



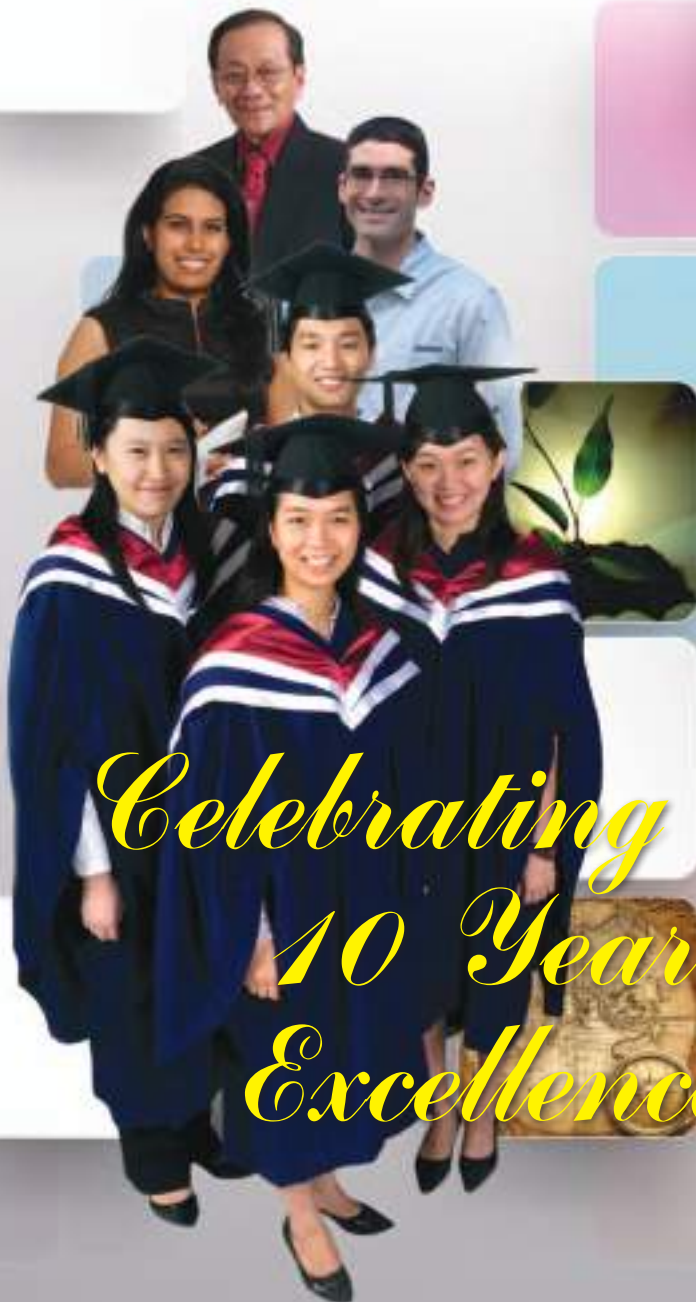
NANYANG  
TECHNOLOGICAL  
UNIVERSITY

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

# HORIZON

*Sharing ideas, Bridging minds*

ISSUE NO.9 Sep/Oct 2014



*Celebrating  
10 Years of  
Excellence*



**HSS**  
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES  
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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**INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES AND RESEARCH HOLD THE KEY TO UNCOVERING NEW KNOWLEDGE AND SOLUTIONS TO THE COMPLEX PROBLEMS OF TOMORROW.**  
 ”

Dear colleagues, students, alumni, and friends,

Welcome to the new academic year. As we continue our yearlong celebration of our 10th year of founding, I am pleased to share with you exciting news about recent developments in research, faculty recruitment and international collaboration here at HSS. Research is the wellspring of a university's intellectual capital. At HSS, we have set out a bold vision to invest in interdisciplinary research as we believe it holds the key to uncovering new knowledge and possible solutions to the complex problems of tomorrow.

In this issue, you will be able to read about the five Interdisciplinary research clusters that HSS has set up based on the School's comparative strengths and the promising researchers we have attracted to our shores with the HSS Post-Doctoral Fellow Scheme.

As a vanguard of the School's research efforts, HSS's cluster of post-doctoral research fellows contributes vitally to the School's groundbreaking research collaborations internationally. By serving as the conduit between various divisions, HSS post-doctoral fellows enable faculty across all divisions to synergise their expertise to tackle complex global issues. In this issue, you will be able to read more about their stories and how they have contributed to the success of HSS.

HSS has continued to search out valuable opportunities to collaborate with world-leading experts in important fields like sustainability. At the NTU International Workshop of Environmental Economics, sustainability experts such

as Professor Christopher Timmins of Duke University and Professor Zhao Jin Hua of Michigan State University presented valuable research findings on how to meet the challenges set by global climate change.

In a multi-disciplinary collaboration with Yonsei University, HSS faculty from the Chinese Division and the Philosophy Programme travelled to South Korea for a joint international workshop on “Confucian Heritage and its Impact on Modernization in East Asia”. Part of a collaboration pact initiated in 2012 between the two institutions, these collaborative workshops serve as a platform to enable academics across East Asia to collaborate on key issues such as the environment and the national identity of East Asians.

In our undergraduate education, we continue to exceed the School's intake target, while the overall quality of our students in terms of indicative grade profiles has further improved. We have also continued to make major breakthroughs in research, clinching yet another MOE Tier 2 research grant this quarter and an unprecedented number of 18 MOE Tier 1 grants.

I believe that, with the collective efforts of all faculty, staff, students, alumni and other stakeholders, HSS will continue to scale the peaks of success in both education and research. I wish all of you a fruitful and prolific year ahead.

**Professor Liu Hong***Tan Kah Kee Endowed Professor**Chair, School of Humanities and Social Sciences*

## WELCOME TO HSS!

The School of Humanities and Social Sciences would like to welcome the following new faculty members to the HSS family.

