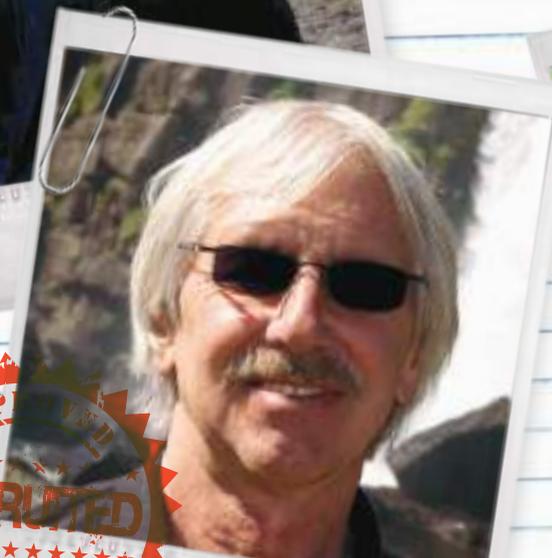


HORIZON

Sharing ideas, Bridging minds
ISSUE NO 6 AUG/SEP 2013

Heavy Hitters



BIG HITTERS
HSS RECRUITS
ACADEMIA'S
HEAVY HITTERS

NTU HOSTS
ASIA'S FIRST
INTERNATIONAL
SYMPOSIUM ON
BILINGUALISM

GENERAL EDUCATION
REQUIREMENT:
HOW HSS EXPANDS THE
HORIZONS OF OTHER NTU
UNDERGRADS

NTU HOSTS
INTERNATIONAL
ROUNDTABLE
FORUM ON
GLOBAL TALENT

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Chair's MESSAGE

Dear colleagues, students, alumni and friends,

As we start the new academic year, I am pleased to share with you news about some exciting recent developments in faculty recruitment, education, research, and international collaboration.

Thanks to the University's continuing support for the humanities and social sciences and to students' growing interest in these subjects, the School has received generous funding for faculty recruitment. After vigorous international search processes, we have recently appointed more than two dozen tenured/tenure-track faculty members, including prominent senior scholars and promising junior colleagues, who will help raise the School's international profile and strengthen its educational programmes. In this issue, you'll be able to read about some of the senior colleagues who join us from renowned universities, together with other profile stories about the newest members of the HSS family in the "People Section".

Besides recruiting scholars to the faculty, we have made some major breakthroughs in research. I would like to congratulate our colleagues, who recently won three MOE Tier 2 research grants, nine MOE Tier 1 grants, and two research grants from the Lien Foundation and the NTU Edex. These awards, worth approximately \$2.5 million in total, are testament to our growing research capacity.

As part of our enduring commitment to innovative collaboration in research at the international level, HSS hosted over 600 scholars from more than 45 countries at NTU campus for the 9th International Symposium on Bilingualism – the first time world-leading experts in linguistics have gathered together in Asia for an event of this magnitude. Essentially a global meeting of minds on bilingualism and multilingualism, the conference also received funding support from the Lee Kuan Yew Fund for Bilingualism.

In collaboration with Kyoto University, HSS hosted "Plural Coexistence and Sustainability: Asian Experiences in Interdisciplinary Perspectives", an international conference on sustainability issues featuring leading scholars in fields ranging from agriculture, history, and geography to international relations and economics. Representing NTU, HSS faculty worked closely with renowned academics from more than ten countries to make this conference a success. To keep up the momentum of institutional collaboration in promoting

interdisciplinary research on Asia, HSS serves as a founding member of the "Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies in Asia", together with distinguished counterparts at Kyoto University, Chulalongkorn University, the Academia Sinica, the National University of Singapore, the University of the Philippines, and the Indonesian Institute of Sciences.

Regarding our undergraduate education, this year we exceeded the School's intake target and the overall quality of our students in terms of indicative grade profiles rose. The number of scholarship holders also increased substantially.

We have just kicked off the new academic year with encouraging results, and I would like to thank all our faculty, staff, students and alumni for your stellar efforts and invaluable contribution to the School's continued growth. I wish all of you a fruitful and prolific year ahead.



Professor Liu Hong

TAN KAH KEE ENDOWED PROFESSOR AND CHAIR
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY



HSS CONVOCATION CEREMONY

By Sneha Gururaj

Ms Josephine Gan, Director (Corporate Communications & Go East) of non-profit organisation Business China was the Guest Speaker at this year's HSS Convocation. Ms Gan, who graduated with a double major in Chinese studies and Chinese Language from NUS, also holds a Masters degree in Guidance and Counseling. Her speech was peppered with anecdotes describing her experience as a young, fresh-out-of-university graduate, which kept the audience thoroughly engaged.

Recounting the early days when her relatives chided her for her "impractical" choice of major, she told the graduating students that it never works to try

pleasing everyone, since that is basically a recipe for disaster. Describing the subsequent change of heart of her relatives, she said: "When they found out that I had landed a job as a Director and Producer for the Singapore Broadcasting Corporation, they exclaimed –Wah, what a wise choice!"

Ms Gan, who is also heavily involved in community work, urged the gathered graduates to pursue an advance degree in a few years' time if they have the opportunity and resources. She believes that continuous advancement in knowledge is crucial in today's economic environment. Stating her belief that the humanities are more relevant than ever

before in the working world of today, Ms Gan also used an interesting analogy to illustrate her perspective on life.

"Don't look to the past, look ahead. As we drive this car called Life, look ahead. Look at the rearview mirror to check. When we approach roadblocks, detour. You can go faster at highways, but slow down or you might drive off a cliff. Slow down when approaching a bend."

"We may lose at the starting points in life but we can win at the inflexion points. [And] maybe it's not about winning or losing, it's about enjoying the journey with those who matter most to you."

Each year, NTU graduates who emerged top in their respective programmes are awarded the Lee Kuan Yew Gold Medal. This year, How Zhan Jie from the Chinese Division was awarded the gold medal for being first in general proficiency throughout his programme of study and for obtaining First Class Honours.

Zhan Jie was visibly touched as he looked back on his time at HSS in the last four years.

“It has been a very memorable and meaningful four years of undergraduate study at NTU. I have been very fortunate to learn from many proficient and dedicated professors, while at the same time having the opportunity to engage in eye-opening and enriching programs such as URECA and GEM Explorer,” said Zhan Jie.

Zhan Jie also attributed his success at HSS to setting a clear goal for himself right at the very beginning of his undergraduate life.

“I set a clear goal for myself – to commit unyieldingly to entering the field of research in philosophy. Setting high but realistic goals has not only motivated me to fulfill my potential, but has also enabled me to gauge my progress as I continually look to enhance my learning experience.”

More than just academic knowledge though, what Zhan Jie has gleaned from his time at HSS are invaluable insights that he will carry with him for life.

“In my four years as a member of the HSS family, I’ve learnt that success and happiness are juicy tidbits that can only be tasted by the adventurous, the conscientious, the indefatigable and the confident.

“An important insight I’ve gained is spreading the joy of learning with my peers and mentors. Learning is not defined by one’s position, status or intelligence, but by one’s willingness to put in the time, patience and effort in pursuing a field of study. To be able to share one’s fruits of knowledge is the most satisfying achievement any aspiring researcher should strive toward, and it is a lifelong goal that I have set for myself.”



Chan Ka Yan Emily
*Winner of LKY
Gold Medal (Sociology)*

For sociology major Chan Ka Yan, Emily, a genuine love for the subject contributed greatly to her success during her spell at NTU. She won the Lee Kuan Yew Gold Medal for Sociology, and was also the recipient of the Kwok Chin Yan book prize in the first three years of her tertiary education.

Ms Chan said that the opportunity to discuss sociological theories and issues with her peers played a big part in her doing well at NTU. The self-motivated student did not see her challenging readings and coursework as “difficult,” but instead viewed them as character-building challenges. Looking at her studies as an opportunity to rethink her views on a variety of issues, the Raffles Junior College alumnus admits that the journey was not an easy one.

Asked what she found most challenging about her undergraduate days, she candidly said: “I’ll be honest, I’m not the most disciplined person when it comes to knuckling down for deadlines. Often I underestimated how long it would take to complete an assignment, and yet I was often too proud to hand up what I felt was shoddy work”.

The inspiring young graduate believes that sociology has fundamentally changed her life for the better.

“Merely studying it for the sake of grades would be to shortchange yourself – you miss out on the full experience.”



Chia Ying En Valerie
*Winner of LKY
Gold Medal (English) &
Koh Boon Hui Scholarship*

Winner of the Koh Boon Hui Scholarship Award and the Lee Kuan Yew Gold Medal for English, Chia Ying En, Valerie, counts post-colonial literature, gender studies, and feminist theory as amongst the most interesting subjects and topics that she encountered during her undergraduate days.

Ms Chia, who has a Diploma in Mass Communication from Temasek Polytechnic, said that maintaining high grades was one of the most difficult tasks she faced. Difficult coursework and rigorous studies were challenging enough, although she did find the work stimulating. But the STARS system for course selection was a constant source of frustration.

Recounting how she had to struggle to get the electives she wanted in her first two years of studies, she added that she is glad the system has improved considerably since those days.

Success does not come easy, and Ms Chia is keen to thank her peers and professors for help and assistance rendered along the way. She is especially grateful for the dedication and commitment shown by her professors.

“I owe a lot to them”, she said.

NTU hosts Asia's first INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON BILINGUALISM

HSS brought together leading world experts to share their views on bilingualism and multilingualism at the 9th International Symposium on Bilingualism which was held from 10 to 13 June. This is the first time that the symposium was held in Asia.

Organised by HSS's Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies, it was attended by over 600 scholars from more than 45 countries. Keynote speakers included Prof Nick Evans, Australian National University; Prof Ofelia García, City University of New York; Prof Monika Schmid, University of Groningen; and Prof Lionel Wee, National University of Singapore.

