



*Migration narratives in Singapore: From economic imperatives to counter-perspectives on ethnicity and age*

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Populated by current cohorts of immigrants and Singaporeans of migrant ancestry, Singapore is both a migration hub and a city-state. Alongside its migration histories, Singapore's post-independence development has long emphasized a managed migration approach. The Singapore state welcomes highly paid foreigners to fill talent gaps while bringing in lowly paid migrant workers to do the work shunned by Singaporeans, concomitantly and sharply distinguishing between the rights and privileges of the two groups. This presentation will first discuss how Singapore's economically driven migration strategy has evolved in the wake of the pandemic; an evolution partly induced by developments during the crisis. Second, the presentation will consider the politics of co-ethnic migration that has surfaced in recent years in the context of the migration policies and narratives shaping Singapore's development. Third, the presentation turns to the hitherto less discussed topic of how local Singaporeans are aging alongside both settled and temporary older immigrants, providing a counter-perspective to the state's prevailing emphasis on younger migrants. This discussion brings to view how statist migration narratives prioritizing economic imperatives also need to address the social dimensions of migration and how they are narrated – and sometimes contested – by migrants and citizens.