### CENTRE FOR MODERN LANGUAGES

Name	Appointment	Date Joined
Son Okhyun	Lecturer	7 Apr 2014
Hani Mustafa	Lecturer	4 Aug 2014
Sakurai Shogo	Lecturer	12 Aug 2014

### CHINESE

Name	Appointment	Date Joined
Asst Prof Arista Kuo Szu-Yu	Assistant Professor	18 Jul 2014
Su Tong	Writer-in-Residence	26 Aug 2014

### ENGLISH

Name	Appointment	Date Joined
Asst Prof Divya Victor	Assistant Professor	1 Aug 2014
Asst Prof Christopher Peter Trigg	Assistant Professor	4 Aug 2014
Miguel Syjuco	Writer-in-Residence	12 Aug 2014

### HISTORY

Name	Appointment	Date Joined
Dr Zhang Hui Mei	Research Fellow	2 Apr 2014
Asst Prof Koh Keng We	Assistant Professor	16 Jun 2014

### LINGUISTICS AND MULTILINGUAL STUDIES

Name	Appointment	Date Joined
Dr Lim Ni Eng	Post Doctoral Fellow	31 Mar 2014
Michael Wayne Goodman	Research Associate	2 May 2014
Dr Gérard Félix Diffloth	Senior Research Fellow	9 Jul 2014
Dr Lauren Michelle Gawne	Post Doctoral Fellow	14 Jul 2014
Dr Song Sang Houn	Research Fellow	18 Aug 2014

### PHILOSOPHY

Name	Appointment	Date Joined
Asst Prof Winnie Sung Hiu Chuk	Assistant Professor	11 Jul 2014
Grace Boey Yong Ai	Research Associate	25 Aug 2014

### PSYCHOLOGY

Name	Appointment	Date Joined
Asst Prof Setoh Pei Pei	Assistant Professor	1 Jul 2014

### PUBLIC POLICY AND GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Name	Appointment	Date Joined
Asst Prof Ana Cristina Dias Alves	Assistant Professor	20 May 2014
Dr Laura Elizabeth Anne Allison	Research Fellow	4 Jun 2014

### SOCIOLOGY

Name	Appointment	Date Joined
Dr Yang Peidong	Post Doctoral Fellow	4 Aug 2014

## 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.

### AWARD OF TENURE

NAME	DIVISION
Assoc Prof Francis Bond	LMS

### FACULTY PROMOTION TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR WITH TENURE

NAME	DIVISION
Assoc Prof Daniel Keith Jernigan	English
Assoc Prof Joyce Pang Shu Min	Psychology
Assoc Prof Teo You Yenn	Sociology

### SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARDS

CATEGORY	PRIZE	NAME	DIVISION
Managerial	1st	Shannen Teo	Language and Communication Centre
Managerial	2nd	Ann-Marie Chua Mei Fen	Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies
Managerial	3rd	Kum Wai Han	Chair's Office
Managerial	Merit	Adeline Lim Guat Ling	Chair's Office (Finance)
Executive	1st	Josh Tan Hwa Mong	Chair's Office (IT)
Executive	2nd	Nurazean Binte Ismail	Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies
Executive	3rd	Josephine Chan Yim Fung	Language and Communication Centre
Executive	Merit	Tan Lionel Cheque	Chair's Office (IT) - Now NSS-IT
Executive	Merit	Carole Lim Lai Yeong	Language and Communication Centre

### NATIONAL DAY AWARDS – LONG SERVICE MEDAL

NAME	DIVISION
Assoc Prof Low Chan Kee	Economics
Asst Prof Diane Koo-Cheah Swit Ling	Language and Communication Centre

### NEW APPOINTMENTS

NAME	APPOINTMENT
Assoc Prof I Lo Fen	Head, Chinese
Assoc Prof Terence Richard Dawson	Head, English
Assoc Prof Ringo Ho Moon Ho	Acting Head, Psychology
Dr Tan Joo Ean	Asst Chair, Communications, Education and Student Life

# Double Celebrations

## AT HSS CONVOCATION 2014

HSS Convocation 2014 was a double celebration this year as HSS conferred degrees to more than 720 HSS graduates in two convocation ceremonies held at the Nanyang Auditorium in NTU on 7 August 2014. HSS was privileged to have two distinguished Guest Speakers address our graduates in two ceremonies held at 10am and 2pm respectively.

Dr Teo Eng Sipp, Chief Economist and Director of Economics & Investment Strategy at GIC, Singapore's sovereign wealth fund, was the Guest Speaker for Ceremony 18 in the morning. He addressed students from the Division of Economics who received bachelors, masters and double degrees in Economics as well as degrees in Master of Arts and Master of Public Administration.

Mr Laurence Lien, Chairman of the Lien Foundation and the Community Foundation of Singapore, and a former Nominated Member of Parliament, was the Guest Speaker for Ceremony 19 in the afternoon. He addressed HSS graduates who received bachelor degrees in Chinese, English, Linguistics and Multilingual Studies, Psychology and Sociology.

As an ASEAN Scholar and the person overseeing the direction of GIC's investments of Singapore's foreign reserves, Dr Teo had HSS graduates rapt in thought with perceptive, counter-intuitive insights borne out of his nearly two decade long experience in Economics.

"It's important to discover quickly if you like something or are good at it, if not, don't be afraid to quit, to start something new," said Dr Teo in his speech to HSS graduates. "We are ingrained to persevere [but] since the future is uncertain, you should try different things because you don't know what will work or what you will like. Not doing so could incur a huge opportunity cost – the missed opportunity."

He also told HSS graduates to be proud of their achievements. "Today is a visible and visceral reminder of what you are capable of. You have much to be proud of. Savour the feeling and memory. Let this memory give you confidence that you can overcome the challenges which life will throw at you.

A passionate advocate for volunteerism and philanthropy in Singapore, Mr Lien elevated the social consciousness of HSS's graduating class with his speech as he distilled his two decade long experience in the public and non-profit sectors into valuable, salient life lessons.

"This is the beginning of your journey to contributing to society. Work in our society is often primarily seen for the purpose of making good money. I believe how much we are paid must never be the presumptive measure of self-worth and job-worth. Instead, we need to pay more attention to the intrinsic worth of the work we do, and its value to society," advised Mr Lien in his address.



“IT'S IMPORTANT TO DISCOVER QUICKLY IF YOU LIKE SOMETHING OR ARE GOOD AT IT, IF NOT, DON'T BE AFRAID TO QUIT.”

– Dr Teo Eng Sipp



“WE NEED TO PAY MORE ATTENTION TO THE INTRINSIC WORTH OF THE WORK WE DO, AND ITS VALUE TO SOCIETY.”

– Mr Laurence Lien

“Not many of you can do what you love, but everyone of you can love what you do. We need to see that our actions affect others. Work and life are about making a difference to the world we are living in; it’s about being useful to others. Always have the end in mind – the legacy that you wish to leave in this world. I think as humanities and social sciences graduates, you’re in a unique position to see this. Even if we go into the corporate world, every product that we make and service that we deliver must be genuinely useful and improve the lives of people.”

#### A NEW JOURNEY

With two convocation ceremonies, HSS graduates were also treated to two valedictorian speeches. Ms Low Mei Xiu, from the Division of Economics, addressed her fellow graduates in Ceremony 18 while Ms Yeo Min Hui, from the Division of Chinese, presented her valedictorian speech in Ceremony 19.