The symposium featured a special workshop on Early Childhood Bilingualism sponsored by the Lee Kuan Yew Fund for Bilingualism. Led by a panel of leading scholars, the workshop targeted educators, parents, and caregivers. The experts spoke on issues such as language acquisition, and learning and literacy in the early years – with a special focus on Singapore's education environment.

For example, Assoc Prof Xiao Lan Curdt-Christiansen from NTU's National Institute of Education shared that young children benefit more when parents converse with them in the language that they are strongest in, rather than the one they hope their children will excel in. When parents are weak in a particular language, they tend to use limited vocabulary and this limits the child's learning of that language.

Speaking at the launch, Guest-of-honour Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Education, Ms Sim Ann, said the mentioned workshop, which was targeted at parents and caregivers, "can help young children better adapt to and benefit from the bilingual environments in which they grow up."

Ms Sim, who is also the Vice-Chair of the Lee Kuan Yew Fund for Bilingualism, added that practitioners and policy makers will benefit from the findings shared by scholars at the symposium.

She said: "As scholars and as experts, you are able to study in a very measured way what we as policy makers are dealing with on the daily basis. You have the position of being able to evaluate over time the effectiveness or otherwise of what it is that we are doing.

"There will be many learning points for us to take away, as practitioners as well as policy makers, and this is the reason why the Fund is happy to support this very worthy initiative."

Prof Randy LaPolla, Head, Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies said: "Singapore has been associated with bilingual, not to say multilingual, education

since its independence. We are delighted and proud to be able to organise a forum for sharing ideas and experiences for all of us who are deeply committed to bilingualism and multilingualism."

Prof Nick Evans also shared his views on his experiences here: "HSS is really leading the charge in the study of bilingualism and multilingualism in Singapore. Linking the study of bilingualism and multilingualism to linguistics is an astute and productive move that is far-sighted and is likely to position HSS as one of the leading departments anywhere in the world for this sort of study."

Prof Evans added, "The way the Symposium was hosted was not only impeccable for its organisation and welcoming hospitality, but also very firmly embedded in the fascinating multilingual and multicultural environment of Singapore. It was, quite simply, one of the best international conferences I've ever been to – and I go to a lot!"

Prof Ofelia García, City University of New York giving her keynote address



Prof Nick Evans from Australian National University giving his keynote address

NTU and Kyoto University host INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE ON A SUSTAINABLE ASIA



A group of leading scholars recently gathered at HSS to discuss pressing sustainability issues. On 11 and 12 March 2013, the school hosted an international conference titled "Plural Coexistence and Sustainability: Asian Experiences in Interdisciplinary Perspectives." The conference was organised by HSS and Kyoto University's Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS). It hopes to boost NTU's Sustainable Earth research thrust as well

as HSS's Environment & Sustainability interdisciplinary research cluster.

The participants came from wide-ranging fields such as history, economics, anthropology, geography, sociology, agriculture, political science, Chinese studies, international relations, and art and film studies. Participants discussed broad themes such as: Global Environmental Crisis and Responses; Sustainability in Action; Governance

and Identity; Livelihood, Alienation and Solidarity; The Political Economy of Chinese Modernity; Plural Coexistence: Ecological and Social Challenges, and Diversity, Hybridity and Resilience.

Representing NTU were Prof Liu Hong, Chair of HSS, Asst Prof Chang Young Ho, Division of Economics; Asst Prof Saidul Islam, Division of Sociology; Prof van Dongen, History Programme; Prof Isaac Kerlow, Artist-in-residence, Earth Observatory of Singapore, and Asst Prof Lee Dong Min, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies. Selected and revised conference papers have since been accepted for publication by *Nature and Culture*, among others.

Prominent overseas participants included Prof Takashi Shiraishi, President, National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies, Japan, and President, Institute of Developing Economies, Japan External Trade Organization, and Prof Hiromu Shimizu, Director, CSEAS.

NTU hosts INTERNATIONAL ROUNDTABLE FORUM ON GLOBAL TALENT



The College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, through HSS and Nanyang Centre for Public Administration, hosted policy makers, professionals and academics from Singapore, China, USA, and Canada at an international roundtable forum held on

3 June 2013. The forum discussed the burgeoning field of Global Talent Studies.

Jointly organised with China's State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs (SAFEA), this is the first time that the forum was held outside China. The previous two forums were organized by SAFEA in association with China's Conference on International Exchange of Professionals in China.

The forum provides a platform for policy- and academic-level discussions on various issues related to global talent mobility.

Prominent speakers included Guest-of-Honour Mr Wong Kan Seng, Member of Parliament for Bishan-Toa Payoh GRC, Special Advisor for Economic Cooperation to Prime Minister of Singapore, and Former Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore; Mr Liu Yan Guo, Deputy Administrator of SAFEA, China; Dr Howard Duncan, Executive Head, Metropolis, Canada; Dr Wang Hui Yao, Vice-President of the Western Returned Scholars Association, China; and Mr Peter Felix, President, Association of Executive Search Consultants, United States, among others.

BRIDGING SUSTAINABILITY IN RESEARCH TO PEDAGOGY: *Theory and Practice*

By Asst Prof Chang Young Ho, Division of Economics

An International Conference on “Bridging Sustainability in Research to Pedagogy: Theory and Practice” was held in HSS from 19 to 20 April 2013. Organized by the Environment and Sustainability Research Cluster (whose coordinators are Asst Profs Chang Young Ho and Md Saidul Islam) and funded by NTU’s Sustainability Earth Office, the conference explored how educators disseminate knowledge accumulated and generated in sustainability research to students in the classroom context.

The experiences and research shared at the conference were as varied as the disciplines and nationalities of the researchers in attendance. A paper sharing the process of how to reflect theoretical research output in educational curricula in Indonesia, Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, and Taiwan clarified the way ahead and identified problems that needed correction. Another presentation covered field experience, in particular the linking of pedagogy to sustainable water resource management in Cambodia. Other papers discussed



the development of literacy materials for endangered languages and the analysis of environmental consciousness in English literature, thus helping to unveil the pedagogical applicability of sustainability research in the humanities. A paper on state-religion relations in Singapore was also given, suggesting how the

environmental curriculum in the country could be further refined. Organisers conducted a field trip to Bollywood Veggies in the Lim Chu Kang area; the trip gave foreign and local participants a pleasant introduction to private-sector green agriculture efforts in Singapore.

MODERN CONFUCIANISM AND PUBLIC CONSCIOUSNESS

「现代儒学与公共性：东南亚与东北亚儒学的建构与实践」学术工作坊

作者：魏月萍，中文系助理教授



南洋理工大学中文系、人文与社会科学研究 中心(CLASS)、中华语言文化中心暨韩国延世大学国学研究院于2013年5月3、4二日举办「现代儒学与公共性：东南亚与东北亚儒学的建构与实践」。共有5位韩国国学院学者以及8位本地学者参加，新加坡学者分别来自南大中文系、哲学组、华裔馆、中华语言文化中心、国立教育学院以及国大中文系。工作坊针对「公共儒学」、「韩国儒学的历史发展」、「东南亚儒学与政教」以及「新马儒学与公共性」这四组主题展开热烈的讨论，吸引了40多位老师及学生出席。

Transcultural Imaginaries: MAKING NEW, MAKING STRANGE

HSS's Division of English hosted leading writers and scholars from around the world at the Transcultural Imaginaries Conference and Festival of Writing held from 14 to 17 June. The conference celebrated the success of *Moving Worlds: A Journal of Transcultural Writings*, which is co-published by NTU and Leeds University, UK.

The journal, which focuses on creative work as well as criticism, began life in 2001 in Leeds, and has, since 2011, put down fresh roots in Singapore. Its founding editor is Shirley Chew, currently Visiting Professor at HSS.

World-renowned writer, Dermot Healy, dubbed the "Celtic Hemingway," and award winning Filipino-Australian author, Merlinda Bobis, were among the leading writers featured at the conference-cum-festival. Others include British writer and scholar, Elizabeth Cook, Jamaican author, Olive Senior, as well as a lively

gathering of Singapore writers such as Grace Chia, Ng Yi Sheng, Ben Slater, and Jean Tay. Besides taking part in scholarly discussions, these writers also conducted creative writing workshops and reading and performance sessions which were open to the public.

"In hosting this major international conference, our college, and NTU, has again demonstrated its deep commitment to the development of a culture of engagement with the arts and culture, locally and transnationally," said Professor Alan Chan, Dean of NTU's College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. "Bringing together writers, artists, and academics from more than 20 countries confirms the status of our college as a major established centre of intellectual and creative activity in Asia."

The central theme of the conference is the movement of cultures across different borders, and the rich transformations

arising from such border crossings. Participants examined key issues such as the impact of globalisation on the arts, the relation between the indigenous and the global, and the continuing claims of the past on the present.

In conjunction with the conference, NTU and the Embassy of Ireland co-hosted the Bloomsday Celebrations Reception on 16 June commemorating the life of James Joyce. Featuring readings by Derek Hand, Dermot Healy, and others, the event was graced by the Irish Ambassador to Singapore, His Excellency Joe Hayes. Observed annually in Dublin and around the world since 1954, Bloomsday aims to relive the events of Joyce's novel, *Ulysses*, the setting of which is 16 June 1904.



Associate Professor Neil Murphy, Head of the Division of English, launches the conference cum festival by planting a tree using a special shovel made from melted gunparts by Mexican artist Pedro Reyes.

Recognising TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Several colleagues have done us proud, winning awards that attest to how seriously HSS takes its teaching mission. Asst Prof Patrick Williams from Sociology has won the inaugural Nanyang Teaching Award (College).

