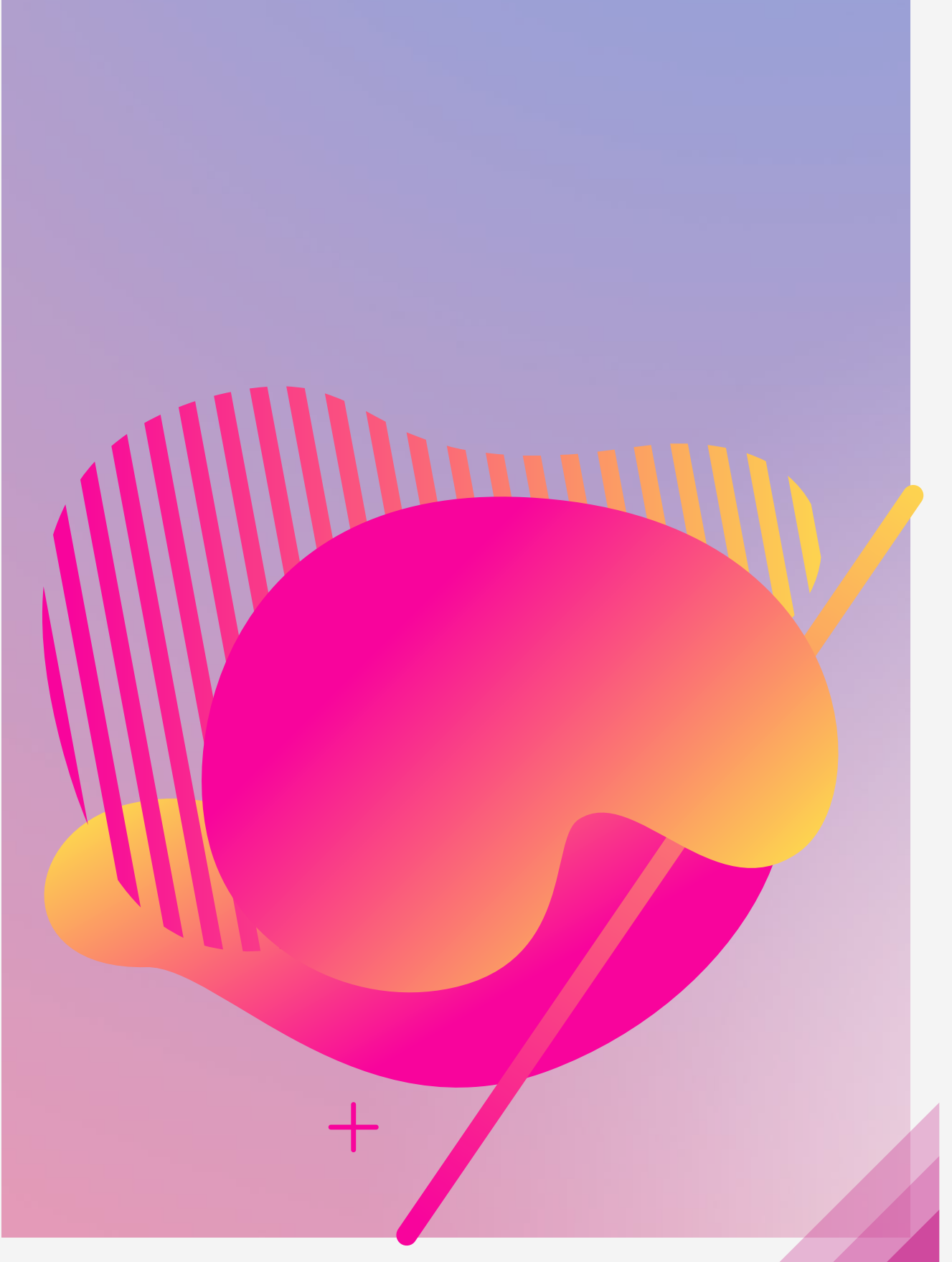


# FASS RESEARCH

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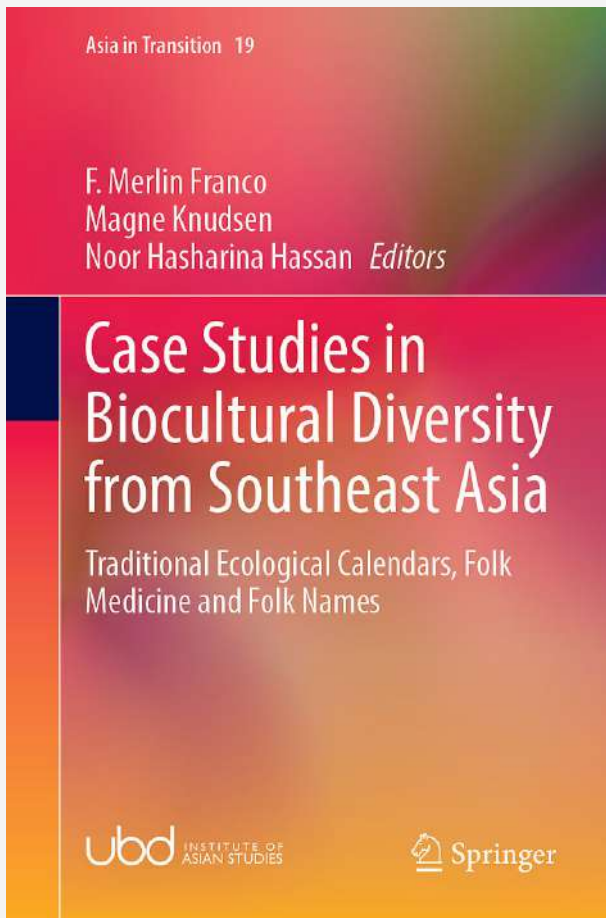
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NOV 2021

# FASS RESEARCH

HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT AND ONGOING RESEARCH ACTIVITIES  
CONDUCTED AT THE FACULTY OF ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES  
(FASS) AT UNIVERSITI BRUNEI DARUSSALAM (UBD)



## CASE STUDIES IN BIOCULTURAL DIVERSITY FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA

BY DR F. MERLIN FRANCO,  