“Our time in NTU may end as we graduate. However, these memories will definitely stay with us forever,” shared Mei Xiu in her speech. “One of my friends told me that graduation can be kind of scary. To me, graduation is actually not an end but a new beginning as we embark on a journey into society as young adults,” she added. After graduation, Mei Xiu will be pursuing her Masters in Economics at the University of Warwick, UK, having won a scholarship from the Ministry of Education.

In her speech, Min Hui also prefaced the new challenges facing the graduating class of 2014. “As we go out there empowered to pursue our dreams, let us remember that the

knowledge we’ve acquired and our concern for people and humanity should not cease, just because we’ve graduated. When we eventually find our place in the world, let us guard ourselves from being desensitized, and be the change we wish to see in this world.”

Reflecting on her time in HSS, Min Hui had this to share: “Four years in NTU-HSS has changed the way I think and view the world. I was chatting with a friend I’d known since we were 17, and we ended up talking about Kierkegaard. And she remarked, ‘I can’t believe we’re talking about this right now. This wasn’t possible a few years back.’ Looking back on the four years in NTU, Growth is probably the word that best describes my journey in NTU.”

This year’s convocation also saw Cheryl Julia Lee Wei Ling, from the Division of English, winning a trio of honours: the LKY Gold Medal (English), Koh Boon Hwee Scholars Award and Koh Tai Ann Gold Medal.

“I’ve really learnt a lot about myself,” said Cheryl. “I started this journey really terrified and unsure of myself because I didn’t even know I would be able to complete the degree. But my professors at the English department were really amazing and they’ve helped me so much. And so I’m not afraid of my fears anymore. I’m very grateful to them and also Prof Koh and all of the people who gave me the awards because it’s just so generous of them.”

Cheryl will be doing her Masters in Literature in Trinity College, Dublin after graduation. “I would like to go on to do a PhD and maybe teach, hopefully at NTU. Give back to the people who helped me.”

## HSS WORKSHOP ATTRACTS WORLD RENOWNED ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMISTS

HSS welcomed some of the world’s brightest environmental economists to NTU as the Economics Division held the “The NTU International Workshop of Environmental Economics” at the HSS Conference Room from 26 – 27 May 2014.

Convened over two days, the workshop was organised into six sessions of discussions on *Climate Change: Theory, Behavioural Economics on the Environment, Asia, Energy, Natural Resources and Ecosystem, and Climate Change: Empirics and Policy*.

Prof Zhao Jin hua, Professor of Economics and Director of the Environmental Science and Policy Program at Michigan State University, and a special term Professor at Shanghai University of Finance and Economics in China, kicked off the workshop with his presentation of his paper, *Adaptation to Climate Change: Gradual Changes vs. Extreme Events*. A world-leading expert in the broad area of environmental and resource economics, Prof Zhao talked about developing a “real options model of adaptation to climate change” to meet the challenges posted by global climate change with its “increased frequency and severity of extreme weather events”. He explained how his model captured the “different effects of gradual changes, represented by Brownian motion processes, and extreme events, represented by Poisson jumps”. By comparing adaptation decisions under

the increased frequency and severity of extreme events as well as gradual changes, Prof Zhao revealed that while the adaptation incentives are “higher in response to gradual changes, the probability of carrying out adaptation activities is higher in response to extreme events”.

Prof Ng Yew Kwang, Winsemius Professor of Economics at HSS’s Economics Division, also presented his paper, *How Do we Analyse Extreme Global Catastrophic Risks Rationally? Climate Change and Expected Welfare Maximization*, in the first discussion session on climate change theory. “For problems like climate change that may involve extinction, we must not just focus on the trading off of current consumption against future consumption, but also consider the effects of mitigation investment in reducing the extinction possibilities,” said Prof Ng as he touched on future utility values in an extreme environmental event impacted economy.

Prof Christopher Timmins, Professor of Economics at Duke University and a member of Duke’s Nicholas School of the Environment, also presented his paper on *The Housing Market Impacts of Shale Gas Development*. A research associate in the Environmental and Energy Economics group at the National Bureau of Economic Research, Prof Timmins shared his expertise on the external costs and benefits from shale gas development on a study



Prof Ng Yew Kwang

of how it impacts property value depending on the geographic scale, water source, well productivity and visibility of the development.

On the last day, Prof Euston Quah, Head of Economics Division, HSS, gave a concluding address on *Asia’s Environmental Governance: What Needs Attention If Growth is to Continue*. He identified four pressing areas of public policy: The siting of environmentally unfriendly facilities essential to a country like nuclear power stations; the worsening global waste generation problem; transboundary pollution like haze and inter-river contamination and the critical need to understand non-market goods how to price them.

## 学与思：国际汉学研讨会

Learning and Reflection: International Conference on Sinology

2014年7月19-20日 新加坡南洋理工大学 SPMS - LTS



# HSS HOSTS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON *Sinology*

BY DR WONG CHEE MENG

Fifteen prominent scholars from across the Asia-Pacific were featured in an international conference on Sinology at the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) on 19 and 20 July 2014, in an event to mark the 10th anniversary of the Chinese Division as part of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS).

Entitled “Learning and Reflection: International Conference on Sinology”, the conference saw experts from the United States, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, mainland China and Singapore provide pertinent reflections on the challenges of Sinology as it ventures into new areas and methodologies in the 21st century.

Among the prominent sinologists in attendance were Prof Ronald Egan from Stanford University, Assoc Prof Quah Say Ren and Assoc Prof I Lo-fen – former and current heads of the Chinese Division of HSS. Assoc Prof Quah and Assoc Prof I shared their academic journeys in developing new frameworks respectively in theatre studies and in

the study of text and image, which have gone beyond approaches of traditional Chinese studies.

Prof Alan Chan, Dean, College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, emphasised the relevance of a global and interdisciplinary outlook in his welcome speech and noted that “Sinology” today encompasses both *hanxue* (Sinology as formalised in western scholarship in the 19th century) and *guoxue* (China national learning).

Prof Hu Siao Chen, Director of the Institute of Chinese Literature and Philosophy at Academia Sinica, Taiwan’s top academic body, underscored the significance of the event with an informative second welcome address to the audience. The result of international cooperation between the Institute and NTU’s Centre for Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS), the conference was jointly organised by the two institutions and received additional financial support from the Taipei Representative Office’s “Spotlight Taiwan Project”.