This is one of two new higher-level awards introduced recently by NTU. Under the new Nanyang Education Awards, three levels of awards will be recognised: University, College, and School. The School award replaces the former Nanyang Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Asst Prof Williams, who is also a recipient of the 2010 Nanyang Award for Excellence in Teaching, teaches courses such as youth subcultures and social psychology. As a recipient of the College Award, Asst Prof Williams will be installed as a Fellow of the NTU Teaching

Excellence Academy, which will be set up soon.

On 12 March 2013, Asst Prof Olwen Bedford and Asst Prof Tan Ying Ying also received the Nanyang Award for Excellence in Teaching at the Nanyang Awards ceremony.

Asst Prof Bedford teaches organisational psychology courses using a variety of blended learning tools, including blogs, video, podcasts, clickers, LAMS, and discussion forums.

Asst Prof Tan is a sociolinguist who teaches course such as Phonetics and Phonology, and Language Planning and Policy. She is also a recipient of the prestigious Fung Global Fellows award at Princeton University.

Asst Prof Patrick Williams

Asst Prof Tan Ying Ying

Recognising EXCELLENCE

The School of Humanities and Social Sciences would like to congratulate the following faculty and staff for their excellent performance and contributions to the School and University.

Faculty Promotion to Professor

Name	Division
Prof C. J. Wee Wan-ling	English

Faculty Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure

Name	Division
Assoc Prof Yohanes Eko Riyanto	Economics
Assoc Prof Francis Lim Khok Gee	Sociology
Assoc Prof Phua Chiew Pheng	Chinese
Assoc Prof Kwan Sze Pui Uganda	Chinese
Assoc Prof Long Shi Ruey Joey	History
Assoc Prof Sun Hsiao-Li Shirley	Sociology
Assoc Prof James Patrick Williams	Sociology

Faculty Promotion to Senior Lecturer

Name	Centres
Dr Jean Francois Noel Ghesquiere	CML
Dr Heah Lee Hah, Carmel	LCC
Dr Lee Hwee Hoon	LCC
Dr Leong Ping, Alvin	LCC
Mdm Li Shu Yun	LCC
Dr Sujata Surinder Kathpalia	LCC

Long Service Medal (National Day Honours by the President of the Republic of Singapore)

Name	Division
Seet Mei Lin Christina	Economic Growth Centre

HSS Service Excellence Award

Category	Prize	Name	Division
Managerial	1st	Yong Su Lin Priscilla	English
Managerial	2nd	Sally Yong Siew Lin	Chair's Office (HR)
Managerial	3rd	Chew Zhiyang Wilson	Chair's Office (Facilities/Comms)
Managerial	3rd	Goh Aiwei Ivy	Graduate Studies
Managerial	Merit	Lydia Seah Hui Lin	Psychology
Executive	1st	Ng Lay Peng	Chair's Office (HR)
Executive	2nd	Lee Yan Biao John	Chair's Office (IT)
Executive	3rd	Seet Mei Lin Christina	Economic Growth Centre
Executive	Merit	Fong Yit Shin Steven	Chair's Office (IT)
Executive	Merit	Siti Nurzilah Binte Abu	Psychology

Long Service Award

Years Name	Designation / Division
10 Assoc Prof Francesco Cavallaro	Associate Chair (Graduate Studies)
Troy Tan	Undergraduate Education Office
Carole Lim	LCC
15 Assoc Prof Quah Sy Ren	HOD, Chinese
Assoc Prof Crossland-Guo Shuyun	Chinese
20 Dr Chan Soon Keng	LCC
25 Haslina Bte Hussein	CML

Professor Elliot DEMYSTIFIES THE QIANLONG EMPEROR

By Sarah Giam Yi Xin



“Let go of your preconceptions of the Qianlong Emperor, if you hope to understand him”, coaxed Professor Mark C. Elliott in flawless Mandarin to the 450-strong audience gathered in the SPH News Centre Auditorium on 17 August.

Speaking as part of the Tan Lark Sye Professorship in Chinese Language and Culture Public Lecture Series, Prof Elliott’s public lecture – “The Qianlong Emperor in Triumph and Tragedy” – was organised by the Centre for Chinese Language and Culture of HSS, The Association of Nanyang University Graduates, and Lianhe Zaobao. And the public lecture was chaired by Professor Liu Hong, Chair of HSS.

Urging his audience to discard the numerous stereotypes of the Emperor, not least an elderly man subject to his corrupt officials’ manipulation, Prof Elliott, who chairs Harvard University’s PhD Committee in History and East Asian Languages and is the Director of the Fairbank Center for East Asian Studies,

also cautioned against “romanticizing the Emperor for his achievements”.

According to Prof Elliott, Qianlong was just 24 years old when he became emperor. During his reign, he expanded China’s empire by one-third, brought economic growth through the free-flow of goods between provinces and foreign nations, even compiling an anthology of two millennia of Chinese writing totalling 36,000 volumes.

“The writings would have fit 128 CDs,” Prof Elliott said, to widespread gasps.

Prof Elliott believes, though, that there is no definite answer as to whether the Emperor had more triumphs or tragedies.

“It really depends on the yardsticks you’re using,” he said.

Still, the Qianlong Emperor had numerous achievements. For one, his reign lasted 63 years – the longest of all China’s emperors.

Though already nicknamed “Precious Prince” by his grandfather, Emperor Kangxi, the Qianlong Emperor further increased in favour after Emperor Kangxi witnessed his calmness even when confronted with a charging bear.

However, the Emperor faced tragedies too. Eighteen of his 27 children died, including his seventh son, at age 1 from smallpox, whom he had hoped would succeed him.

Qianlong was still writing love poems to his wife, half a decade after she died. Prof Elliott displayed one written in 1798, with a concluding line of “What joy is there in solitary longevity?” – supporting his earlier description of Qianlong as someone who treasured relationships.

Although we might never know the real Qianlong, due to his care in recording his exploits for posterity and the myths surrounding him, perhaps, the best way to view him in triumph or tragedy would be as Prof Elliott said, “a man, just like us”.



Big Hitters

HSS RECRUITS HEAVY HITTERS

In less than a decade, HSS has grown from a modest 53-student initial cohort to become a heavyweight contender offering degrees in eight disciplines with over 2800 students and 160 full-time faculty members.

Faculty recruitment – one of the most important tasks for a research-intensive university like NTU – has been integral to our exceptionally rapid growth.

Through our passion and commitment to excellence, we've been able to grow at an unprecedented pace in the past two years and especially in the last few months, adding 41 new colleagues (including Visiting Professors) to our ranks, many of them leading vanguards in their respective fields. We're also recruiting more than a dozen new faculty members and seven Postdoctoral Fellows in the coming months.

Professor Liu Hong, Chair of HSS who oversees the School's recruitment drive, said, "The School attaches great

importance to recruiting and retaining high-calibre faculty members, both senior and junior ones. I am very pleased that our efforts have paid off and that we have recruited a significant number of excellent faculty members in all disciplines at HSS."

The Heavy Hitters

In the last few months, we have successfully attracted eminent academics from world-renowned institutions to join our School.

Professor Zhou Min is one such trailblazer. One of the world's leading experts in Sociology, Prof Zhou was recruited from UCLA to head our Sociology Division.

"Prof Zhou is a well-known scholar in the field of Sociology, migration. She has written lots of books and publications on Chinese immigrants in America – their

history, their current situation, how they live and develop their careers," said Professor Luke Kang Kwong Kapathy, Associate Dean (Research), College of Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences and Chairperson of the selection committee charged with recruiting Prof Zhou. Profiled in this issue of *Horizon*, read ahead to learn more about Prof Zhou's achievements and research in the field of immigration and Chinese diaphora studies – one of the many reasons she was recruited to lead Sociology.

Another distinguished recent addition to our ranks is **Professor Kingsley Bolton**, the new head of the Language and Communication Centre (LCC). Co-editor of the influential SSCI-indexed journal *World Englishes*, an editorial board member of the journals *Educational Studies*, *English Today*, and *English World-Wide*, and formerly the elected President of the International Association for World Englishes (from 2003 to 2004), Prof Bolton brings much-valued stature

to LCC.

Featured in this issue, read ahead to learn how this former Chair of English in the City University of Hong Kong hopes to propel the centre to greater heights.

In addition to new permanent faculty appointments, we've also invited renowned academics to our School as Visiting Professors.

One such academic is **Professor Gerald Chan Chi Wang**, currently visiting with our Public Policy and Global Affairs (PPGA) programme. An authority on Chinese international relations and politics, Prof Chan has written trend-setting books and numerous articles and was a two-time Best Essay of the Year Award winner in 2005 and 2008.

A Life Member of Clare Hall at Cambridge, Prof Chan has served as visiting faculty in many universities including Cambridge and Kobe-Gakuin in Japan.

Professor He Bao Gang, the Head of PPGA, revealed how our students can access Prof Chan's expertise.

"Prof. Gerald Chan will teach one course, 'Introduction to International Relations'," said Prof. He, who himself joined HSS in January this year together with Economics Division's **Prof Ng Yew Kwang**, the Albert Winsemius Chair Professor.

In addition, HSS has also bolstered the Philosophy group by getting **Professor Liu Xiao Gan** to be a Visiting Professor at our School.

"Prof Liu is an internationally recognized authority and leading scholar in Daoism. His work in Daoism has been extensive and far-reaching. We're fortunate to have him teach a class in Chinese philosophy for us," said Assoc. Prof Li Chen Yang, Coordinator of the Philosophy Group. Prof Liu earned his doctorate at Beijing University under the tutelage of legendary Chinese Philosopher Zhang Dai Nian. He has published many books on Daoism, and his journal essays are routinely translated into Korean, English, and Chinese. He has taught in prestigious institutions including Beijing

University, the University of Michigan, Princeton University, and the Harvard-Yenching Institute.

Professor John Newman, one of Asia's leading linguists, is also a Visiting Professor at our Linguistics and Multilingual Studies (LMS) division.

A Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and Chair of the Department of Linguistics at University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada for close to a decade, Prof Newman's research interest in the Sinitic language family, especially Chinese dialects, will be a boon to LMS.

"Prof Newman is a specialist in corpus linguistics, and is teaching the subject this semester using a different approach. He'll also present a six-part research seminar series on using the statistical package R for interrogating linguistic corpora," revealed Prof Randy J. LaPolla, Head of LMS.

"Besides helping those of us with extensive language data to create proper corpora, he's working with Asst Prof Lin Jing Xia from our Chinese Division on a corpus of Wenzhou Chinese data for a paper based on that corpus," added Prof LaPolla.

Also profiled in this issue are Visiting Professors **Professor Gregor Bolton**, a leading authority on Chinese history and Chinese migrants overseas from the University of Cardiff at our History Division and **Professor John Stephen Lansing**, one of the world's leading anthropologists from the University of Arizona at our Sociology Division.

With so many distinguished scholars joining our ranks including newly appointed Nanyang Assistant Professors **Dr Suzy Styles** of Psychology and **Dr Chou Meng Hsuan** of PPGA, HSS will certainly continue to scale the heights of academia in the foreseeable future.





HSS: PROVIDING A FORMIDABLE COMBINATION OF HUMANITIES AND SCIENCE

By Chua Yi Ni

Gone are the days when the scientist is only expected to don a white coat and conduct experiments, when the accountant hunches over the laptop and squints only at numbers or when the engineer looks only at flow charts and production processes.

“It’s not sufficient to just know about technology, science and engineering,” said Assoc Prof Eko Riyanto, HSS’s Associate Chair for Undergraduate Education.

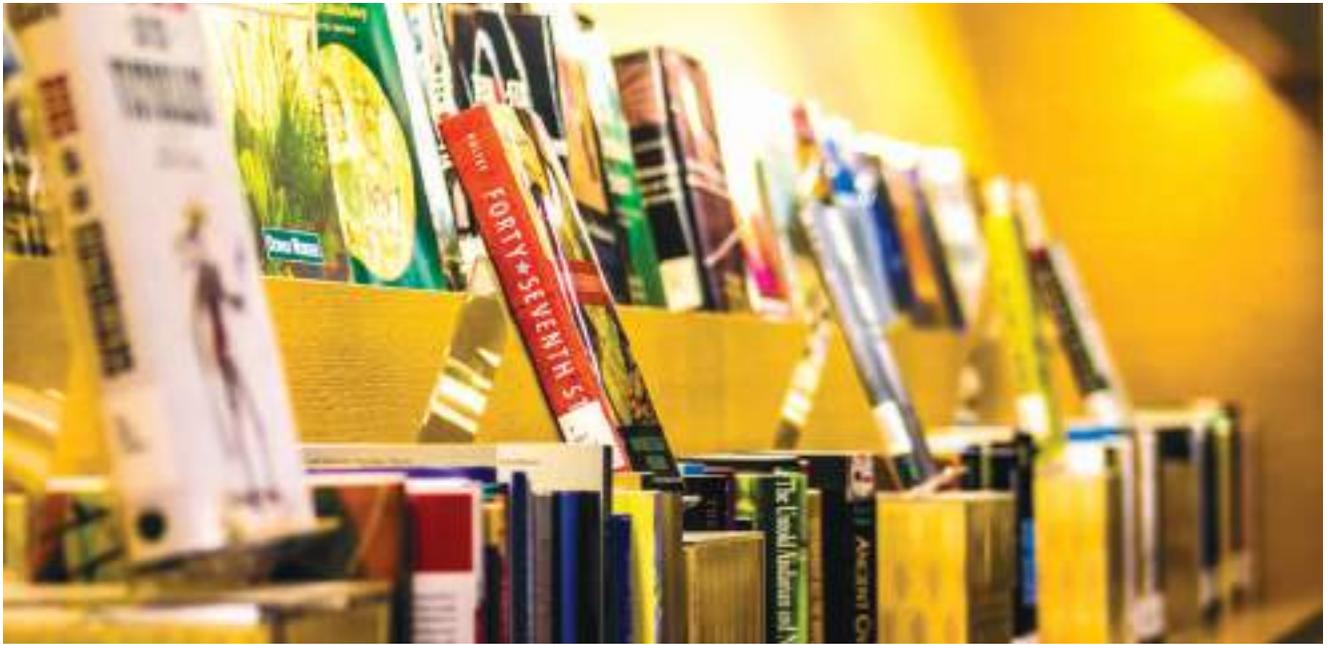
“When you engineer something, the product itself has to be diffused to society. So there is an interaction with society with regards to new technology or science breakthroughs. That interface is very important.”

That’s where the humanities and social sciences come in.

While HSS majors are happy to focus on their own disciplines, many may not know that the school plays an increasingly critical

role in expanding the intellectual horizons of other NTU undergraduates.

HSS first opened its doors in 2004 and has expanded rapidly in recent years. Shortly after its inception, and in response to the needs of non-humanities students, the school established Second Major and Minor systems, and introduced General Education Requirement Prescribed Electives (GER-PE) for the general NTU student population.



“If you look at the old curriculum [before the introduction of Minors and GER-PE], they tend to be very one-sided,” said Assoc Prof Riyanto, who teaches in the Economics division.

“So basically if you’re taking engineering or if you’re taking economics, then you’ll be trained as an engineer or an economist. This is good but at the same it neglects all other things that are important,” he explained.

To prepare students for an ever-changing working environment, NTU decided to revamp its curriculum. It sought to broaden the general knowledge of students while maintaining their areas of specialization.

Through Minors, Second Majors, GER-PE and Unrestricted Electives (UE) offered by the School, non-HSS undergraduates obtain among other things a well-rounded perspective on the role of technology and science in society. They become better workers and, hopefully, better global citizens.

“I think HSS is probably the fastest growing school in NTU in terms of student numbers and also in terms of course offerings,” said Assoc Prof Riyanto.

The GER-PE System, Minor and Second Major

In the GER-PE system, HSS professors teach the majority of courses offered under the Art, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS) section of the General Education category, one that all NTU students have to fulfill. To give students more exposure to HSS courses, the School is currently looking into converting some AHSS courses to the Liberal Studies category. According to the HSS Undergraduate Office, GER-PEs offered by the Division of Psychology are the most popular, with about 250 students per module and numerous appeals during the Add/Drop Period.

For students keen on in-depth study of a particular area, the School has many opportunities for them as well.

“If we think students are capable, we always want to encourage them to be more adventurous and expand their knowledge by taking a Minor or second Major,” said Assoc Prof Riyanto.

“We have a lot more exciting Minor programmes, so we are always aiming to provide more options and choices for students. Every year we think of new Minor programmes that we can offer to students,” he added.

Currently, HSS offers Minors in Chinese, Economics, English Literature, Psychology,

Public Policy and Global Affairs, Sociology, Translation, History, Linguistics and Multilingual Studies, Environmental and Urban Studies, and Philosophy.

Minors in Psychology and Economics are the most popular. In Semester 2 AY2012-2013, about 200 NTU students declared to do the Minor in Psychology, while about 190 students declared their intention to complete a Minor in Economics.

On average, about four students file for a Minor in English Literature yearly. Also, from 2005 to 2011, 104 students have graduated with a Minor in Public Administration.

In addition, HSS recently introduced two new majors, one in Public Policy and Global Affairs, and another in Philosophy.

“The current system has served NTU students well in allowing them to broaden their knowledge beyond their first Major of study. Of course it would be more ideal if more new GER-PEs and Minors were offered to give our students more choices. However, this is very much dependent on our manpower availability as well as the funds that have been given to us,” Assoc Prof Riyanto added.

Benefits of Exposure to the Humanities and Social Sciences

Students who study the humanities and social sciences on top of their Majors gain a wealth of advantages. They make better employees, are more knowledgeable global citizens, and are also able to think creatively.

Firstly, employers nowadays look for more diverse workers. Besides good grades and relevant training, they require employees to have general knowledge of the humanities, which can be helpful during the course of work, or give them an advantage.

“While interdisciplinary exposure is, in general, not required by employers, our students will benefit from the exposure by being able to see things from other perspectives,” said Ms Chong Mei Ying from the NTU Career and Attachment Office. According to Chong, a Business student can for instance benefit from a minor in Psychology or other HSS disciplines.

She added that during job interviews, employers expect graduates to be up-to-date on current affairs, especially if it is related to the economy or to a specific industry sector.



Professors Have Their Say

Assoc Prof Li Chen Yang, the Coordinator of the Philosophy Group in HSS, strongly believes that Philosophy is not the “useless” subject some conceive it to be.

“Learning philosophy propels students to think ‘outside the box’,” said Assoc Prof Li, adding that the skills developed in studying the subject are “generally transferable and broadly applicable”.

He cited a recent article by Edward Tenner, the founding advisor of Smithsonian’s Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation. In the article titled *Is Philosophy the Most Practical Major?*, Tenner made a strong case for studying philosophy and cited data from a survey which showed that “working conditions for philosophers outranked some other prestigious fields like aerospace engineering and astronomy.”

In addition, the power of language is also not to be slighted. According to Asst Prof Daniel Jernigan of the Division of English, a Minor in the subject allows students to analyse information critically and to write persuasively.

“[These are] useful skills in all disciplines, and highly sought after by most employers,” he said.

Asst Prof Jernigan is confident that students who minor in English can achieve the same success as English majors, many of whom have landed key managerial positions in government, business and industry sectors.

In addition, China’s economic rise has propelled rapid development in other parts of Asia as Chinese money flood Asian markets. Therefore, a Minor in Chinese seems increasingly useful because it gives graduates a better understanding of Chinese culture and thinking. This allows them to communicate effectively with businesspeople from China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan.

Said Asst Prof Hee Wai Siam of the Chinese Division: “The use of Chinese language will become more and more important in industrial and commercial circles as well as in many science and engineering fields in Asia.”

