New Zealand Asia Institute

Enhancing New Zealand’s understanding of and engagement with Asia

The New Zealand Asia Institute (NZAI) undertakes research that promotes engagement with Asia, provides a forum for informed debate and offers a bridge to Asia-related expertise and research within the University of Auckland.

NZAI was established in 1995 in response to the growing importance of Asia to New Zealand politically, economically and culturally.

Based at the University of Auckland Business School, NZAI is a university-level research institute that draws on the wide body of knowledge available in the University, with a number of core research projects being undertaken by faculty and PhD students.

We also work collaboratively with research institutes and researchers throughout Asia on research projects, programmes and conferences that enhance our understanding of Asia’s transformation.

NZAI engages widely with corporate, government and other stakeholders.

NZAI Staff and Management Committee 2016

Charles Chow  
Asia Network Adviser

Xin Chen  
Research Fellow

Benjamin Fath  
Project Manager

Antje Fiedler  
Project Manager

Natasha Hamilton-Hart  
Director NZAI and Director of the Southeast Asia Studies Centre

Mark Mullins  
Director of the Japan Studies Centre

Richard Phillips  
Director of the Korea Studies Centre

David Robb  
Director of the China Studies Centre

Yuri Seo  
Acting Director of the Korea Studies Centre

Glenn Simmons  
Research Fellow

Nicholas Tarling  
Fellow

Dinah Towle  
Office Manager
During 2016 NZAI embarked on several new initiatives as well as continuing its established programmes of research and outreach. We gratefully acknowledge the support of the MSA Charitable Trust in advancing our activities in 2016. I took up the director’s position in August, following on from the leadership of Professor James Sun in the first half of the year. Our study centres were led by Professors Mark Mullins (Japan), David Robb (China), Richard Phillips (Korea) and myself (Southeast Asia). We also welcomed Dr Yuri Seo as Acting Director of the Korea Study Centre towards the end of the year.

In support of NZAI’s mission to disseminate research about Asia, we began a new publications series – Research Snapshots – which make academic research carried out by NZAI staff available to the public in accessible, short summaries. All snapshots can be downloaded from our website.

Our established research projects on Business Engagement with Asia, Growing New Zealand Business and New Zealand Catch Reconstruction continued in 2016. We also commenced a new research project on Asian investment in New Zealand, in collaboration with the Asia New Zealand Foundation.

The student-led Asia Savvy Conference 2016 was a major highlight, with excellent participation from students and an exciting cast of speakers. The conference is now an established event on the Auckland calendar and we’re delighted to support it. In between the annual conferences, we also facilitate Asia Savvy networking events that provide an opportunity for students and young leaders interested in Asia to connect, share experiences and gain insights from those whose careers have an Asia focus.

In the second half of 2016 we supported the University of Auckland’s bid to be involved in a new government-funded initiative to establish Centres for Asia Pacific Excellence (CAPE), tasked with raising awareness and understanding of Asia among New Zealanders, with a particular focus on students and the business sector. We are delighted that the University of Auckland has been appointed to lead a North Asia CAPE and will play a role in a Victoria University-led Southeast Asia CAPE.

Other highlights from 2016 are described below. Overall, the year was exciting and fruitful, and I’m looking forward to developing our research and collaborations further in 2017.

Professor Natasha Hamilton-Hart
Director
New Zealand Asia Institute
Events and activities: Highlights for 2016

Research informed workshops about nurturing business relationships in China

Benjamin Fath and Antje Fiedler

To compete successfully in China, it is critical to develop relevant relationships with key business partners. However, SMEs (small and medium enterprises) often lack knowledge and skills of how to nurture such relationships. Based on the research findings of the project “Business Engagement with Asia”, we have developed interactive tools for practitioners that can assist them to systematically select suitable business partners and build fruitful relationships over time.

In collaboration with the Asia New Zealand Foundation, we delivered a series of training workshops for managers and owners of SMEs aiming to grow their business in China. The training builds on the interactive tools we developed on the basis of the Business Engagement with Asia research. To complement these tools, we also include experienced New Zealand business people engaging with China to share their first-hand knowledge with the audience.

The inaugural workshop was held on 8 December 2016 at the University of Auckland Business School. Guest speakers included Glen Murphy, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise's regional director for greater China, and Mark Ventress, EasiYo’s international business manager. Over 20 owner-managers of New Zealand SMEs participated in this workshop, which included interactive presentations as well as a group work session. The speakers encouraged the participants to investigate thoroughly the different opportunities prospective partners may have to offer, based on their own on-the-ground research. We intend to offer similar workshops during 2017.