DR MAGNE KNUDSEN, AND  
DR NOOR HASHARINA HASSAN

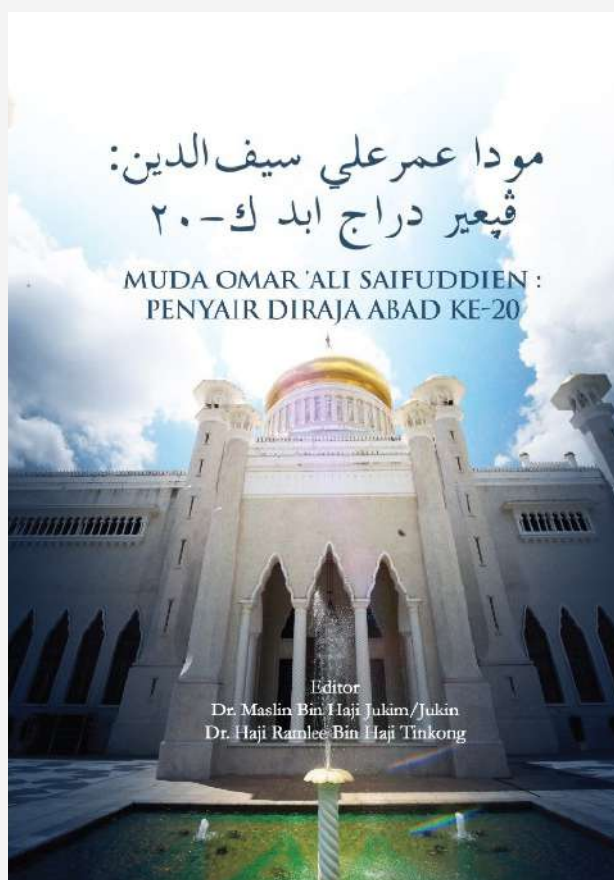
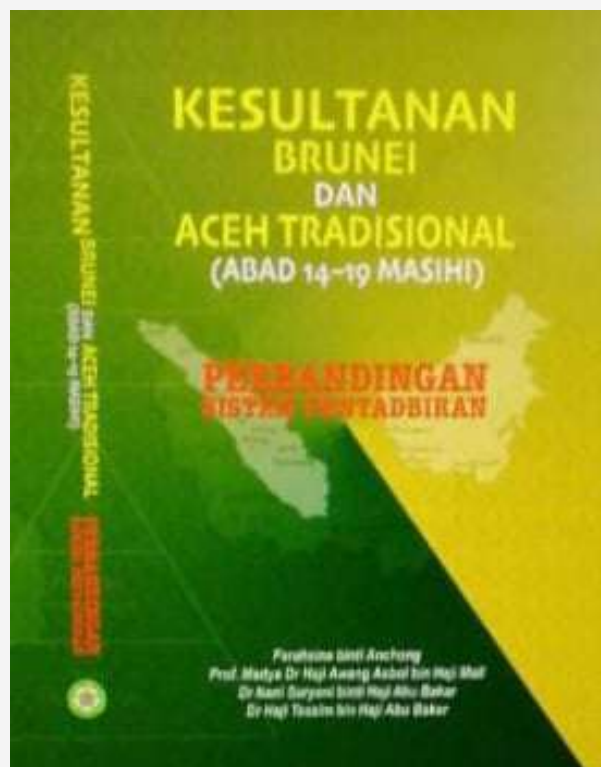
This edited volume demonstrates the linkages between local languages, traditional knowledge, and biodiversity at the landscape level in Asia, providing a fresh approach to discussions on Asia's biocultural diversity. The book carries forward earlier analyses but importantly focuses on 'traditional ecological calendars,' 'folk medicine,' and 'folk names' in the context of the vital importance of maintaining biological, cultural, and linguistic diversity.