“Mere reliance on English information falls short of a full understanding of how Chinese people think and handle things,” he added.

From LA to Singapore: LEADING THE WAY FORWARD

By Sneha Gururaj

For Professor Zhou Min, who has published 13 books and more than 150 journal articles and book chapters, Singapore was a huge draw when she pondered the next step to take in her career. Among other things, the sociology professor has a keen interest in international migration issues (comprising topics such as migrant integration and enclave formation, globalized Asia, immigrant entrepreneurship, and immigrant trans-nationalism), racial and ethnic relations, overseas Chinese studies, and urban sociology. As a major destination point for the global Chinese Diaspora, she believes that Singapore is an ideal place to pursue her new research focus on international and intra-Asia migrations, as well as on globalised Asia developments.

Previously based at UCLA, one of the best universities in the U.S. with a top-10 sociology department and the best Asian American Studies department, Prof Zhou has worked with the best in the field. Among her goals, Prof Zhou wants to build a stronger sociology programme at HSS. Research-wise, she hopes to shift her attention from the U.S. to Asia.

Increasingly, her research focus will be on overseas Chinese studies and on Asian migration concerns, with the latter aimed specifically at countries that have historically received few international migrants.

Asked why she was attracted to NTU-HSS, she said: "I am attracted to NTU mainly because of the youthfulness, tremendous energy, passion, and collegiality of the sociology faculty, the research potential of Singapore and the region, and, most importantly, the instrumental support [I received] from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences." We welcome Prof Zhou Min on board!

I am attracted to NTU mainly because of the youthfulness, tremendous energy, passion, and collegiality of the sociology faculty



A MASTER OF WORLD ENGLISH

By Sneha Gururaj

Professor Kingsley Bolton is very familiar with success. A leading authority on the English Language, he has authored, edited and published 16 books, five journal special issues, and more than 60 journal articles and book chapters on the subject. His main research interests in the last twenty years have been connected with language and society in the Asian region. In particular, he has studied the history of English in Asia and the spread of English in Asian societies such as India, Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines. From 2003 to 2004, he served as the elected president of the International Association for World Englishes (IAWE), the global association for English linguists and language scholars.

Prof Bolton has 30 years of teaching experience in Hong Kong and Sweden, where he taught a wide range of courses in English language and linguistics, and introduced a number of key innovations in curriculum design for English majors as well as students in Engineering, Science, and other disciplines. One great highlight of his academic career, he says, was receiving a full professorship at the University of Stockholm in the presence of the King and Queen of Sweden. He received the professorship in the city hall of Stockholm, the same hallowed premises used annually for the Nobel Prize ceremonies.

The Professor, who recently joined HSS, counts the experience as another highlight of his career. "I am very happy to be here", he said.

He is the Co-Editor of the SSCI-indexed journal *World Englishes* (Wiley-Blackwell) and book series of the same name, and a member of the Editorial Boards of *Applied Linguistics Review*, *Educational Studies*, *English Today*, *English World-Wide*, and the international book series *Multilingual Education* (Springer). He will continue to edit *World Englishes* during his time at NTU while working

on a number of books and pursuing a full research agenda. Apart from teaching and research, Prof Bolton will serve as the head of the Language and Communication Centre (LCC). He believes that LCC, which teaches 10,000 students from across the university, is an important centre for the university.

Prior to joining NTU, Prof Bolton was the Chair Professor of English at City University of Hong Kong. NTU and HSS, which in his opinion is young and developing quickly, drew him to Singapore. He believes that HSS will play a leading role in the international development of the humanities and social sciences. He also believes that the university is already making its mark on the world stage.

"It is an exciting time to be here at NTU, and I'm looking forward to the development of the university in the coming years."

“It is an exciting time to be here at NTU, and I'm looking forward to the development of the university in the coming years.”



A DEFENDER OF WORLD HERITAGE

By Sneha Gururaj

A six-month stint on the Indonesian island of Bali prompted Professor John Stephen Lansing to change his major from physics to anthropology. Specialising in Balinese culture, Prof Lansing's research work in the 1980s with ecologist James Kremer showed the world that Balinese water temple networks were self-organised and that these networks had expanded over the centuries to manage the ecology of rice terraces at the scale of entire watershed systems. These networks were recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2012.

Through his water temple research, Prof Lansing grew more interested in self-organising processes elsewhere in the region. In 2013, he will be a visiting professor at Singapore's new institute for complexity research and an adviser on the governance system for Bali's World Heritage. In recent years, his research has concentrated on the long-term dynamics of coupled social-ecological systems, focusing in particular on two topics. The first has to do with emergent properties of Balinese water temple networks where he is assisting the Indonesian government to create a new UNESCO World Heritage site to help preserve these apparatus. The second project is a comparative study of social structure, ecology, kinship, language change and the evolution of disease resistance in 69 villages on 14 Indonesian islands.

An authority on environmental issues in Bali, he has written many articles and several books on Bali such as *The Balinese* (1995), *Priests & Programmers: Technologies of Power in the Engineered Landscape of Bali* (1991, Revised 2nd Edition 2007) and *Perfect Order: Recognizing Complexity in Bali* (2006). He has also participated in the production of several documentary films, the most notable being *The Goddess and the Computer* (1988) – a film about the study

of Balinese water temples in ecological management. Other films include a segment of *The Sacred Balance* (2003), *Perfect Order* (2006) and *Voyagers on the Ring of Fire* (2011).

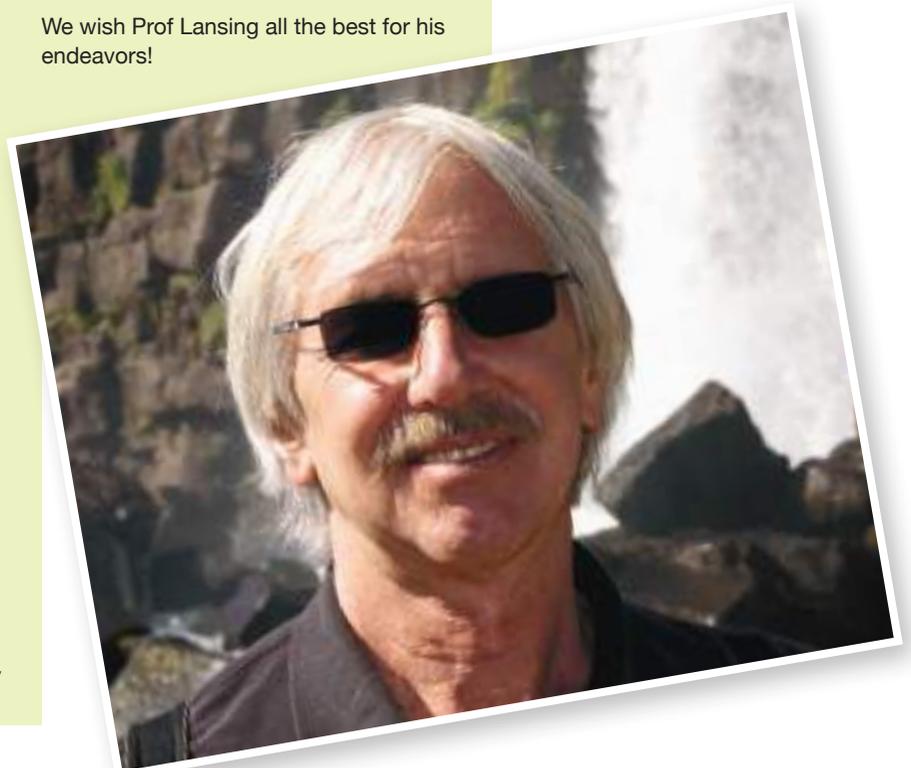
Despite his wide acclaim, when quizzed on what he considered his proudest professional achievement, he had a simple reply: "My students!"

Prof Lansing told *Horizon* that he hopes to play a constructive role in the formation of the new Complexity research institute, and is also eager to support plans to create a major new program in environmental sciences.

"Singapore is located in the midst of the greatest biodiversity, both terrestrial and marine, in the world. There is an excellent chance for NTU to become Asia's leading center in both complexity science and environmental research. The social sciences and humanities are critical to the success of both of these initiatives," said Prof Lansing.

We wish Prof Lansing all the best for his endeavors!

“There is an excellent chance for NTU to become Asia's leading center in both complexity science and environmental research.”