The keynote speech was delivered by Prof Tseng Yong Yih, a leading scholar in traditional Chinese drama and a member of the Academia Sinica of Taiwan. He had recently received the national honour of being the first expert in folk literature to be named Academician or *yuanshi* at the Academia Sinica. He spoke of *xiqu* (Chinese opera) as a multi-faceted art form that defies a simple definition, of which the melodic quality of the language or dialect sung forms a crucial part of Chinese culture.

Over the two days, other scholars provided insights on marginalised or overlooked genres in Chinese literary history, such as the works of female writers, songs in Suzhou dialect, and representations of China’s southwest regions, or the lyrical as well as the epic in the Chinese literary tradition; the interaction between Chinese culture and other cultures in history, including the role played by religion, as well as the flow of Chinese books overseas, and existing resources such as a database of Korean literature in Chinese characters.

## SOCIAL MOBILITY IN CHINA AND BRITAIN

BY DR MICHELLE Y. MERRILL



Prof Kong Jianxun presenting his paper at HSS

Prof Kong Jianxun, Director of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies at Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences in Kunming, China, visited NTU on 6 May 2014 as he delivered the keynote lecture in a seminar organised by the Environment and Sustainability Research Cluster of HSS.

Hosted by the HSS Research Cluster “Environment and Substability”, Prof Kong, who obtained his PhD from the University of Manchester, enthralled the audience as he presented his paper, *Social Mobility in China and Britain: A Comparative Study*, at the HSS Conference Room. The paper was coauthored by Prof Kong and Prof

Li Yaojun from the School of Social Sciences, University of Manchester. The paper taps on both men’s extensive personal experience in both English and Chinese culture, with Prof Kong having earned his Ph.D. in quantitative sociology at the Institute for Social Change at the University of Manchester.

Prof Li and Prof Kong had analyzed national sample surveys from both countries to consider both absolute and relative social mobility in China and Britain, including consideration of the Chinese *hukou system* of household registration. Their main question was whether there was more openness and mobility in Chinese or British society.

Both Britain and China enshrine social equality within their constitutions, implying some economic mobility and opportunities for the poor to attain higher socioeconomic status. Both men had expected that the expanding opportunities resulting from China’s economic reforms over the last thirty years would lead to greater upward mobility for both men and women coming from families where previous generations had been listed as unskilled workers.

Instead, the duo found that there was high inequality and low mobility in both societies. However, the *hukou system* creates a more substantial barrier to upward mobility for rural families in China, even when rural children have the same educational attainment as their urban peers. This problem was especially pronounced for Chinese peasants’ daughters, who were three times less likely to advance than their British peers, and 2.5 times less likely to advance than their brothers.

After presenting the results of this study, Prof Kong engaged the audience in a lively and open discussion of these findings and other considerations, answering questions from several students and faculty in attendance.



Asst Prof Samara Anne Cahill with other conference participants in front of the HSS building

## SUSTAINABLE LITERATURE

BY ASST PROF SAMARA ANNE CAHILL

Scholars from England, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, the Philippines, Turkey, and the United States visited NTU to discuss interdisciplinary approaches to sustainability as they participated in “Sustainable Networks: The Enlightenment to the Contemporary” – an international conference held at HSS, NTU on 13–15 June 2014.

The interdisciplinary conference was organised by Asst Prof Samara Anne Cahill and faculty members from the Divisions of English, Sociology and Economics in celebration of the 10th anniversary of HSS and as part of NTU’s commitment to sustainability research. The conference was co-sponsored by NTU’s Centre for Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) in partnership with the US-based South Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, the Singapore-based Southeast Asian Society for Eighteenth-Century Society (the executive committee of which is currently represented by faculty of NUS and NTU) and received support from the American Embassy in Singapore as well.

Besides visiting NTU, the scholars made visits to Gardens by the Bay and the outskirts of the Singapore Botanical Gardens. The conference attracted a variety of scholars from different disciplines. Professor Kathryn Duncan, for instance, explained the place of empathy in sustainability studies in a paper that addressed both her trip to the Night Safari and one of the *Harry Potter* movies.

Dr. Baerbel Czennia analysed Singapore’s Gardens by the Bay in relation to the history of landscape gardening. Dr. Marlon Pareja, an expert on sustainable water practices, and Dr. Michelle Merrill, Postdoctoral scholar of the HSS Sustainability Cluster at NTU and an expert on sustainability, forestry, and animal habitats, each gave two presentations or workshops on resource use.

Sir Malcolm Jack, an internationally recognized expert on constitutional law and a former member of the UK Parliament, summed up the experience

of “Sustainable Networks” best: “The conference brought out interesting interconnections between a number of disciplines on the broad theme of sustainability in a way that would be difficult to achieve without an actual gathering of specialists in these various disciplines. So there was a great sweep from classical architecture through eighteenth century storytelling to modern horror movies but there was no feeling that these were disjointed.”

“On a personal level,” he noted, “it was a highly enjoyable occasion to meet new colleagues, renew long standing contacts and talk to the articulate and well read students who accompanied us.”

Selected papers from the conference will appear in a special feature devoted to sustainability scholarship in the journal *1650-1850: Ideas, Aesthetics, and Inquiries in the Early Modern Era* edited by Dr. Kevin Cope, the keynote lecturer at the conference.

## THE ASSET OF EAST ASIAN CIVILIZATION AND THE NEW PLAN OF ITS PUBLICITY

BY ASST PROF PARK SO JEONG



Participants of the International Workshop (from left to right): Yow Cheun Hoe, Cho Keong Ran, I Lo-fen, Na Jong Seok, Baik Young Seo, Park So Jeong, Park Young Do, Ngoi Guat Peng, Cho Kyung Hee, Baek Min Jung (Photo taken by Zhou Hao)

NTU faculty from the Chinese Division and the Philosophy Programme of HSS travelled to South Korea as they participated in a joint international workshop between HSS, NTU and the Institute for Korean Studies (IKS) at Yonsei University on 2 – 3 May 2014.

The workshop is the second in a series of international workshops organised as part of a collaboration pact initiated in 2012 between HSS and IKS of Yonsei University. The inaugural workshop was held in HSS last year and examined how Confucian heritage interacted with modernization in Asian countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Taiwan, China, Japan and Korea. This year, the discussion was developed further to examine the potential alternative plans with our East Asian Heritage.

The keynote speaker for this year’s workshop was Assoc Prof I Lo Fen,

Head of Chinese Division, HSS (Prof Baik Young Seo, President of IKS, was the keynote speaker last year). She presented her research on how cultural images shaped East Asian self-consciousness with illustrations of common motifs in poems and paintings between China, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam.