Asia: Thinking big and small Asia Savvy Conference, 27 August 2016

Dinah Towle

Over 80 students from four universities nationwide participated in the 2016 Asia Savvy conference. The conference theme considered the wide array of business opportunities arising from Asia’s rapid growth. This could become overwhelming and, as a result, it was easy to focus on the big picture. However, in order to succeed in Asia, it is the “small” that matters most. We need to think small which means identifying our strengths and leveraging them to benefit from Asia’s growth.

The conference drew on the experience of government, industry experts and entrepreneurs who spoke on emerging market trends in Asia, opportunities for New Zealand entrepreneurs and examples of innovative thinking for Asia. During the workshops students discussed and presented their ideas on opportunities and challenges for New Zealand entrepreneurs entering Asian markets and qualities that go into making a successful entrepreneur. The conference fulfilled its objectives to provide an opportunity for the students to learn, connect and contribute.

Feedback from participants included “lots of inspiring stories and experiences”, “highly interactive”, “open discussions, approachable personalities, good insights shared throughout presentations”, “diversity of backgrounds and experience of speakers and how engaging they were”, “food was delicious”, “enjoyed opportunity to interact with others”.

We are now looking forward to Asia Savvy 2017!

Japan Studies Centre snapshot

Mark Mullins

In association with the Japanese Studies Programme in the Faculty of Arts, the Centre assisted in hosting the “Sixth Japanese History Workshop” on 2-5 December 2016. In addition to the keynote lectures and papers by prominent historians from Japan, Australia and the US, a specialist provided instruction and guidance in the methodology of reading and interpreting historical documents in Japanese.

Former post-doctoral researcher Emily Anderson completed editorial work on the papers from the international conference “Empire of Religions: Belief and Practice in Imperial Japan and Colonial Korea,” hosted by the New Zealand Asia Institute in 2014. This collection addresses the complex ways in which religion served as a site of contestation and negotiation among different groups, including the Korean Choson court, the Japanese colonial government, and representatives of different religions, and was published under the title Belief and Practice in Imperial Japan and Colonial Korea (Palgrave Macmillan Press, 2017).

In co-operation with the University’s English Language Academy, the Centre helped to launch and host a new two-week academic English programme for postgraduate students and teaching staff from the University of Tokyo in March 2016. Our aim is to strengthen postgraduate exchanges in Japanese studies and teaching and research collaborations with scholars in Japan through this initiative.

Centre Director Professor Mark Mullins was awarded the Foreign Minister’s Commendation for 2016 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan for his contribution to and promotion of Japan-related research in New Zealand.
Korea Studies Centre snapshot

Yuri Seo

Last year was a productive year for Korean Studies Centre. Just to highlight few achievements, Dr Richard Phillips (Asian Studies) and Dr Changzoo Song (Asian Studies) organised an international conference in Philippines entitled “Korean Ethnic Return Migration and Diasporic Engagement Policy”. The conference was co-sponsored by NZAI’s Korea Studies Centre and Ateneo University de Manila. Papers presented at this conference will be published in an edited volume by Palgrave Macmillan in 2018. A brief description of this conference is also provided below.

In another event, Dr Yuri Seo (Business School/NZAI), Dr Denise Conroy (Business School), Dr Ilaisaane Fifita (Business School) and Ivy Gan (sponsored by NZAI) represented the University of Auckland at the Korean Scholars of Marketing Science International Conference hosted at Yonsei University, Seoul. During the conference, Dr Fifita was awarded the Excellence Award for her PhD thesis research, and Dr Seo received the Best Paper Excellence Award. The ideas that the Auckland team developed at the conference helped them to put a successful bid for the University of Auckland Business School Strategic Research Fund $60,000. The project led by Dr Yuri Seo and Dr Denise Conroy will investigate luxury organic market opportunities for New Zealand brands in South Korea. In addition to these achievements, Korea Studies Centre was active in supporting the expansion of knowledge about Korea with the University of Auckland through seminars, lectures, and by networking among staff and students with Korea-related interests.

The “Korean Ethnic Return Migration and Diasporic Engagement Policy in Comparative Perspective” conference was co-sponsored by the NZAI’s Korea Studies Centre and the College of Social Sciences, the Ateneo University de Manila. Fifteen academics from North America, South Korea, Japan, Vietnam, New Zealand and the Philippines presented papers at the conference. From the University of Auckland, Drs Changzoo Song (Asian Studies) and Sunhee Koo (Anthropology) participated. The Ateneo University de Manila is a leader in Korean Studies in the region and it has been one of the grant beneficiaries of the Academy of Korean Studies based in Korea. The opening ceremony was attended by the President of the University, Dean of College of Social Science, Korean Studies Program Chair and many other prestigious staff.