A BRITISH CHAMPION OF CHINESE HISTORY

By Sneha Gururaj

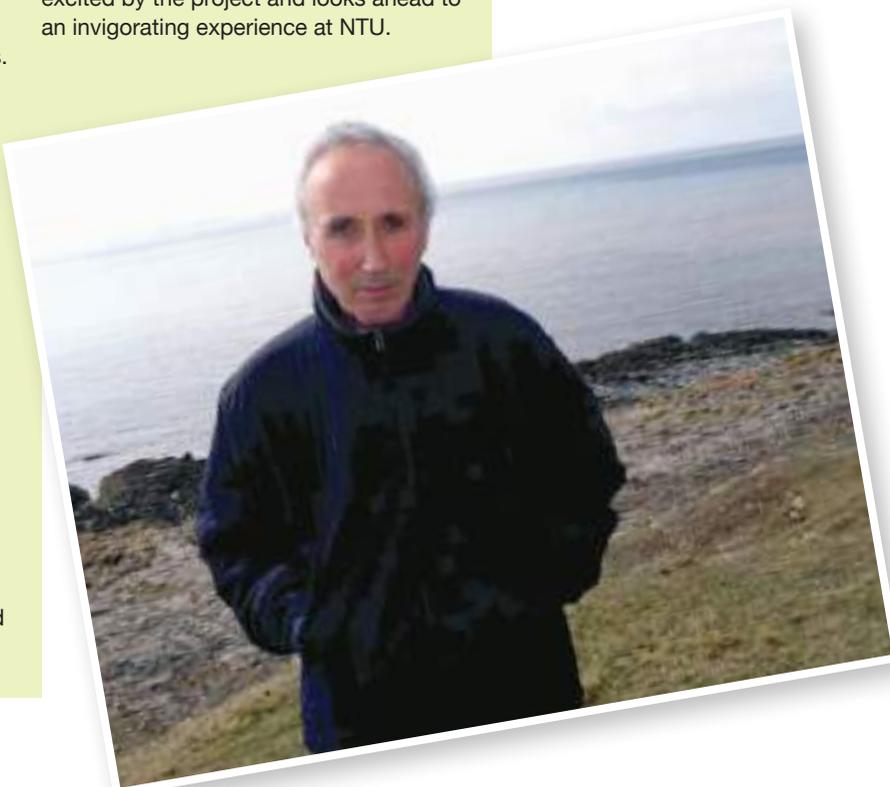
At a time in the 1960s when Chinese Studies was still largely peripheral in academic institutions around the world, Professor Gregor Benton took it up as a major at Cambridge University, UK. He has not looked back since that choice. Focusing on lesser studied and seemingly marginal issues – the Communists who stayed behind in the South rather than those who joined Mao on the Long March, the Communists' New Fourth Army in the War against Japan as opposed to their better-known Eighth Route Army under Mao, Chinese migrants overseas, and the politics of dissent within the country – Prof Benton has carved out an academic career that is varied, engaging and increasingly topical in the context of contemporary geo-political relations and what some have called China's progressive "decentring".

In the past 15 years, he has focused his research on the lives and particularly the identities of Chinese migrants overseas, including their children and descendants. Overseas migrants have even had an influence on the Chinese polity and economy in some regions, which would have been barely imaginable in Mao's day.

After winning the Association of Asian Studies' Best Book on China award in 1993 for his *Mountain Fires: The Red Army's Three-Year War in South China* (Berkeley, 1992), Prof Benton went on this year to win the English Pen Award for his translation of a memoir detailing the prison experience of Chinese literary critic Hu Feng (written by Hu's wife, Mei Zhi). Counting these as his most notable achievements, Prof Benton finds it gratifying that his work has brought the topic of eclipsed minorities, marginalised migrants, oppressed dissidents and

Hu Feng's persecution to the world's attention. He is currently about to publish a 1000-page sourcebook on the Chinese Trotskyists, a group that formed under Chen Duxiu in opposition to the official Party in the 1930s, and whose leaders spent decades behind bars under Chiang Kai-shek and Mao. Its title: *Prophets Unarmed: Chinese Trotskyists in Revolution, War, Gaol, and the Return From Limbo*.

Prof Benton told *Horizon* that he has enjoyed very much his teaching and research at HSS. He has just started a collaborative research project with Prof Liu Hong on a study of Qiaopi, Chinese migrant letters that have recently been given international recognition by the UNESCO's "Memory of the World" programme. Their joint research is provisionally titled *Dear China: Chinese Emigrants Write Home, 1860-1980*. He is excited by the project and looks ahead to an invigorating experience at NTU.





IN PURSUIT OF SUCCESS

By Shreya Gopi

What are modern Asia's new benchmarks for success?

NTU-National Arts Council international writer-in-residence Tash Aw explores this question as well as the lives of migrants in his new novel, *Five Star Billionaire*, which was released on 21 Feb. at the first international launch held at NTU-HSS. In this, his third novel, Aw traces the lives of five Malaysians who migrate to Shanghai in a bid to start life afresh.

"This is the most personal book I've written so far," said Mr Aw, who was born in Taipei to Malaysian parents, grew up in Kuala Lumpur and went on to study in England. "The exaggeration of success markers in the novel's title is a reflection of current conditions in modern Asian societies. Being extremely forward-thinking, cities such as Shanghai only give importance to the future", he said at the launch, which was held at Artease Café in the HSS concourse.

For the protagonists in his novel, however, the past is what drives them. "We don't realise our identity till we leave home," said Mr Aw, explaining how the characters have to live in

Shanghai's future-obsessed environment before they realise how much they are anchored to the past. In seeking a new life, his characters attempt to reinvent themselves and embody identities they cannot take on at home. "Handbags [for example] are more than just leather," explained Mr Aw. A climax of the story is when an expensive bag gets stolen, an act that is extremely painful for the owner because of the status that the bag supposedly confers.

Addressing a well-heeled crowd at the launch, which was graced by the presence of NTU Provost Professor Freddy Boey, Mr Aw also raised concerns about the role that his generation and peers play in society. Describing this cohort as the first to enjoy the privilege of an overseas higher education, he said: "What have we done with the dreams of our generation? Have we taken the path of easy materialism or are we changing society?"

Mr Aw stressed that his job as a novelist is not to make normative judgements, but to pose questions and allow readers to think for themselves. Furthermore, his readers are not limited to people of his generation.

"Both [Malaysia and Singapore] have complicated relationships with their past. This results in a tendency to look forward, which is less complicated than trying to make sense of our recent histories," he said.

Mr Aw added, however, that "being sensitive and questioning is something that can occur at any age" and that many young people are aware of the importance of home and history in forming one's identity.

Five Star Billionaire has been reviewed in a number of international publications including *Time*, *The Guardian*, *Telegraph*, and *The Independent*.

HSS's Division of English hosts the NTU-National Arts Council Singapore Writing Residencies, where critically acclaimed international and local writers teach and act as mentors to students. These artists are a great inspiration to young aspiring writers. Their presence contributes to the growth of a vibrant creative writing programme at NTU, one that is swiftly gaining international recognition and plaudits.

HSS-PSY Research: PLAYING VIDEO GAMES CAN HELP TO TRAIN YOUR BRAIN



A HSS (psychology) research study shows that casual gaming can help improve a person's performance on tasks requiring mental processes similar to those called up by the game.

This finding was published in the open-access journal, *PLOS ONE*, by Asst Prof Michael Patterson and graduate

student Adam Oei Chie Ming. This is the first study to simultaneously compare multiple video games, and also the first to show that different games can improve diverse skill sets. It has garnered worldwide attention, with its findings featured on *Healthline*, *The Telegraph* and *Science Daily*.

"This study, along with many studies from other laboratories, demonstrates that video gaming is not all bad or a waste of time," Asst Prof Patterson said in an interview with *Healthline*. "The games we used were not designed to improve cognitive functioning, or to educate. But perhaps in the future, together with game designers, we could improve education and learning by using the techniques of game design in education."

For the research, participants – none of whom were gamers – played five different games on their smartphones for an hour a day, five days a week, for one month. Each participant was assigned one game. These included *Bejeweled*, where participants matched three identical objects; *Hidden Expedition*, where they had to find hidden objects; virtual life simulation like *The Sims*, and action games.

After a month of "training", the researchers found that those who had played the action game had improved their capacity to track multiple objects in a short span of time, while hidden-object-finders, multiple-object-matchers and spatial-memory game players improved their performance on visual search tasks.

Asst Prof Patterson said: "Though previous studies have reported that action games can improve cognitive skills, this is the first study that compared multiple video games in a single study and show that different skills can be improved by playing different games."

He said that video games do not appear to cause a general improvement in mental abilities, but, like muscles that can be trained with repetitive actions, repeated use of certain cognitive processes in video games can improve performance on other tasks as well.

MOE ACADEMIC RESEARCH GRANT AWARDS

The Ministry of Education (MOE) Academic Research Fund (AcRF) Tier 2 and Tier 1 funds research projects on a competitive basis across Singapore-based universities. The AcRF provides funding for research that has academic significance and will drive future research, potentially leading to innovations and discoveries. Three research proposals from HSS have been awarded MOE AcRF Tier 2 research grants with nine other HSS research proposals clinching MOE AcRF Tier 1 research grants. Congratulations to all our researchers!

MOE Tier 2 Grants

Linguistics and Multilingual Studies



Title: Grammar Matrix Reloaded: Syntax and Semantics of Affectedness

PI: Asst Prof Frantisek Kratochvil

Description: Grammar engineering and language description used to be two separate fields. With the advancement in computation linguistic tools, grammar engineering is ready to tackle more complex linguistic notions. Computational tools can also increase the accuracy and efficiency in language description. The time is ripe to bring the two fields together. This project focuses on a complex grammatical notion, affectedness. By tracking its manifestation in genetically diverse languages, we aim to unearth its underlying nature and implement it in grammar engineering. This is the first comprehensive study on affectedness and the biggest project, to date, to bring the two fields together.



Title: That's what you meant: A Rich Representation for Manipulating Meaning

PI: Assoc Prof Francis Charles Bond

Description: One of the main reasons that computers are hard to use is that they cannot understand language as humans do. The object of this proposal is to improve computers' understanding of natural language. To achieve this, we have gathered an international team of multi-disciplinary researchers from the humanities and engineering. There are two main approaches to the study of meaning in text. One looks at the relations between words when they are used (structural semantics). Another approach is to consider the meaning of each word in relation to our knowledge of other words (lexical semantics). Our goal is to unite these two approaches (structural and lexical) in an integrated semantic framework. This will allow us to study the interactions between the two kinds of information and to better model language computationally.

Psychology



Title: Brain changes following interventions in children with reading disability

PI: Asst Prof Cao Fan

Description: Reading disability is defined as reading failure unexplained by low intelligence, motivation, lack of opportunities, or neurological disadvantages. The goal of this study is to examine neurocognitive changes following different interventions in English-Chinese bilingual children with reading disability using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). This is the first study that will examine if writing can be an effective alternative remedial instruction for children with reading disability, especially those who are non-responders to the phonologically-based intervention. By examining English-Chinese bilingual children in Singapore, the study would provide more comprehensive and informative findings about the underlying neurocognitive deficits of reading disability by addressing the issue of how bilingualism would influence reading disability in the dominant language (e.g. English) and the non-dominant language (e.g. Chinese). It is also the first study that will seek effective intervention for dyslexia in Chinese.