It does this by addressing a range of cases and issues in relation to Southeast Asia: Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and North-East India. The several chapters demonstrate the ways in which the various forms of knowledge of the environment and their categorisations are important in areas such as landscape and resource management and conservation. They also demonstrate that environmental knowledge and the practical skills which accompany it are not necessarily widely shared. This book sends important messages to those who care about the sustainability of our environment and the maintenance of its biocultural diversity, or at least the maintenance of what remains of it because much has changed. This interdisciplinary collection draws from a wide range of disciplines and is of appeal to students and scholars in anthropology, environmental studies, geography, biodiversity, and linguistics.

# KESULTANAN BRUNEI DAN ACEH TRADISIONAL (ABAD 14-19 MASIHI) 'TRADITIONAL SULTANATE OF BRUNEI AND ACEH (14TH-19TH CENTURY AD)'

BY FARAHAINA BINTI ANCHONG  
& PROF. HAJI AWANG ASBOL BIN  
HAJI MAIL

Considering the rise and fall of the sultanates of Aceh and Brunei in the 14th to 19th Century Malay World, this book discusses the sultans and sultanas in their administrations, the role of their officials, and the political conflict that arose from the power play, resulting in the demise of these powers as distinct polities at that time.



# MUDA OMAR 'ALI SAIFUDDIEN: PENYAIR DIRAJA ABAD KE-20 'YOUNG OMAR 'ALI SAIFUDDIEN: THE ROYAL POET OF THE 20TH CENTURY'

BY DR MASLIN BIN HAJI  
JUKIN/JUKIM & DR HAJI  
RAMLEE BIN HAJI TINKONG

This anthology provides a definitive insight into the works of SOAS III from the lens of scholars and students of literature. Its production is also in line with Malay Studies' annual project in promoting SOAS III as the Royal Poet in the region.

# WHO'S THAT RESEARCHER?

AN ACADEMIC PROFILE



## DR SITI MAZIDAH HAJI MOHAMAD

***Geography, Environment, and Development Programme***

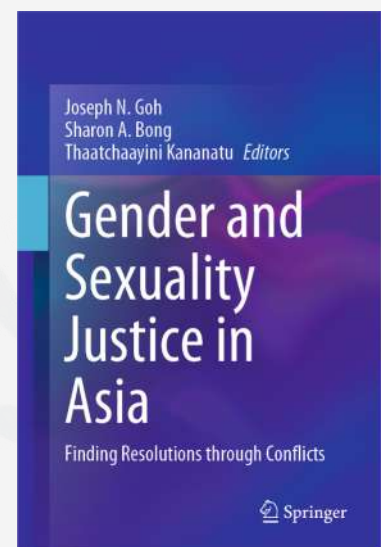
I am a geographer researching youth's mobilities, everyday socio-spatial practices, engagements and realities reflected through various new social media platforms.