The first session of the workshop began with Asst Prof Baek Min Jung’s presentation, which touched on a different definition of justice and its application as suggested in Joseon, Korea. Asst Prof Ngoi Guat Peng from HSS’s Division of Chinese also presented “Historical Justice” in Malaysian Chinese literature. The second session started out with Asst Prof Na Jong Seok’s observations on Korean ecological thought and practice associated with Confucian heritage and Asst Prof Park So Jeong’s discussion on the relevant

contributions of East Asian ecological outlook to the contemporary environmental discourse. The topic of the final session was Asian Diaspora. Asst Prof Cho Kyung Hee dealt with the ambivalence of the national identity of Koreans in Japan and Asst Prof Yow Cheun Hoe discussed the diasporic citizenship of Chinese Malaysians.

The outcome of the workshop will be published in Korean by IKS. The results of the first workshop, *The Construction and Practice of Confucianism in Southeast Asia and Northeast Asia*, will be published in Chinese by the Centre for Chinese Language and Culture (CCLC), NTU. With the success of these workshops, this collaboration looks set to develop into a regular platform for academic exchange between NTU and Yonsei University.

# UNCOVERING THE FUTURE

Research is the wellspring of a university's intellectual capital. In the last decade, with global problems becoming more complex as they span across traditional disciplines, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) boldly invested in its belief that interdisciplinary studies and research held the key to uncovering new knowledge and solutions. This year, as HSS celebrates its 10th year of founding in NTU, Horizon magazine looks at how HSS is ushering in the future through its interdisciplinary research clusters and the HSS Post-Doctoral Fellow (PDF) Scheme.

To meet the challenges of tomorrow, HSS launched in January 2012 five Interdisciplinary research clusters based on the School's comparative

strengths and leading-edge research trends in the international academe centrally aligned with NTU's Five Peaks of Excellence (Sustainable Earth, Future Healthcare, New Media, New Silk Road and Innovation Asia). The five Interdisciplinary research clusters are:

- Humanities, Science and Society (HSS@HSS)
- Environment and Sustainability
- Global Asia
- New Frontiers in neuroscience
- Literary and Cultural Studies

## RESEARCH SUPPORT & THE HSS POST-DOCTORAL FELLOW

In order to harness its diverse research strengths, the School appoints two Co-cluster Coordinators from two different disciplines to each research cluster to

promote interdisciplinary research. The School also initiated in 2013 the HSS Post-Doctoral Fellow (PDF) Scheme to strengthen support for the five research clusters by recruiting a PDF for each cluster.

Professor Liu Hong, Chair of HSS, reflected upon the rationales behind these new initiatives: "As a new school, we have to identify and develop our comparative strengths in the humanities and social sciences. New discoveries are mostly likely to emerge from intersections between different disciplines, and we want to encourage interdisciplinary research through new funding mechanisms such as offering competitive grants for organizing international conferences and recruiting new postdoctoral fellows under different

research clusters. I am delighted to see that our investment has borne abundant fruits in terms of raising research outputs, strengthening international collaborations, and nurturing a new generation of young scholars."

One of the main roles of the PDF is to support the clusters' research activities through their research and by contributing to the academic coordination for the cluster's activities. Special importance is attached to the selection of PDF applicants to ensure that PDFs are picked according to the relevance of their research to specific research clusters and not just their relevance to the Principal Investigator responsible for proposing the PDF's research theme. To ensure that the right candidate is selected, the Heads of Divisions of the PDF's secondary discipline affiliation are also involved in the selection process.

Besides serving as an important plank in the interdisciplinary research efforts of the School, the HSS PDF scheme allows good PDF candidates to be considered for recruitment as faculty. Read ahead to the People section of this issue as we profile four PDFs who are now faculty at HSS.

## HUMANITIES, SCIENCE AND SOCIETY (HSS@HSS)

Over the last century, advancements made in the field of science and technology has transformed the world from an agrarian society to a global economy based on information computerisation. The Humanities, Science and Society research cluster (HSS@HSS) uses research methods from the humanities and social sciences – history, anthropology, sociology, and cultural studies – to investigate the interactions between science and technology, and culture, politics, and economics.

Assoc Prof Shirley Sun from the Division of Sociology and Asst Prof Hallam Stevens from the History Programme

are the Co-cluster Coordinators of HSS@HSS. Dr Lyle Fearnley is the PDF specifically hired for the cluster.

One of the projects the cluster recently worked on involved measures that helped curb the outbreak of the Avian influenza in Asia. Avian influenza, the "bird flu," is a virus that jumps from animal to humans. When a new variant began infecting Shanghai residents last year, health authorities suspected the people were infected at live poultry markets. Although the markets were closed and premises disinfected, the virus reappeared in nearby cities. Poultry traders had simply moved infected birds on the black market, transporting the deadly viruses along with their avian cargo.

In March 2014, Dr Lyle Fearnley, travelled to Hanoi, Vietnam, to help design a qualitative study of poultry traders. The aim of this study, organized by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, was to understand how poultry traders would react to possible market closure, to investigate their alternative marketing outlets, and to learn how live poultry markets could be made safe without closure.

With the help of Dr Fearnley, influenza experts and government administrators realised they must build collaborative relationships with poultry traders and poultry breeders in order to effectively control the bird flu. Dr Fearnley and the cluster were able to facilitate such collaborations with their expertise in the dynamic tensions among scientific knowledge, government policy, and society.

## ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Global warming and dwindling natural resources are two of the biggest problems facing Mankind today. The Environment and Sustainability Research Cluster was formed with the aim of developing strategies and techniques for managing social,



Dr Michelle Y. Merrill studied wild orang-utans in Sumatra and Bonobos apes in Zaire as part of her PhD fieldwork

political, economic, cultural and environmental challenges.

Asst Prof Chang Youngho from the Division of Economics and Asst Prof Md Saidul Islam from the Division of Sociology are the Co-cluster Coordinators while Dr Michelle Y. Merrill is the PDF attached to the cluster.

Although global warming is not a new issue, education about sustainability is still not widespread in the burgeoning economies of Asia. "Right now, we're working on projects involving a wider community of practice around higher education for sustainability across Asia," said Dr Merrill. "Asian universities are currently under-represented in the literature on education for sustainability. We hope to document what's happening at Asian post-secondary institutions, find examples of best practices in pedagogy and themes across disciplines, and find the best ways to facilitate the sharing of sustainability education innovations. We're working on an edited book,

and seeking funding for an in-depth research project to move forward over the next few years.”

Before coming to HSS, Dr Merrill had worked at Cabrillo College in California, developing sustainability-themed courses, advising student clubs, and supporting college efforts to enhance institutional and community sustainability and social justice.