MOE Tier 1 Grants

Chinese



Title: Modelling Levels of Consciousness for Language Development in Infants

PI: Asst Prof Helena Hong Gao

Description: This research seeks to explore the idea “that patterns of use strongly affect how language is acquired, used, and changes over time.” Experiments will be used to clarify and explore the effect of perceptual constraints and social motivation upon the newborn’s increasing autonomy, in terms of “levels of consciousness”. As this approach highlights the effects of social interaction on the acquisition of language, the treatment uses a Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) framework where multiple agents interact and learn from each other. This suggests that each agent will develop its own idiolect and that agents that interact regularly will have many common constructions in their idiolects, a familiar finding of modern linguistics. Executable versions of these models will be built and tested, extending human experiments in ways that will suggest improvements to the models. The study aims to provide a strong, testable theoretical base for the “levels of consciousness” approach to language acquisition.



Title: Rewriting the early history of Sinophone Cinemas in Singapore and Malaya (1926-1965)

PI: Asst Prof Hee Wai Siam

Description: This study is the first to examine early Sinophone Cinema history in Singapore and Malaya from the Sinophone theory perspective. Investigating the Chinese language and Chinese dialects in Singapore-Malayan Sinophone Cinema culture from 1926-1965, this study will also examine the historical and cultural production backgrounds of local Sinophone film companies and actors, their film production models and their interactions with film industries in Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Hollywood. By proposing to establish a “Database of Singapore-Malayan old Chinese newspapers, periodicals and tabloids”, this research will help Singapore-Malayan literary culture researchers, historians, and linguists understand and master the “creolized” linguas-apes of early Singapore-Malayan Sinophone communities and the cultural and political identity of people of Chinese origin with multiple modernities. This research will be utilized to produce the first book on the Singapore-Malayan Sinophone Cinemas.

English



Title: An Aesthetic Analysis of the Contemporary Novelist John Banville (Literary Studies & Aesthetics)

PI: Assoc Prof Cornelius Anthony Murphy

Description: This project entails the production of a full research literary monograph, three conference papers and at least one journal article, all of which will focus of the intersection of literary studies, aesthetic theory and the arts, and an investigation of how the principles that are used to discern artistic value, specifically in literary studies, can form a sustained theoretical model that will be applied to the work of the Booker-prize (2005) winning contemporary novelist, John Banville. This theoretical model, situated in the intersection between art, literature, and aesthetics, is interdisciplinary in focus, while the primary subject matter is literary.



Title: The Sustainable Enlightenment: Space, Place, and the Natural World in the Eighteenth-Century English Novel and Beyond

PI: Asst Prof Samara Anne Cahill

Description: Building on my current research foci — pre-romantic ecological consciousness and the partisan regulatory mechanism of “realism” in the early English novel — this book project aims to contribute to eco-sustainability by combining literary history and textual analysis with an ecocritical lens adapted to the particularities of current theories of the novel. My project will be relevant to contemporary Singaporean sustainability efforts for two reasons. By focusing on historicization, networks, and systems complexity my book will necessarily attend to how Southeast Asian developments affected (1) the development of the British novel and, (2) British imperial assessments of the value of ecological conservation.

Linguistics and Multilingual Studies



Title: The sociolinguistics of English in the Asian region

PI: Prof Kingsley Bolton

Description: This research project is a book project, which will result in a monograph to be published by Cambridge University Press, UK. This monograph will survey the spread of English in the Asian region. The research will discuss the “archaeology of Asian Englishes” and the contemporary (sociopolitical and linguistic) trends in Asia in the face of rapid industrialization, modernity, and globalization. The aim of the volume is to produce a monograph that will serve as a “state of the art” commentary on the topic of English in Asia, drawing on primary research by the Investigator in such societies as India, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and the Philippines, as well as the critical analysis of previous and current research. This work will be of direct relevance to Singapore, give the importance accorded high-level bilingualism in the nation’s education system and public life.

Public Policy and Global Affairs



Title: Theorizing the Research on Public Service Motivation

PI: Asst Prof Chen Chung An

Description: First, this is a study with an interdisciplinary focus. The current proposal intends to bridge two major themes: public service motivation (PSM) in public administration and self-determination theory (SDT) in psychology. Second, this is a study based on international collaboration. I (the PI) have a forthcoming paper in Review of Public Personnel Administration about human resource management in eight different countries. The current proposal follows this line by including scholars in different regions in Asia, Europe, and the United States. The international context increases the generalizability and the comparability of the SDT-based PSM theory proposed in this research.

Psychology



Title: Clarifying the Neural Basis of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder — A Combined Functional, Structural and Diffusion MRI study

PI: Assoc Prof Annabel Chen Shen Hsing

Description: Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) is a debilitating disorder with limited treatment efficacies due to the limited knowledge of the neurobiological basis of the disorder. Our study intends to investigate how abnormalities in the fronto-striatal regions and the cerebellum in OCD psychopathology contribute to OCD. Our study aims to examine the aberrant neural networks involved in OCD by 1) investigating structural abnormalities; 2) evaluating intrinsic functional connectivity within the cerebellum and basal ganglia, and the connectivity between these subcortical to cortical regions; and 3) establishing differences in cerebellar activations during performance of working memory and inhibition control tasks in OCD. Knowledge derived from this study will clarify the abnormalities in OCD, and serve as a platform for future research on OCD, focusing on OCD subtypes, and encourage translational research for clinical utility.



Title: Understanding Online Ethnic Communities through Psychological and Linguistic Analysis of Social Media

PI: Asst Prof Qiu Lin

Description: This study aims to sense the mood, culture, and topic of different online ethnic communities in Singapore (i.e., Chinese, Malay, and Indian) by collecting Tweets from a large number of active users from each ethnic group, then analyzing their Twitter messages by applying two psycho-linguistic analyses to these tweets. First, we will examine social and psychological states of these communities by analyzing the use of function and emotion words. Then, we will apply a meaning extraction method to determine the major topics discussed in a given period in different communities. Our research is the first to systematically compare different online ethnic communities through psycho-linguistic analysis of tweets and the study based on Chinese, Malay, and Indian communities. It will uncover cross-cultural differences in linguistic patterns and socio-psychological dynamics, and provide new empirical evidence for social psychology research.

Sociology



Title: A Search for the Origins of Sociotechnical Vulnerability: The Case of Fukushima Nuclear Disaster

PI: Asst Prof Sulfikar Amir

Description: The proposed study is about sociotechnical vulnerability that generally characterizes the functioning of complex technology in modern society. The central question that drives the proposed study: Where does vulnerability originate in sociotechnical system? To answer this conceptual question, the Fukushima nuclear disaster is chosen as the empirical setting for the proposed study. The primary objective of this study is to develop knowledge and frameworks for identifying and explaining how vulnerability emerges and propagates in a sociotechnical system which can lead to disaster.

BOOKS

Guangdong and Chinese Diaspora: The Changing Landscape of Qiaoxiang



By Asst Prof Yow Cheun Hoe
(Division of Chinese)

Routledge, 2013

China's rapid economic growth has drawn attention to the Chinese diasporic communities and the multiple networks that link Chinese individuals and organizations throughout the world. Ethnic Chinese have done very well economically, and the role of the Chinese Diaspora in China's economic success has created a myth that their relations with China is natural and primordial, and that regardless of their base outside China and generation of migration, the Chinese Diaspora are inclined to participate enthusiastically in China's social and economic agendas.

This book seeks to dispel such a myth. By focusing on Guangdong, the largest ancestral and native homeland, it argues that not all Chinese diasporic communities are the same in terms of mentality and orientation, and that their connections to the ancestral homeland vary from one community to another. Taking the two Cantonese-speaking localities of Panyu and Xinyi, Yow Cheun Hoe examines the hierarchy of power and politics of these two localities in terms of their diasporic kinsfolk in Singapore and Malaysia, in comparison with their counterparts in North America and Hong Kong. The book reveals that, particularly in China's reform era since 1978, the arguably primordial sentiment and kinship are less than crucial in determining the content and magnitude of linkages between China and the overseas Chinese. Rather, it suggests that since 1978 business calculation and economic rationale are some of the key motivating factors in determining the destination and degree of diasporic engagement.

Examining various forms of Chinese diasporic engagement with China, this book will appeal to students and scholars of Chinese Diaspora, Chinese culture and society, Southeast Asian culture and society and ethnicity.

Understanding Society through Popular Music



By Asst Prof J Patrick Williams, Division
of Sociology

Routledge, 2013

This creative text uses popular music as a window to understanding the "sociological imagination" and how to think sociologically, with an emphasis on the symbolic interactionist and social constructionist traditions of sociology. Written for Introductory Sociology and Sociology of Popular Music courses, the second edition of *Understanding Society through Popular Music* uses popular music to illustrate fundamental social institutions, theories, sociological concepts, and processes. The authors use music, a social phenomenon of great interest, to draw students in and bring life to their study of sociology. The new edition has been updated with cutting edge thinking on and current examples of subcultures, politics, and technology.

