

Cheng-Chwee KUIK, Ph.D.

Professor in International Relations

Head, Centre for Asian Studies, Institute of Malaysian and International Studies (IKMAS)
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[Google Scholar](#) Citations: 1763

KUIK Cheng-Chwee is Professor in International Relations and Head of Asian Studies at the Institute of Malaysian and International Studies, National University of Malaysia (UKM). He is concurrently a non-resident Fellow at Johns Hopkins Foreign Policy Institute (FPI). Previously, he was a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the Princeton-Harvard “China and the World” Program and a Visiting Research Fellow at Oxford University. Professor Kuik’s research focuses on smaller-state foreign and defence policies, Asian security, and international relations. He has held consultant positions for Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), and Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). He served as Head of the Writing Team (2019-2020) for the Government of Malaysia’s inaugural *Defence White Paper*. Cheng-Chwee’s publications have appeared in peer-reviewed journals and edited books. Dr. Kuik’s essay, “The Essence of Hedging”, won the Michael Leifer Memorial Prize awarded by the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies. He is co-author (with David Lampton and Selina Ho) of *Rivers of Iron: Railroads and Chinese Power in Southeast Asia* (2020) and co-editor (with Alice Ba and Suelo Sudo) of *Institutionalizing East Asia* (2016). His current projects include: hedging in international relations, domestic politics and foreign policy choices, and the geopolitics of connectivity cooperation. Cheng-Chwee serves on the editorial boards of *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, *Asian Perspective*, *Asian Politics and Policy*, *International Journal of Asian Studies* (Cambridge University Press), and *East Asian Policy*. He can be contacted at cckuik@gmail.com

Education

Johns Hopkins University, SAIS, *Washington DC* (Sept 2003 – May 2010) ▪ Ph.D. ▪ Distinction in Dissertation ▪ Committee Members: Karl Jackson, David Lampton, Francis Fukuyama

St. Andrews University, *Fife, Scotland, United Kingdom* (September 1997 – September 1998) ▪ M. Litt. in International Security Studies ▪ Distinction in Dissertation (Thesis)

Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), *Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia* (July 1992 – November 1995) ▪ Bachelor of Public Administration ▪ Distinction in Undergraduate Thesis (in Malay)

Awards (Selected)

- Newton Advanced Fellowship, British Academy & Akademi Sains Malaysia ▪ 2016-2018
- Princeton-Harvard China and the World Program Postdoctoral Fellowship ▪ 2013/2014
- William and Marie-Daniele Zartman Fellowship, Johns Hopkins SAIS ▪ 2009
- Fulbright Graduate Study Scholarship ▪ 2003/2004 & 2004/2005
- British High Commissioner’s Chevening Award ▪ 1997/1998