The conference focused on issues facing ethnic return migrants and South Korea’s diasporic engagement policy in a comparative perspective. The conference was a great success. Papers presented at the conference will be edited into a volume, which will be published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2018.
China’s massive consumer market could even be illustrated by Prime Minister John Key’s 2016 China visit itself – while his entourage included more than 40 delegates from across New Zealand business sectors, his Australian counterpart had led a trade mission of 1,000-strong business leaders to Beijing and Shanghai just days before. Mr Arand quickly added that China’s growing middle class, thriving e-commerce, and surging demands for “reputable” products, especially in the food and beverage categories, should provide New Zealand companies with ample business opportunities. To “play to win”, Mr Arand believed that New Zealand companies needed to work hard on the “details” of consumers, distributors, and regulations. Using the wine industry as an example, he noted that as impressive as the marketing phrase “a wine glass in every Chinese hand” might sound, the majority of Chinese wine drinkers were in the 18-49 age group, consisting of about 300 million people. Among them, 48 million drank wine, but only 19 million would have “a glass a day”. Moreover, their “stereotypical” perceptions pushed them to go with French imports first, Australian wines next, and then domestic brands. The actual target market left for New Zealand wines was thus rather small. Hence, New Zealand wine companies had to be both creative and well informed to increase their share of China’s massive but very competitive market.

Mike Arand, China Business Development Adviser at NZ Trade and Enterprise, substantiated the rather omnipresent policy analyses of Sino-NZ FTA and bilateral relationship by pointing out that there were currently about 500 New Zealand businesses operating on the ground in China. But how could these operators, mostly small, reach their target consumers in an effective manner? First and foremost, he stressed, NZ businesses should be soberly aware that China was the “largest trading partner” of over one hundred countries. The fierce competition for
Recent Developments in the Philippines, Indonesia and China

A Roundtable with Aileen San Pablo-Baviera from the University of the Philippines, Greg Barton from Deakin University, and TANG Lan from China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations

29 August

Nicholas Tarling

NZAI, in association with Massey University’s Centre for Defence and Security Studies, hosted the roundtable forum for interested Auckland academics to discuss with two visiting scholars issues related to the 2016 Philippine presidential election, Indonesia’s anti-terrorism efforts, and internet governance in China. On the first topic, Professor San Pablo-Baviera echoed the common description of President Duterte as a “successful tough guy” with an “a-typical background”. Yet his decision to adopt the same kind of methods he used in Davao City throughout the country proved controversial. Specifically, he sanctioned and indeed encouraged the shooting of suspected drug-peddlers without trial. Such strong measures were welcome to the public. But they also fuelled widespread concerns about the use of illegal means even to put down illegal trafficking. Equally contentious was his “softer” approach towards Beijing on the South China Sea dispute. That he implicitly dropped the high moral ground of the Benigno Aquino government for greater pragmatism was greeted positively by the local business community, but was not popular with the public.

Indonesia, Prof Greg Barton commented, was now also concerned about the South China Sea, but did not want to be involved directly. What seemed more challenging for the Indonesian government was the fact that ISIS in the Middle East was trying ever harder to attract young people in Indonesia, and Malaysia for that matter, to join the cause. As in other parts of the world, ISIS used social media to radicalise and recruit young Muslims from the two countries. Worse still, now it was not only criminals and people with drug problems who were targeted, but internet chat rooms and other online networking platforms were established to also engage with school-age children. Prof Barton thought that Islamic extremism would not be easily defeated. We would be faced with it for many years. Once an advisor to the former Indonesian President Wahid, Prof Barton thought Indonesia had useful experience in dealing with terrorism.

Speaking on China, Ms Tang discussed cyber security from a different angle. In her opinion, few people today thought that cyber security was just about technology and concerned only IT specialists. It was instead widely recognised that internet governance necessitated joint efforts by the government, the private sector, and the civil society. China had 700 million internet users, and a huge E-commerce market. To balance information flows and security controls, which were “two wings of a bird”, was thus a great challenge for the Chinese government. The Chinese central internet control agency, according to Ms Tang, was the Cyberspace Administration of China. Her institute had also been involved in cyber policy studies and deliberations.
Appendices

Seminars and events

- Symposium on “Prime Minister John Key’s Visit to China, Implications and Ways Forward”, featuring 4 speakers: Dr Jian Yang, MP, on “NZ-China Relations: Recent Development”; Mr Mike Arand, NZ Trade and Enterprise on “Reaching the Consumers in China”; Prof Siah Hwee Ang, BNZ Chair in Business in Asia, Victoria University on “Larger than Free Trade Agreements: The One-Belt One Road (OBOR) Initiative”, and A/Prof Rob Scollay, NZ APEC Studies Centre, University of Auckland on “News from China: Should We Worry?” (3 June)

- “2016 Asia Savvy Conference: Asia: Thinking Big and Small, (27 August 2016)