I have been working on Muslim celebrity culture in Southeast Asia research since 2018 (This is one of my research interests). I started with funded research that focused on individual Muslim Bruneian youths' use of Instagram for self-branding and identity expression. It explored how Muslim Bruneian youths use social media, their self-disclosure practices on Instagram, the motivations behind those practices and their influence on the individual's self-branding efforts, and their strategies to achieve this personal brand. This research further developed into an examination of Muslim celebrity culture and practices in Southeast Asia.

To date, I have published journal papers and a book chapter on this topic. These works have looked at micro-celebrity practices in Muslim-majority nations in Southeast Asia, the celebrification of influencers by postmodern Malay-Muslim women in Malaysia, and hijabi celebrification and hijab consumption in Brunei and Malaysia.

I am currently examining the need for Muslim influencer regulation in Brunei. With the current influencer landscape in the nation, this research is guided by these key questions: Is society's scrutiny and moral policing sufficient to guide the influencers? Is there a halal standard for Muslim influencers? Finally, is there a need for Muslim influencer regulations and governance?

One manuscript that considers questions such as these is in preparation for the Policy & Internet Journal Special Issue on Influencer Regulations, Governance, and Socio-cultural Issues in the Asia Pacific Region.



# PROJECTS AND STUDIES

## **THE IBAN OF BRUNEI: CASE STUDIES OF CHANGE AND RESPONSE**

*BY DR MAGNE KNUDSEN AND  
PROF. VICTOR KING*

The Iban are the most well-documented and studied of all Borneo indigenous peoples; there is a wealth of material on their language, history, social organisation and culture which can be used for comparative purposes.

Yet the Iban of Brunei are relatively unknown and under-studied. While research is ongoing on the Iban in Temburong and upper Belait, this study will consider the Iban of Brunei-Muara, who have moved from their traditional heartlands in the upper Belait and the Temburong to take up employment opportunities in Brunei-Muara.

The focus is on current developments and the ways in which the Iban have adapted to life in the sultanate and come to terms with the politico-legal and socio-economic environment. It is hoped that this project will help fill a gap in Iban Studies and provide recent data on Iban social organisation, economic activities and cultural identity and their response to their minority status in Brunei.

## **SMALL-SCALE FISHING IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM**

*BY DR MAGNE KNUDSEN AND  
DR MUHAMMAD ARAFAT BIN  
MOHAMAD*

Social science studies of small-scale fishing in Brunei Darussalam are few and far between. We know very little about who the fishers are, their background and livelihood situation, and where, how and why they fish. This research project aims to fill this gap in the literature and covers fishers from districts across the country.

The study expects to find that small-scale fishing in Brunei remains a highly diverse and dynamic phenomenon, serving multiple purposes, practiced in up-river, estuarine and marine environments, and tapped into by different groups of fishers. We also expect to find uptake of new technologies (including GPS) and evidence of resource decline. We will examine fishers' views of and responses to resource decline and competition, as well as to coastal and marine regulation.

The Brunei case will be discussed and analysed in a wider regional context, comparing it with studies of small-scale fisheries and livelihood change elsewhere in Southeast Asia. To further strengthen the comparative analysis, some additional primary data will be collected among small-scale fishers in Pattani, southern Thailand.

## NARRATING THE BRUNEIAN PETROCULTURE

BY DR RINNI MARLIYANA BINTI HJ AMRAN

Oil's integral role in the shaping of modern Brunei demands that contemporary local literature and other cultural forms be examined under a petrocritical lens.

This project seeks to examine how the extraction, production and consumption of fossil fuels mediate perceptions and experiences of the natural environment and national identity within an increasingly climate-conscious world.

In contrast to narratives of other petrocultures characterised by political violence, economic instability and environmental degradation, fiction and other cultural forms from Brunei appear to be more ambivalent in their portrayals of energy, environment and national identity.

On the one hand, the burgeoning of nationalistic novels post-independence, for example, can be seen as one of the products of a booming oil economy that helped pave the way for the nation's independence in the first place. On the other, there is also growing realization of the downsides to being fossil fuel-dependent, such as environmental degradation, climate change and economic volatility that threaten national prosperity, identity and even human existence. How does such tension appear in Bruneian narratives?

For one, the postmodernist short stories written by Mussidi illustrate the submersion of the human underneath the abstraction, delocalizing and globalising of various incomprehensible infrastructures, systems and networks shaped by petrocapitalism.