- 2023 (with Fikry Abd Rahman (forthcoming). “**ASEAN’s Dialogue Mechanisms: Institutionalizing the Quest for ASEAN Centrality**”, in Jörn Dosch and Frederick Kliem, eds., *The Elgar Companion to ASEAN*.
- 2022 “**Southeast Asian States and ASEAN**”, in David Shambaugh, ed., *The International Relations of Asia*, 3rd edition (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield), pp. 189-227.
- 2022 (with Paul Evans) “**ASEAN and Ukraine: Non-Alignment via Multi-Alignment**”, *TI Observer* 21: 23-29.
- 2022 (with Abdul Razak Ahmad) “**Southeast Asia-U.S. Relations in the Indo-Pacific Era**”, in Gilbert Rozman, ed., *Joint U.S.-Korea Academic Studies 2022* (Washington, DC: KEI).
- 2022 (with Abdul Razak Ahmad and Ayman Rashdan Wong) “**Malaysia and Northeast Asia: What Drives Small-State Forward Diplomacy**”, *Issues and Studies* 58(3).
- 2022 (with Thomas Daniel) “**Malaysia’s Relations with the United States and China: Asymmetries (and Anxieties) Amplified**”, *Southeast Asian Affairs* 2022, pp. 211-231.
- 2022 (with Chen-Dong Tso) “**Hedging in Non-Traditional Security: The Case of Vietnam’s Disaster Response Cooperation**”, *Chinese Journal of International Politics*.
- 2022 “**Hedging via Institutions: ASEAN-led Multilateralism in the Age of the Indo-Pacific**”, *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding* 10(2): 355-386.
- 2022 “**Shades of Grey: Riskification and Hedging in the Indo-Pacific**”, *Pacific Review* 35.
- 2022 “**Locating Host-Country Agency and Hedging in Infrastructure Cooperation**”, in Seth Schindler and Jessica DiCarlo, eds., *The Rise of the Infrastructure State: How US-China Rivalry Shapes Politics and Place Worldwide* (Bristol University Press), pp. 194-210.
- 2022 “**The Politics of Thailand-China Railway Cooperation: Domestic Determinants of Smaller State BRI Engagement**”, in Suthiphand Chirathivat, Buddhagarn Rutchatorn, Anupama Devendrakumar, eds., *China’s Belt and Road Initiative in ASEAN* (Singapore: World Scientific), pp. 223-250.
- 2021 “**Elite Legitimation and the Agency of the Host Country: Evidence from Laos, Malaysia, and Thailand’s BRI Engagement**”, in Florian Schneider, ed., *Global Perspectives on the Belt and Road Initiative* (Amsterdam University Press), pp. 217-244.
- 2021 “**Getting Hedging Right: A Small State Perspective**”, *China International Strategy Review*, December, 1-16. (*SCOPUS-indexed*)
- 2021 (with Abdul Razak Ahmad) “**Malaysia’s Resilient (but Ambiguous) Partnership with the United States: The Dilemmas of Smaller States in the Indo-Pacific Era**”, *Asia Policy*, October, pp. 86-95.

- 2021 (with Abdul Razak Ahmad and Lai Yew Meng) “PLA Overflight near Malaysian Airspace: A Precarious Provocation”, *Fulcrum: Analysis on Southeast Asia*, June 30.
- 2021 **“Irresistible Inducement? Assessing China’s Belt and Road Initiative in Southeast Asia”**, Council on Foreign Relations (CFR)’s *Asia-Unbound*, June 15.
- 2021 **“Laos’ Enthusiastic Embrace of China’s Belt and Road Initiative”**, *Asian Perspective*, Vol. 45, No. 4, pp. 735-759. *(ISI-indexed)*
- 2021 **“Malaysia’s Fluctuating Engagement with China’s Belt and Road Initiative”**, *Asian Perspective* 45(2): 421-444.
- 2021 **“Asymmetry and Authority: Theorizing Southeast Asian Responses to China’s Belt and Road Initiative”**, *Asian Perspective* 45(2): 255-276.
- 2021 (with Lai Yew Meng and Amy Azuan Abdullah) **“Pulau Layang-Layang in Malaysia’s South China Sea Policy”**, *International Journal of China Studies* 12(2): 189-222.
- 2021 (with Lai Yew Meng) **“Structural Sources of Malaysia’s South China Sea Policy”**, *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 75(3).
- 2021 **“The Twin Chessboards of US-China Rivalry: Impact on Geostrategic Supply and Demand in Post-Pandemic Asia”**, *Asian Perspective* 45(1): 157-176.
- 2020 **“Hedging in Post-Pandemic Asia: What, How, and Why?”** *The Asan Forum: An Online Journal* (June 6).
- 2020 **“Connectivity and Gaps: The Bridging and Missed Links in China’s BRI in Southeast Asia”**, in Maria Adele Carrai, Jean-Christophe DeFraigne, and Jan Wouters, eds., *The Belt and Road and Global Governance* (Northampton, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing), pp. 76-95.
- 2020 (with David M. Lampton and Selina Ho) *Rivers of Iron: Railroads and Chinese Power in Southeast Asia* (University of California Press).
- 2020 **“Mapping Malaysia in the Evolving Indo-Pacific Construct”**, *CSCAP Regional Security Outlook 2020* (Canberra: Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific).
- 2019 (With BA Hamzah) “The Making of Defence White Paper”, *New Straits Times* (December 7).
- 2018 **“Keeping the Balance: Power Transitions Threaten ASEAN’s Hedging Role”**, *East Asia Forum Quarterly*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (January-March), pp. 22-23.
- 2018 (With Alice Ba) **“Southeast Asia and China: Engagement and Constraint”**, in Alice D. Ba and Mark Beeson, eds., *Contemporary Southeast Asia: The Politics of Change, Contestation, and Adaptation*, 3rd edition (London: Palgrave), pp. 229-247.