- “Sixth Japanese History Workshop” (in association with Japanese Studies Programme/Faculty of Arts (2-5 December 2016)

- International conference on “Korean Ethnic Return Migration and Diasporic Engagement Policy in Comparative Perspective”, in association with Korean Studies Programme/Faculty of Arts and Ateneo de Manila University (14-17 December 2016)

Public lectures/seminars/roundtables

- “Taking stock of Myanmar’s democratic transition, 2010 to 2015” by Prof N. Ganesan, Hiroshima Peace Institute, Japan (19 February)

- “The Future of China: Status Quo, Reform or Chaos?” by Roger Garside, retired British diplomat on (in association with Political Studies Department, 8 March)

- “Value Branding in Higher Education - A Preliminary Study in Japan” by Dr Shu-Ching Chen, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Japan (in association with Graduate School of Management, University of Auckland, 23 March)


- “The ten commandments of doing business in China” by Paul O’Brien, Douglas Pharmaceuticals (Asia Savvy networking seminar, 1 April)

- “China’s low carbon transition: The role of technology transfer and cooperation” by Dr Frauke Urban, University of London (in association with NZ APEC Studies Centre, School of Environment (6 April)

- “Catch reconstructions reveal that global marine fisheries catches are higher than reported and declining” by Prof Daniel Pauly, University of British Columbia (7 April)

- “Global Marine Catch Reconstruction” by Prof Daniel Pauly, University of British Columbia (11 April)

- “China Goes Global: Large Hydropower Dams in Asia and Africa and Impacts on Indigenous People” by Dr Johan Nordensvard, University of Southampton and Dr Frauke Urban, University of London (14 April)

- “Convergence of Archives and Humanities in the Digital Era” by Prof Hyeon Kim, Academy of Korean Studies (23 November)

- “Institutions and Global Finance” by Dr Stephen Bell, University of Queensland (9 December)

- “Policy environment for digital economy in China” by Tang Lan, China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (in association with Centre for Defence and Security Studies, Massey University, 29 August)

- “From Black Monday 1987 to Black Monday 2015” by Dr Wesley Widmaier, Griffith University (18 November)

- “Building fruitful relationships in Asia” (in association with Asia NZ Foundation (8 December)

- “Institutions and Global Finance” by Dr Stephen Bell, University of Queensland (9 December)

NZAI visitors

- Alfiana Efiyanti, State Islamic University of Malang, Indonesia (November 2015-January 2016)

- Prof Yanhui Wang, Beijing Technology University (January-June)

- Prof Zhen Wang, Hebei University of Economics and Business, China (February 2016-February 2017)

- Prof Jianrong Tang, Hainan University, China (February 2016-February 2017)

- Prof Hugh Whittaker, Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies, Oxford (11-15 April)

- Prof Michio Yamaoka with students, Waseda University, Japan (2-9 August)

- Prof Günther Schulze, Freiburg University (22-29 August)

- Prof Hyeon Kim, Academy of Korean Studies (22-24 November)
Staff and management committee publications in 2016


**Staff in the media, recognition and awards**

*Chen, X.*:
- Interviewed by Olivia Carville from the NZ Herald on 6 October for her article (with Mike Scott), “Black Gold, Hair Extensions and the Resulting Exploitation”, 1 December 2016.

*Hamilton-Hart, N.*:
- ‘Making it in Asia’ by Helen Twose from the NZ Herald in her article, 9 September 2016.
- ‘Language skills can open the door to Asia’, *Sunday Star Times*, 28 August 2016.
- WTO interview, September 2016.

*Mullins, M. R.*:
- Awarded “Foreign Minister’s Commendation” for 2016 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan for contribution to and promotion of Japan-related research in New Zealand.
- Interviewed by Justin McCurry from The Guardian for his article, “G7 in Japan: Concern over World Leaders’ Tour of Nationalistic Shrine”, 25 May 2016.

*Simmons, G.*:
- Note: The New Zealand reconstruction has been the basis of over 300 notable media reports and commentaries, and Parliament held an urgent debate on fish dumping and misreporting of catches on 20th September 2016. Selected media coverage includes:

**Conferences, invited talks and presentations**

*Hamilton-Hart, N.*: “Who wants what kind of institutional change? Perspectives from the Palm Oil industry” presentation at the Conference on Two Decades of Reformasi, University of Melbourne, 4 November (sponsored by host).


*Mullins, M. R.*: “Preliminary Findings from Archival Research on the Fate of Shinto and Christianity in Occupied Japan,” presented at the research meeting of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science funded team research project on “A Religious Studies Approach to Research on the Allied Powers’ Treatment and Disposition of Postwar Asia: A Re-examination through Archives Outside Japan,” Soka University, Tokyo, 20 July 2016.