In recent years, this challenge has also resulted in the imagining of alternate visions of the nation, which can be seen in Amir Faliq's *The Forlorn Adventure* set in a distant future, and Aamton Alias' *The Bunian Conspiracy* series set partially in another dimension. The former imagines a booming, futuristic Brunei, thus showing a techno-utopian vision of the local petroculture. In the latter novel, a battle over the land ensues between humans and spirits that highlights issues of multispecies justice.

These stories of alternate Bruneis reveal the challenges posed in writing from within a fossil-fuelled nation.

## LIVING WITH COVID-19 IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

BY DR HANNAH HO MING YIT



## REPRESENTATIONS AND LANGUAGE USE OF THE CHINESE DIASPORA IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

BY DR DEBBIE HO GUAN ENG AND DR HANNAH HO MING YIT

Since we last heard about this research project, Dr Debbie Ho and Dr Hannah Ho have produced a chapter called *Ethnic Identity and the Southeast Asian Chinese: Voices from Brunei* in Springer's 'Asia in Transition' Series book 'Contesting Chineseness: Ethnicity, Identity and Nation in China and Southeast Asia'.

Dr Hannah Ho has also published a journal article entitled *Chinese Bruneian Identity: Negotiating Individual, Familial and Transnational Selves in Anglophone Bruneian Literature* in 'The Wenshan Review of Literature and Culture'.

Dr Hannah Ho serves as the National Lead in Brunei Darussalam for the National University of Singapore-Asia Research Institute's (NUS-ARI) Inter-Asian Engagement research project on 'Crisis, Community and Control: Living with COVID-19 in Southeast Asia'. Before Brunei's second wave of COVID-19, she published two reports on the Asia Research Institute's academic blog called ARIScope, and Heinrich Boll Stiftung Foundation's research web dossier. Her journal article *Mental Health Challenges of Migrant Domestic Workers in the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Case of Brunei Darussalam* is forthcoming.

### FASS RESEARCH THRUSTS

FASS researchers work on a wide variety of themes, but the three main faculty research thrusts are:

- Globalisation, Migration and Diaspora
- Language, Culture and Society
- Environments and Transformation

# EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

## FASS SEMINAR SERIES

CONVENED BY DR MUHAMMAD ARAFAT BIN MOHAMAD

The FASS Seminar Series runs throughout the year and contributes to UBD's vibrant intellectual environment by providing a stage for faculty members and graduate students to share knowledge and perspectives developed

from their respective research projects. In 2021, FASS collaborated with the Institute of Asian Studies (IAS) to organise two ambassadorial talks by HE Dr Vincent Piket, Ambassador of the European Union to Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam, and HE Mr Igor Driesmans, Ambassador of the European Union to ASEAN.