- 2017 **“Explaining the Contradiction in China’s South China Sea Policy”**, *China: An International Journal* 15(1): 163-186.
- 2016 **“How Do Weaker States Hedge? Unpacking ASEAN States’ Alignment Behavior towards China,”** *Journal of Contemporary China* 25(100): 500-514.
- 2016 **“Malaysia between the United States and China: What do Weaker States Hedge Against?”** *Asian Politics and Policy* 8(1): 155-177.
- 2015 (With Gilbert Rozman) **“Light or Heavy Hedging: Positioning between China and the United States”**, in Gilbert Rozman, *Joint U.S.-Korea Academic Studies 2015*, Vol. 26 (Washington, DC: Korea Economic Institute of America), pp. 1-9.
- 2015 **“Variations on a (Hedging) Theme: Comparing ASEAN Core States’ Alignment Behavior,”** in Gilbert Rozman, *Joint U.S.-Korea Academic Studies 2015*, Vol. 26 (Washington, DC: Korea Economic Institute of America), pp. 11-26.
- 2015 **“Malaysia’s Balancing Act”**, *New York Times* (December 7), p. 8.
- 2015 **“Malaysia’s Relations with Major and Middle Powers”**, *Observatoire Asie du Sud-est* (Paris: Asia Centre, Sciences Po).
- 2015 **“An Emerging 3rd Pillar in Asian Architecture? AIIB and Other China-led Initiatives”**, *Asia-Pacific Bulletin* 305, March 26 (Washington, DC: East-West Center).
- 2013 **“Making Sense of Malaysia’s China Policy: Asymmetry, Proximity, and Elite’s Domestic Authority,”** *Chinese Journal of International Politics* 6:429-467.
- 2013 **“Malaysia’s U.S. Policy under Najib: Structural and Domestic Sources of a Small State’s Strategy,”** *Asian Security* 9(3):143-164.
- 2012 (With Nor Azizan Idris and Abd Rahim Md Nor) **“The China Factor in the U.S. ‘Reengagement’ with Southeast Asia: Drivers and Limits of Converged Hedging,”** *Asian Politics and Policy* 4(3): 315-344.
- 2008 **“The Essence of Hedging: Malaysia and Singapore’s Response to a Rising China”**, *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 30(2): 159-185.
- 2008 **“China’s Evolving Multilateralism in Asia”**, in Kent E. Calder and Francis Fukuyama, eds., *East Asian Multilateralism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press), pp. 109-142.
- 2005 **“Multilateralism in China’s ASEAN Policy: Its Evolution, Characteristics, and Aspiration,”** *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 27(1): 102-122.

Invited Talks and Presentations (Selected)

Public Lecture on **“Southeast Asia between the U.S. and China: Why Do Smaller States (Still) Insist on Hedging?”** ▪ Organized by Asian Institute, Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, University of Toronto ▪ 15 December 2022

Australasian Aid Conference (AAC) Panel and DFAT Roundtable on Chinese Overseas Infrastructure Investment, organized by Australian Aid; and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australian Government, Canberra ▪ 30 November 2022

“Crosstalks or Melian Dialogue: How Southeast Asia See U.S.-China Rivalry” ▪ Workshop on “The PLA in a World of Strategic Competition with the United States”, organized by RAND-NDU-USIP-CAPS, Washington, DC ▪ 18-19 November 2022

Special Session, ASEAN-Japan Expert Panel on the 50th Commemorative Years of ASEAN-Japan Relations, organized by ASEAN-Japan Centre (AJC), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (online) ▪ 27 October 2022

ASEAN Junior Fellowship Programme, Workshop on Regional Security, organized by the ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta ▪ 31 August – 1 September 2022