“I’ve always been interested in questions about how humans interact with the rest of the biosphere,” said Dr Merrill. “When I was doing my PhD at Duke University, I considered ideas like conservation and sustainability to be hobbies, while my primary research project was understanding human evolution through comparative work on the behavior and ecology of other great apes. But as I did my fieldwork for my doctorate (first in Zaire in 1996, then in Indonesia in 1999-2000), I realised the only way to save the habitats of these amazing apes was to work on the problem of sustainability from the human perspective.”

Indeed, it was Dr Merrill’s wish to do research on sustainability that led her to HSS. “I loved teaching at Cabrillo College, but I had very little support for conducting research. I realised that if I wanted to make a larger contribution to sustainability, I would need to move to a university where research was also a priority. When I saw the opportunity to work in HSS, it seemed to be a perfect fit.”

#### GLOBAL ASIA

The idea of “Asia” has gained prominence in political, economic and cultural discourses in recent years. The Global Asia research cluster aims to enhance NTU’s interdisciplinary research centred on Asia by bringing together the experts and researchers in the divisions and programmes in HSS and beyond. Assoc Prof Francis Lim Khek Ghee and Asst Prof Kei Koga

are the Co-Cluster Coordinators of the Global Asia research cluster.

From 2014 to 2016, the cluster plans to focus on the theme, “Regionalism and Regionalization: Charting Asia’s Future”. The cluster’s main analytic thrust is to explore how and why different actors – embedded within state structures, inter-state institutions, and the civil society and grassroots – engage in the discursive practices of constructing “Asia” as an important category in projects such as political institution-building, cultural affiliations and distinctions, grassroots mobilization, economic restructuring, and geopolitical shaping of alliance networks.

In 2014-2015, the cluster will explore interdisciplinary collaboration among HSS divisions and programmes in facets of “regionalism and regionalization”, examining its problems, potentials, limitations, and implications from the perspectives of their respective disciplines. There are plans to conduct seminars and a workshop by March 2015. Through these events, the cluster hopes to identify similarities and differences existing in each discipline and promote awareness and cooperation among those disciplines



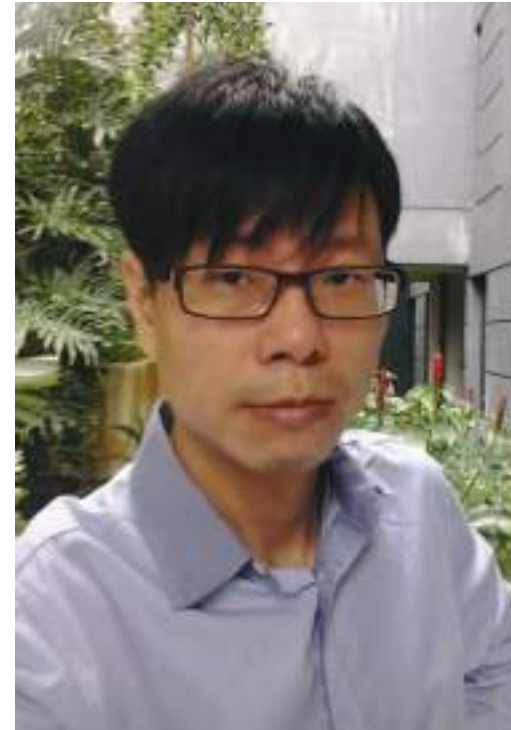
Dr Belle Yick Yee Ying

that have common interests in tackling similar regional problems or issues.

In 2015-2016, the cluster will continue to focus on “Regionalism and Regionalization” by fostering interdisciplinary inquiries. On the basis of the insights generated through the cluster’s events in 2014-2015, potential research collaboration among disciplines will be identified with the aim of investigating in-depth a specific issue and expanding beyond holding seminars/workshops to establish potential large-scale research programmes within the “Global Asia” cluster.

#### NEW FRONTIERS IN NEUROSCIENCE

The New Frontiers in Neuroscience cluster brings together researchers interested in brain function, cognition, and behaviour. It hopes to generate research findings that can help boost societal welfare and well-being. The Co-Cluster Coordinators are Asst Prof Alice Chan Hiu Dan from the Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies and Asst Prof Xu Hong from the Division of Psychology. Dr Belle Yick Yee Ying is the PDF assigned to the cluster.



Dr Wong Chee Meng’s personal research examines the challenge of intercultural dialogue in Singapore

The team is currently working on two projects. The first is a project using electrophysiology to investigate memory aging and how cognitive training can improve memory abilities and prevent normal cognitive decline. The project is a collaboration with Prof Anastasios Bezerianos’ research group from the Singapore Institute for Neurotechnology (SINAPSE) at NUS and Prof Toshiharu Nakai from the National Center for Geriatrics and Gerontology in Japan.

A “BrainConnects2014” two-day workshop involving Singapore and Japanese collaborators was held in August this year at NTU and NUS to share ideas about neuroimaging of healthy aging, neurodegenerative disorders and other neuropsychological disorders. The workshop is being planned for Japan next year.

The second project is a study to understand the differences between our perceptual processing of 2D and digital 3D faces using event-related potentials (ERPs). It is a collaboration between Asst Prof Annabel Chen and Asst Prof Xu Hong from the Division of Psychology in HSS, Dr Cham Tat Jen and Guo Yu from IMI, NTU, Dr Miriam Reiner from Technion Haptic Lab, and Dr Henry Fuchs from UNC Computer Science. The cluster hopes to facilitate the development of 3D communication for more efficient teleconference.

As the PDF assigned to the cluster, Dr Yick’s passion for psychology and research has been instrumental to the cohesion of the projects and research undertaken by the cluster.

“I’m interested in the basis of memory, how memory is organized functionally and neurally, and the mechanisms that give rise to different memory experiences and cognitive behavioural,” said Dr Yick. “While pursuing my undergraduate psychology degree in Cardiff University in the UK, I was fascinated by Prof. Ed Wilding’s lectures about human electrophysiology and cognition. I wanted to pursue a research career in cognitive neuroscience and went on to complete my PhD under Prof. Ed Wilding. A research career is fascinating if you’re working on a topic that you’re truly interested in. It’s like solving endless puzzles, every step is exciting,” Dr Yick added.

#### LITERARY AND CULTURAL STUDIES

A cooperation between the Chinese and English divisions, the Literary and Cultural Studies research cluster was set up to develop interdisciplinary research that explores the interaction between cultural phenomena and the collective experience of the people in different social formations and historical contexts.

Assoc Prof Uganda Kwan Sze Pui from the Division of Chinese and Asst Prof Daniel Jernigan from the Division of Chinese are the Cluster Coordinators while Dr Wong Chee Meng is the PDF for the cluster.