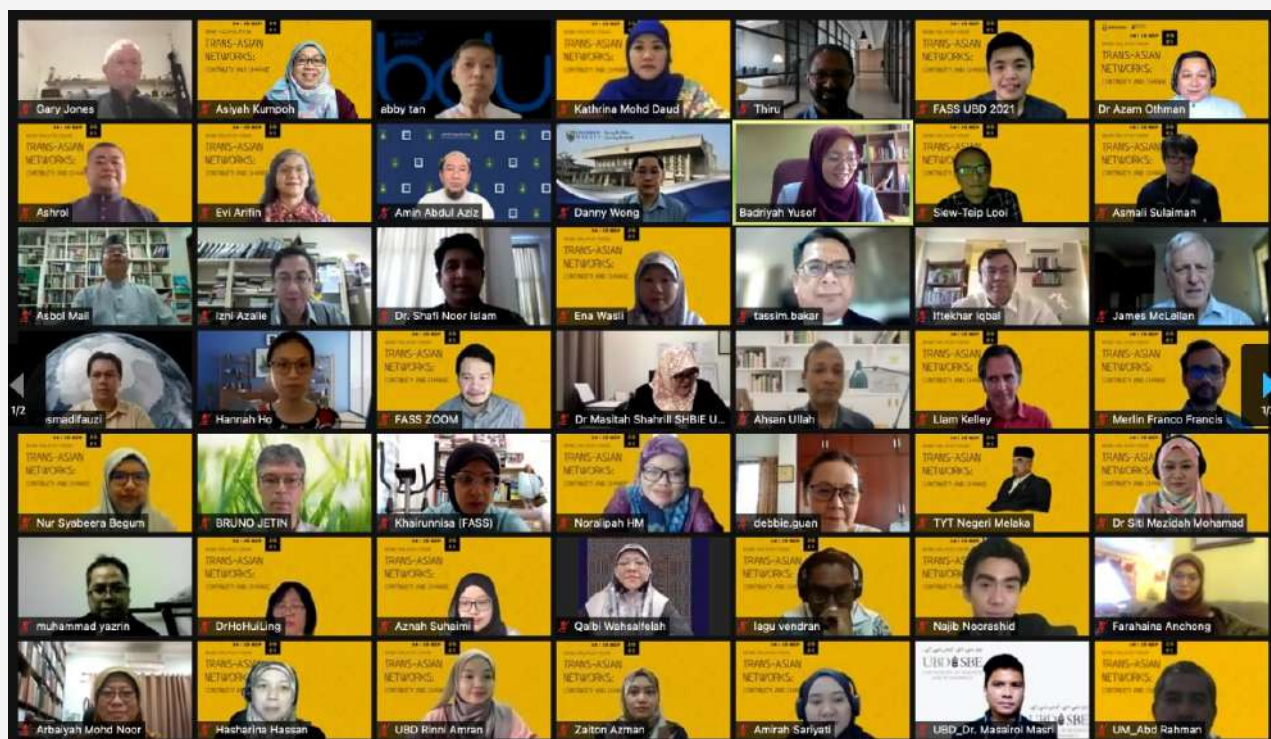
For those who are interested in presenting at the FASS SEMINAR SERIES, or to find out more information, please contact the convenor at: [arafat.mohamad@ubd.edu.bn](mailto:arafat.mohamad@ubd.edu.bn)





# THE 4TH BRUNEI-MALAYSIA FORUM (BMF2021)

BY FASS, UBD AND FASS, UM



The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, UBD hosted the 4th Brunei-Malaysia Forum (BMF2021) virtually from 14-15 September 2021. This event is held biennially and exemplifies the close relationship between the host and its partner institution, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Universiti Malaya.

This instalment of the event was aptly themed 'Trans-Asian Networks: Continuity & Change' given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The former Dean of FASS UBD, Associate Professor Dr Gary Jones, delivered the keynote address entitled 'The Future of the Past: 35 Years of UBD-UM Bilateral Relations.' He spoke about the need to adjust to the new normal while maintaining the benefits of cross-institutional exchange and mobility between UBD and UM.

Despite the uncertainties of the pandemic and the virtual format of the conference, the scholars, researchers, and students of the two universities engaged in lively discourse on topics such as The Malay World, Indigenous Communities and Local Knowledge, Youth and Social Issues, and Globalization, Migration, and Diaspora. A total of 51 papers were presented.



# BOOK CHAPTERS

BY DR AHSAN ULLAH AND ASSOCIATED CO-WRITERS

## 'NON-TRADITIONAL MIGRATION'

In I. Rajan's *Migration in South Asia*

This research is meant to contribute to the discourse of a new category of migrants who are different from those in the conventional migration stream that includes economic and forced migration.

## 'ROHINGYA CHILDREN IN BANGLADESH: QUESTIONING THE PAST AND IMAGINING THE FUTURE'

In K. Aljunied's *Routledge Handbook of Islam in Southeast Asia*

This chapter deals with how Rohingya children have survived under the current dire circumstances and how they imagine their future. We attempt to reconstruct their life-politics as reflected in narratives of their everyday life in the refugee camps.

## 'MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT: A CRITICAL INTERPLAY'

In P. Scholten's *Introduction to Migration Studies*

This chapter argues that the nexus of migration and development is not a unidirectional one, and seeks to come up with a more balanced assessment of the nexus. I seek to answer the question 'Does migration cause development or is it a result of development flaws?'

## 'ETHICS AND EMPIRICS: ESSENCE OF ETHICS IN SOCIAL RESEARCH'

In R. Islam's *Social Research Methods*

The chapter focuses on the primary stages, methodology, and procedures of ethical protections that the modern social research institution has established to protect study participants' rights and privacy.


FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ANY OF THESE HIGHLIGHTS AND THE MANY OTHER PUBLICATIONS NOT FEATURED HERE, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE OR OUR INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT.

 <http://fass.ubd.edu.bn>

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