Brainstorming Session on Identifying Priority Issues for ASEAN in 2023, organized by the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS) and Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Jakarta ▪ 18-19 August 2022

“Malaysia’s Conceptions of International Order: Paradoxes of Small-State Pragmatism” ▪ ASEAN Conceptions and Practices of Order (ACPIO) Conference, organized by Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore ▪ 15-16 July 2022

“Asymmetry, Authority, and the Agency of Smaller States along the Belt and Road” ▪ (Online) Columbia-Harvard China and the World Program, organized by School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), Columbia University, New York ▪ 29 March 2021

“Gaps, Not Traps: A Southeast Asian Perspective of the BRI” ▪ Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) Workshop, organized by Shorenstein Asia-Pacific Research Center, Stanford University ▪ Stanford, March 2-3, 2020

“Smaller States and the Twin Chessboards of Asian Geopolitics” ▪ Workshop on “The Future of Power, Norms, and Institutions in the Indo-Pacific: Implications for the Australia-U.S. Alliance”, co-organized by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and the United States Studies Centre (USSC), University of Sydney ▪ Sydney, February 3, 2020

“Malaysia between the BRI and the Indo-Pacific” ▪ MGIMO ASEAN Academic Days, organized by MGIMO University ▪ Moscow, 11 October 2019

“Mapping Malaysia Middlepower: Structural and Domestic Sources of Small-State Activism” ▪ International Conference on Middle Powers in the Indo-Pacific Region, co-organized by U.S. Naval War College and Bond University ▪ Gold Coast, Australia, 3-5 October 2019

“The ‘New’ Southeast Asia and the ‘Indo-Pacific’: Analyzing the Weaker States’ (Old) Ambivalence” ▪ Columbia-Harvard International Conference on China and the World, organized by Columbia University ▪ New York City, 27-28 February 2019

“Emerging Great Games in Southeast Asia: Influence, Infrastructure, and Institutions” ▪ Ifri Annual Conference on Asia 2018: “Power Competition and Regional Stability in Asia”, organized by the French Institute of International Relations (ifri) ▪ Paris, France, 3 December 2018

“Circles of Courtships: ASEAN-India Partnership in the Indo-Pacific” ▪ Delhi Dialogue X, co-organized by Indian Ministry of External Affairs and (RIS) ▪ New Delhi, 19-20 July 2018

“Malaysia and the Belt and Road Initiative” ▪ Working Consultation for the Asian Development Bank (ADB) Technical Assistance Study of the Belt and Road Initiative with Stakeholders in the GMS and Malaysia, organized by ADB ▪ Beijing, PRC, April 24, 2018

“Southeast Asian Responses to China’s Belt and Road Initiative” ▪ Southeast Asia Seminar Series, St, Antony’s College, University of Oxford ▪ Oxford, 22 November 2017

“Malaysia-China Partnership” ▪ The Chatham House ▪ London, 20 November 2017

“Structural Uncertainty and Weaker States’ Hedging Behavior” ▪ London School of Economics and Political Science ▪ London, 8 September 2017

“The Origins of Hedging: Theorizing Weaker States’ Alignment Choices toward a Rising Power” ▪ 7th Annual CWP Workshop ▪ Harvard University, 6 December 2013

“Hedging in International Relations” ▪ Princeton “China and the World Program” Talk ▪ Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University, 16 October 2013

Thesis Supervision and Examination

PhD Supervision ▪ 6 graduated + 6 in progress

Master Thesis Supervision ▪ 72 graduated + 2 in progress

Undergraduate Thesis Supervision (B.A. in International Relations) ▪ 15 graduated

External Examiner (Selected):

- Master’s Thesis ▪ Cambridge University ▪ “How US-China Technology Competition Constrains Hedging Behavior in International Relations” ▪ August 2021
- PhD Thesis ▪ Australian National University ▪ “Between Honey and Poison: Indonesia’s Management of Ties with a Rising China” ▪ December 2021

Personal

Date and Place of Birth: 23 July 1971, in Muar, Malaysia

Citizenship: Malaysian

Family: Married, two children (b. 2002 & 2005)