The team is currently organising a conference entitled “Contemporary Innovations: The Arts, Technology and Culture”, where the influence of digital technology on new forms of arts and literacy will come to the fore.

Dr Wong received his PhD in heritage studies in BTU Cottbus, Germany with a thesis that explored the use of intangible heritage as a medium for intercultural dialogue in Singapore, by applying a framework derived from social systems theory.

His return to Singapore was precipitated by a recruitment advertisement he saw in Germany from HSS. “I saw vacancies of postdoctoral fellowship at HSS advertised online when I was in Germany waiting to return to Singapore after a three-year PhD programme. Those magic keywords like ‘Singapore Cultural Studies’ and ‘multicultural’ – I felt like this was a sign beckoning me home. The forward-looking vision of NTU in its strategic direction towards the interdisciplinary, their cosmopolitan outlook, and promotion of cross-cultural understanding, is also really encouraging to me.”

Dr Wong’s interest in cultural studies can be traced to his childhood in multicultural Singapore. “My interest in the interdisciplinary field of cultural studies stems partly from my appreciation of such rich diversity in our social environment and in the media. I had the luxury as a boy of listening to Chinese storytelling and watching Indian classical dance, not to mention early impressions of English literature through movies based on Charles Dickens. This diversity was fascinating.”



# THE LANDSCAPES ALONG HER TRAIN RIDE

BY ANGELENE WONG

It was a curious mix of childhood experiences, the people she met, and a Paul Theroux travel book which shaped Asst Prof Els van Dongen's passion for history and China. The HSS History lecturer was careful not to ascribe her life journey to a meticulously planned process, but to coincidences and circumstances – a true testament indeed to her calling as a historian.

Growing up in Belgium – the “Battlefield of Europe” where great powers often fought – Asst Prof van Dongen visited historic war sites and heard war stories about her family as a child. Her grandfather of Jewish origin lived in the municipality of Ypres (Ieper), which endured five World War I battles. The other side of her family lived in the Jewish quarter of Antwerp and hid a Jewish family of 11 in their basement during the 1942 raids.

“For me, history has always been something tangible and powerful that has a direct impact on people's lives,” she said.

Her fascination for the use and abuse of history began in high school when a history teacher moved away from traditional teaching methods and introduced her class to ideas of historical revisionism, omissions and taboos. She also struggled tenaciously with Latin and Greek as a 13-year-old but now attributes much of her passion for history to (her mastery of the language) this focus in her studies early on.

The tale of how she came to pursue a Chinese Studies degree at the University of Leuven in 1997 is an even

more intriguing one. After reading Paul Theroux's *Riding the Iron Rooster*, she was struck by an instant yearning to travel through China by train to relive what Theroux had written. Her experiences living in an immigrant neighbourhood, where intercultural tensions ran high, also fueled her desire to understand a culture different from her own.

“At the time, many people thought it was a crazy idea, but I'm very happy I didn't listen to them. Ironically, today, everyone thinks it was a great idea.”

Upon completing her Bachelor's degree, she spent a year at Central China Normal University in Wuhan before moving to Leiden University in the Netherlands in 2009. She also spent time at Boston University and Peking University before arriving in Singapore in 2012.

Currently, her research involves intellectual history and the Chinese diaspora. One project examines the sudden influx of Chinese snack vendors in Belgium selling fries known as “Chips Chinese”.

“FOR ME, HISTORY HAS ALWAYS BEEN SOMETHING TANGIBLE AND POWERFUL THAT HAS A DIRECT IMPACT ON PEOPLE'S LIVES.”



Besides her academic interests, Asst Prof van Dongen continues to pursue the passion she first discovered when she read Paul Theroux's book – her love for train travel. “I love travelling through countries by train, preferably journeys several days long. During these journeys, strangers start to interact and there's something poetic about watching landscapes change.”

# PUSHING THE FRONTIERS OF COGNITIVE SCIENCE

BY ANGELENE WONG

Asst Prof Francis Wong Chun Kit has always been fascinated by speech and the way the brain processes it. Currently teaching “Research Methodology” and “Communication and Language Disorders” at the Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies (LMS) in HSS, Asst Prof Wong first arrived in Singapore in 2011 as a post-doctoral research fellow with LMS after ascertaining his psycholinguistic and computational modelling background to be a good fit for the School.

Since receiving his Bachelor's degree in Cognitive Science in 2001 at The University of Hong Kong, Asst Prof Wong has dedicated his career to connecting the dots between cognition and linguistics. Interested in both linguistics and psychology, he studied speech processing through the usage of the empirical and quantitative aspects of experimental research as it allowed him the opportunity to indulge both his interests in linguistics and cognition at once.

After getting his PhD from The Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2009, Asst Prof Wong had continued his post-doctoral research at Northwestern University in the United States where he investigated how the brain works to support cognition and behaviour. This involved using Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) experiments to measure and analyse fluctuations in blood oxygenation and flow in different areas of the brain to see which areas are active and working together to carrying out complex tasks, such as speech comprehension.

In addition to speech, music also plays a part in his current research at HSS. Music, like language, relies on changes in pitch to deliver meaning. Asst Prof Wong is interested in testing if experience with linguistic pitch (lexical tones) and musical pitch would help in acquiring a new pitch system. He is also investigating which sections of the brain would be affected when a new language is learnt. These different areas of research on language and brain function are part of Asst Prof Wong's efforts to piece together a comprehensive brain model that will allow researchers to have a better understanding of the human mind.

“I find reward in teaching. I want people to continue to research, to find interesting results, and keep the field moving,” he said as he expressed his desire to have more students working in his lab.

“I FIND REWARD IN TEACHING. I WANT PEOPLE TO CONTINUE TO RESEARCH, TO FIND INTERESTING RESULTS, AND KEEP THE FIELD MOVING.”



Although he hopes to make a fair contribution to the knowledge of cognitive science to keep his field flourishing, his bigger wish is for his students to develop a passion for the cognitive science of linguistics. “The students are the motivators themselves,” he said. For him, the sense of satisfaction lies in seeing students through the learning process for many years. When asked what he wishes to achieve in ten years, he laughingly replied, “I hope I'll still be staying in this office!”

# A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

BY LAVISHA S. PUNJABI



“When I tell laypeople that I teach history, they often jump to the conclusion that it must be an easy job because the same material can be taught over and over again, year after year,” quipped Asst Prof Chen Song Chuan, a faculty member of the History Programme in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS), NTU.

Some might respond to such stereotypical assumptions by proclaiming the non-static nature of history or reiterate the active reinterpretations of historical events from different perspectives by researchers. However, Asst Prof Chen usually lets such statements pass, keeping his chuckles to the confines of his mind.