JOURNALS

Community Commitment in Special Districts

By Asst Prof Chen Chung An (Division of Public Policy & Global Affairs), with Evan M. Berman, Jonathan P. West & Robert J. Eger III

International Public Management Journal, 2013

Vol 16, Issue 1

Special districts now constitute about 42% of all U.S. jurisdictions, yet little is known about them. Some critics are concerned that special districts and their staffs have insufficient community commitment. This study, based on a national survey of senior managers in large special districts, examines activities and programs of special district managers that foster community building and engagement, including correlates of these. Study results reveal that special districts are committed to their communities and several strategies and conditions are associated with increased community commitment, such as jobs that focus on community interactions, service type, and ethics management, as well as, to a lesser extent, graduate degree qualifications and charters that specify the role of managers in promoting the public interest and in relation to the board.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Cultural Differences and Switching of In-group Sharing Behavior between an American (Facebook) and a Chinese (Renren) Social Networking Site

By Asst Prof Qiu Lin (Division of Psychology), with Lin Han & Asst Prof Angela Leung Ka Yee (School of Social Sciences, SMU)

Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 2013,

Vol 44, Issue 1, Pages 106-121

Prior research has documented cultural dimensions that broadly characterize between-culture variations in Western and East Asian societies and that bicultural individuals can flexibly change their behaviors in response to different cultural contexts. In this article, we studied cultural differences and behavioral switching in the context of the fast emerging, naturally occurring online social networking, using both self-report measures and content analyses of online activities on two highly popular platforms, Facebook and Renren (the "Facebook of China"). Results showed that while Renren and Facebook are two technically similar platforms, the Renren culture is perceived as more collectivistic than the Facebook culture. Furthermore, we presented evidence for the first time that users who are members of both online cultures flexibly switch and adapt their in-group sharing behaviors in response to the online community in which they are: They perform more benevolent in-group sharing when they participate in the Renren community and less so when they participate in the Facebook community. We discussed both the theoretical and methodological implications of the current research.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

Reassignment of consonant allophones in rapid dialect acquisition

By Asst Prof James Sneed German
(Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies), with
Carlson, K., Pierrehumbert, J.B.

Journal of Phonetics, 2013, Vol 41, Issue 3-4, Pages 228-248

In an experiment spanning a week, American English speakers imitated a Glaswegian (Scottish) English speaker. The target sounds were allophones of /t/ and /r/, as the Glaswegian speaker aspirated word-medial /t/ but pronounced /r/ as a flap initially and medially. This experiment therefore explored (a) whether speakers could learn to reassign a sound they already produce (flap) to a different phoneme, and (b) whether they could learn to reliably produce aspirated /t/ in an unusual phonological context. Speakers appeared to learn systematically, as they could generalize to words which they had never heard the Glaswegian speaker pronounce. The pattern for /t/ was adopted and generalized with high overall reliability (96%). For flap, there was a mix of categorical learning, with the allophone simply switching to a different use, and parametric approximations of the “new” sound. The positional context was clearly important, as flaps were produced less successfully when word-initial. And although there was variability in success rates, all speakers learned to produce a flap for /r/ at least some of the time and retained this learning over a week’s time. These effects are most easily explained in a hybrid of neo-generative and exemplar models of speech perception and production.

Chinese Migrants in New York: Explaining Inequalities with transnational positions and capital conversions in transnational spaces

By Asst Prof Caroline Pluss (Division of Sociology)

International Sociology, 2013, Vol 28, Issue 1, Pages 12-27

This article puts forward the concept of “transnational positions” as an important part of a new analytical framework to deconstruct and explain the inequalities that 22 Chinese transnational migrants — who had links to Singapore and who lived in New York — perceived they experienced when attempting to access resources in the transnational spaces they formed by living in several societies. Emphasis is on analyzing their experiences in New York and Singapore. Transnational positions are the migrants’ subjective and retrospective accounts of their relations with people and institutions controlling access to desired resources in the different countries and places in which they lived. This new framework uses Bourdieu’s (1984, 1986) ideas of capital conversions to deconstruct and analyze the Chinese migrants’ transnational positions. The article shows that these positions express and reflect the migrants’ perceptions of their inequalities when they attempted to access resources in their transnational spaces, and that these inequalities are the intersections of cultural, social, economic, and political characteristics, with roots in different places, which the Chinese migrants saw as the opportunities and constraints with accessing resources in their transnational spaces. The relevance of this new analytical framework, and the data analysis, to explain cultural hybridity and cosmopolitanism are discussed.

On Zhang Jing-sheng’s Sexual Discourse: Women’s Liberation and Translated Discourses on Sexual Differences in 1920s China

By Asst Prof Hee Wai Siam (Division of Chinese)

Frontiers of Literary Studies in China, 2013,
Vol 7, Issue 2, Pages 235-270

This article explores and re-evaluates Zhang Jing Sheng’s views on sex education and aesthetic education, as revealed in his book *Sexual Histories* and in articles that he published in the journal *New Culture*. His endorsement of sex education and aesthetic education constructed a sexual discourse, advocating the redefinition of Chinese men and women’s gender and sexuality through knowledge/power. Zhang Jing Sheng highly valued eugenics and “aesthetic sexual intercourse,” and he attempted to use sex education to improve Chinese people’s innate physical weakness and their “androgynous” sexual characteristics. By prescribing an aesthetic education that covered all fundamental aspects of life, he also attempted to remedy what he saw as the inadequate or inverted models of masculinity and femininity available to Chinese men and women. Furthermore, by collecting and analyzing articles solicited for *Sexual Histories* and letters addressed to *New Culture*, he discussed how to cure the sexual perversions that were associated with Chinese men and women’s sexualities. Finally, this article compares the contents of *New Culture* with the discourses (in Chinese and other languages) on sexual difference published in other Chinese journals in the 1920s, including how the discourses on sexual difference by Havelock Ellis and Edward Carpenter were translated into the modern Chinese context. The article concludes that the contributors to *New Culture* held unified opinions on the issues of homosexuality and women’s liberation. Thus, in comparison with journals such as *The Chinese Educational Review*, *The Ladies’ Journal*, and *New Women*, *New Culture* was less tolerant of divergent opinions. Although Zhang supported sexual liberation, he nonetheless sought to eliminate homosexuality from the aesthetic society that he envisioned. His idea of sexual liberation tended to signify women’s liberation and excluded a homosexual agenda because he was homophobic. For most of the May Fourth Generation, including Zhang Jing Sheng, sexual and women’s liberation were not equivalent to self-liberation. Instead, the concepts of sexual liberation and women’s liberation were invoked to re-code the bodies of Chinese men and women, with the aim of creating a “Strong Breed to Rescue the Nation.”

JOURNAL ARTICLES

A Study of Yu Jian's Eight Views of Xiao Xiang Paintings and Poems

By Assoc Prof I Lo Fen (Division of Chinese)

Kokka, 2013, Vol 1412, Pages 1-16

Around the end of the fourteenth century to the beginning of the fifteenth century, the drawing of *Eight Views of Xiao Xiang* by a monk Yu Jian was brought to Japan. The original art work consists of eight pieces. Now it is only left with *Autumn Moon over Dongting* (Tokyo/Agency for Cultural Affairs), *Mountain Market, Clearing Mist* (Tokyo/Idemitsu Museum of Arts) and *Sails Returning from a Distant Shore* (Nagoya/The Tokugawa Art Museum).

During the late thirteenth century, Yu Jian was quite active back in his hometown Jin Hua. From the poems that Yu Jian exchanged with other scholars, we can estimate that Yu Jian was born in the period between 1180-1190 and passed away in the period between 1260-1270.

Eight Views of Xiao Xiang was first created by the artist Song Di (about 1015-1080) in the late Northern Song dynasty and this art work has been of great interest to researchers. "Xiao Xiang" is a traditional concept in Chan Buddhism, and in the trend of making *Eight Views of Xiao Xiang* in the Chan context, Yu Jian's work is between the *Dream Journey Over Xiao Xiang* (Tokyo National Museum) by Master Li in the Southern Song and the works of Mu Xi.

Many art historians have studied Yu Jian's paintings and produced much meaningful research. However, discussions on the poems written on the painting *Eight Views of Xiao Xiang* are scarce. This paper will analyze the eight poems that were inscribed on the *Eight Views of Xiao Xiang*. Additionally, it would examine the three pieces of work that are left to discuss the aesthetic essence of Yu Jian in his poems, calligraphy and paintings.

Research has shown that the poems that were written in Yu Jian's *Eight Views of Xiao Xiang* is in the form of seven quatrains, and that it combined both narrative and vivid expressions of emotions, just like the Chan Ji. However, the poems written by Yu Jian do not follow this structure which consists of an introduction, a climax and an ending. His poems do not have a conclusion and are always in a continuous and changing state. It seems like the poems are commenting on the difficulty of Buddhist practice and the perpetual seduction of seeking secular relief.

Relational strategies during disagreements in New Zealand political televised discussions

By Asst Prof Stefanie Stadler (Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies)

World Englishes, 2013, Vol 32, Issue 2, Pages 243-260

The world Englishes approach to discourse analysis has extended our understanding of the ways in which socio-pragmatic norms may be expressed in various varieties of English. In this vein, this paper addresses relational practices in New Zealand English and their impact on language use. While relational strategies have been linked to politeness devices and mitigation strategies, this paper identifies a range of relational practices that appear to be distinctive in the New Zealand context. The frequency of relational strategies and the amount of communicative effort interactants invest is evidence for an underlying wish for harmony and conflict avoidance that often typifies spoken New Zealand English interactions. An understanding of the social motivations underpinning such interactions may thus broaden our understanding of New Zealand English patterns of discourse, with particular reference to spoken interactions in the public arena.

Gender, pride and medical circumcision in contemporary Japan

By Asst Prof Genaro Castro Vazquez (Division of Sociology)

Culture, Health & Sexuality: An International Journal for Research, 2013, Vol 15, Issue 1, Pages 101-113

The outcome of interviews with 26 Japanese men is analysed to identify their views concerning male circumcision and their implications in terms of embodiment, gender and sexuality. Data were collected as part of a larger ethnographic investigation of circumcision, masculinity, sexual behaviour and health matters for Japanese men. Participants in the investigation offered their views in relation to male circumcision by deploying arguments that commodify male genitalia and stress masculinity and sexual prowess. Male circumcision was thought of as a medical technology oriented towards boosting the gender identity of adolescent and/or 'incomplete' men. Male circumcision may also be promoted as a medical strategy to help heterosexual couples conceive. References to circumcision as a procedure for disease prevention were almost completely absent.