver the outcomes desired by its stakeholders writes Byron Chong in this policy brief for the Asian Peace Programme.

[Read More](#)

Spotlight
**Q&A with Dr Sumit
Mandal**
In Conversation



Dr Sumit Mandal is the new steward of the Muhammad Alagil Distinguished Professorship in Arabia Asia Studies. In this Q&A, Dr Mandal discusses his interest in developing a language to speak about intermixing and interconnectedness, his current research on *keramat* (Muslim shrines), and his vision for Arabia Asia Studies for the Professorship.

[Read More](#)

Featured Event
**The 19th Singapore Graduate Forum on
Southeast Asia Studies**



19TH SINGAPORE GRADUATE FORUM ON SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES

OPENING ADDRESS



The [19th Singapore Graduate Forum on Southeast Asian Studies](#) was held over two weeks beginning 18 June. Thank you to all our participants - the talent and enthusiasm of the group really shone through and created a fantastic atmosphere for learning and sharing.

Over three days, we were treated to research on topics including food and culture, Asian visualities, urbanisms, gender, literature, migration, histories, labour, migration and religion. The field of Southeast Asian studies is fortunate to have such a talented group of emerging academic leaders.

A huge thanks to our keynote speakers, A/P Kah-Wee Lee and Asst. Prof Kankan Xie and Convenors Dr Ven Paolo B. Valenzuela (Chair), Dr Emily Soh, Dr Jia Wen Hing, A/P Mairrii Aung-Thwin, Dr Michelle Miller, Dr Stefan Huebner and A/P Titima Suthiwan, for being part of the Graduate Forum.

Others

Bulletin Board

📌 **Call for Papers:** Call for submissions for both [Theorizing Migration and Social Mobility in Asia and Beyond](#) and [Natural Climate Solutions in Southeast Asia: Positioning Local Carbon Transition within Global Frameworks](#) close 15 October 2024. Submissions for [Crossing Boundaries: Food and Southeast Asia, 1500-Present](#) close 25 October 2024. The CoronAsur team are seeking contributions for a special section of CoronAsur on '[Pandemic Leftovers: Life and Ritual in the 'New Normal'.](#)' Abstracts are due 15 October 2024.

Opportunities: ARI invites applications from ambitious scholars to conduct cutting-edge academic humanities or social sciences research on Asia. For 2025/26, ARI is hiring in the Asian Urbanisms, Food, Politics and Society and the Science, Technology and Society (STS) clusters only: [Research Fellowships In Asia Research Institute \(ARI\) FY2025/26](#) and [Postdoctoral Fellowships In Asia Research Institute \(ARI\) FY2025/26](#).

Staff Changes: ARI welcomes Visiting Associate Prof [Dr Sumit Mandal](#) as the Muhammad Alagil Chair in Arabia Asia Studies, [Dr Eva Samia Dinkelaker](#) and [Dr Colum Morris Graham](#) as our new postdoctoral fellows, as well as Research Associates [Ms Lee Chyen Yee](#) and [Ms Clair Hurford](#). At the same time, we say our goodbyes to Dr Aparna Nambiar, Dr Joppan George, Dr Exequiel Camarig Cabanda and Dr Marcus F.D. Bingenheimer, and wish them the very best in their new endeavours!

Special Issues/Sections: [Faith in Immunity and Structures of trust: COVID-19 Vaccines from Asian Perspectives](#) Special Issue was published in *Asian Medicine* by Carola E. Lorea, Erica M. Larson, Ashawari Chaudhuri, and Emily Z. Hertzman.

[Ethical Pedagogies and/of Relationality](#) Special Section introduction was published in *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* by Erica M. Larson.

Awards and Prizes: *Stalemate: Autonomy and Insurgency on the China-Myanmar Border* by former ARI Postdoctoral Fellow, Andrew Ong, has been awarded the 2024 [Association of Mainland Southeast Asia Scholars](#) (AMSEAS) Early Career Book Prize.

In the News: [Peatlands and the Climate: This year's COP29 must build on COP28](#): Helena Varkkey, Michelle Miller and Matthew Ashfold's OpEd on the potential of carbon-rich peat ecosystems to mitigate climate change and help meet Southeast Asian national climate targets was published on *Fulcrum*.

[Pope Francis Returns to Asia-Pacific Frontlines](#): Michel Chambon's article on Pope Francis' trip to Asia was published in *The Diplomat*.

LinkedIn: [ARI is on LinkedIn!](#) Be part of ARI's professional networking community and stay up to date with upcoming events and opportunities.



Michel Chambon was interviewed by Channel News Asia (CNA) about Pope Francis' four-country Asia Pacific visit.

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