Anti-Microbial Resistance in China
Authors: Catherine Lo Yuk-ping | Nicholas Thomas
Abstract: Since the turn of the century, China has been a major source of infectious disease outbreaks (SARS, H5N1, H7N9, COVID-19). It is also the source of the MCR-1 gene that confers resistance to colistin, a 'last line' antibiotic that can be deployed against multidrug resistant infections. With the largest population of any country combined with its status as a major supplier of produce, evaluating the emergence of AMR in China and Chinese responses to the threat is critical to understanding the global response. This paper starts by reviewing how Chinese authorities have framed the issue. The analysis focuses on antibiotic usage in both humans and the agricultural sector. Finally, the domestic and international implications of China’s responses are considered. Based on interviews with key Chinese and international officials, scientists, and public health specialists as well as farmers and consumers, we present data that argues the securitization of AMR in China is currently more concerned with policy and resource competition than with addressing an existential threat.

Bio: Dr Nicholas Thomas is the One Health cluster coordinator for the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences. His research lies at the intersection of regional politics and security studies, with a particular emphasis on health.

A tale of two city-states: A comparison of the state-led vs civil society-led responses to COVID-19 in Singapore and Hong Kong
Authors: Samson Yuen [Hong Kong Baptist University] | Edmund W. Cheng [City University of Hong Kong] | Nick H. K. Or [City University of Hong Kong] | Karen Grépin [University of Hong Kong]
Abstract: This paper compares the early pandemic response in Singapore and Hong Kong, two Asian city-states of similar sizes with a shared history of SARS, and advanced medical systems. Although both were able to contain the disease, they did so using two very different approaches. Using data from cross-national surveys, news, and mobility data, we demonstrate that, in protest-ridden Hong Kong, low governmental trust bolstered civil society, which focused on self-mobilization and community mutual-help. In Singapore, a state-led response model that marginalized civil society brought early success but failed to stem an outbreak among its segregated migrant population. The study sheds light on the roles of state and non-state actors in a crisis.

Bio: Nick Or is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Public Policy. Nick’s research interests lie in the field of public policy, comparative politics, and authoritarian regimes by drawing insights from behavioural and complexity sciences, using quantitative techniques and experimental methods. His research examines how individuals and organisations filter and process policy-related information for decision-making. His works can be seen in Public Administration and Policy Studies Journal.

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