“Asst Prof Chen is not one to put down an opinion. ‘Big picture’, he likes to say; to encourage us to think from different perspectives,” revealed third-year undergraduate History student, Zavier Ong, 25, who is taking his third module taught by Asst Prof Chen.

Being able to embrace another dimension of thought and emotion has been one of Asst Prof Chen’s strengths from young, when he used to enjoy the thrill of dissolving into the character of the protagonists in the stories he read.

After attaining a Bachelor’s and two Master’s degrees in literature, the appeal of history struck him while he was pursuing his PhD in East Asia Studies at the University of Cambridge from 2005 to 2009.

“Understanding modern times naturally tends to bring one back to history

because history underlies all spheres of knowledge,” explained Asst Prof Chen. “My background in literature gives me an edge because it allows me to adopt a holistic approach to history, as opposed to abiding by conventional approaches,” he added.

In 2012, he became a tenure-track assistant professor at HSS after competing successfully in the School’s global search process. Since then, he has enjoyed hearing fresh perspectives from his students as they add dynamism to his career. His students, too, have been blessed.

“Asst Prof Chen often encourages students to look beyond constructed narratives of histories, into the original records that might debunk our common understanding of historical events such as the Opium War. This is really stimulating, and it stirred my interest to delve into the archives of Singapore to question the common knowledge we have today,” explained first year History PhD student, Lin Chia Tsun, 25.

Asst Prof Chen’s upcoming publication is a book that challenges prevailing opinion as well. Tentatively entitled *The China They Fashioned: British Traders’ Role in Starting the First Opium War*, he suggests in his book that the Opium War (1839-1842) was an idea conceived by British Merchants residing in Canton – a chilling similarity to what transpired in the 21st Century when the governments of the US and UK conceived the idea of military action against Iraq based on questionable discoveries of weapons of mass destruction.

“**UNDERSTANDING MODERN TIMES NATURALLY TENDS TO BRING ONE BACK TO HISTORY BECAUSE HISTORY UNDERLIES ALL SPHERES OF KNOWLEDGE.**”

# ROOTS RUN DEEP

BY ALYSSA TEO

“Roots are not in landscape or a country, or a people, they are inside you.” Asst Prof Winnie Sung Hiu Chuk seems to embody this quote by Isabel Allende perfectly. Currently a faculty of the Philosophy Programme in HSS, Asst Prof Sung has always been more conscious of the culture that she came from, especially as a young Asian teenager studying abroad.

“I am very passionate about Chinese Philosophy partly because I find early Chinese thinkers’ insights to be profound and partly because many of their teachings were also part of my upbringing. I suppose there is a natural affinity to Chinese culture, which is perhaps brought out or enhanced by the fact that I was a young Chinese teenager studying in Canada.”

Originally an International Relations undergraduate at the University of Toronto (UofT), Asst Prof Sung switched allegiances after being gripped by an introductory philosophy course she took as a freshman. Upon completing her undergraduate degree, she moved to the University of New South Wales (UNSW) to attain her PhD in Chinese Philosophy. Here, she also had the opportunity to attend the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) as a visiting student, giving her the chance to learn more about contemporary Chinese philosophers. She then pursued further graduate studies in analytic philosophy at University College London (UCL). In 2011, she joined HSS as a post-doctoral fellow and became a faculty member of the Philosophy Programme in July 2014.

Her main research interests are early Chinese thinker Xunzi’s thoughts and self-knowledge. After working on a project that attempted to articulate the Confucian definition of hypocrisy, she became more interested in early Confucian moral psychology and their insights into human nature and emotions, fueling her interest in epistemology, self-knowledge and emotions.

Asst Prof Sung is currently working on a book centred on Xunzi’s philosophy. Two of her other projects discuss emotions and commitment in early Chinese thought, and contemporary discussions of self-knowledge and epistemology of belief without drawing on Chinese philosophy.

“**I FIND EARLY CHINESE THINKERS’ INSIGHTS TO BE PROFOUND AND PARTLY BECAUSE MANY OF THEIR TEACHINGS WERE ALSO PART OF MY UPBRINGING.**”

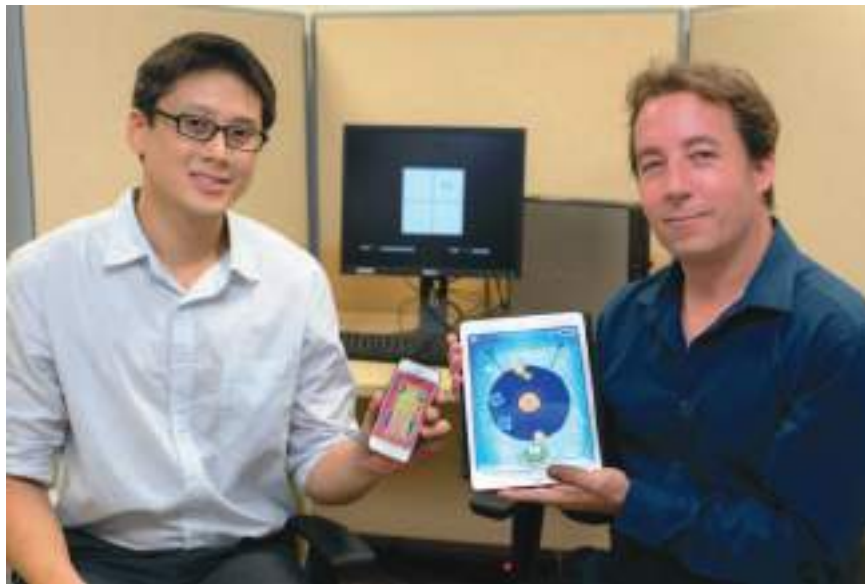


Having had numerous supportive and encouraging mentors, Asst Prof Sung herself is looking forward to being a mentor.

“It is something I’m very excited about. I enjoy talking to students a lot and I have often benefitted from their questions and comments. I am constantly impressed by how diligent and smart the students are. Teacher-student relationship is a constitutive part of the practice of Chinese philosophy and it is a privilege for me to be able to experience this relationship both ways.”

## NTU STUDY SHOWS PUZZLE GAMES CAN IMPROVE MENTAL FLEXIBILITY

BY LESTER KOK



Want to improve your mental finesse? A recent study conducted by Asst Prof Michael D. Patterson and PhD student Adam Oei from the Psychology Division of HSS has shown that adults who played physics-based puzzle video games for as little as an hour a day, had experienced improved executive functions in their brains.

Executive functions enables us to “think on our feet” like deciding whether we can brake in time when the traffic lights at a junction suddenly turns from green to amber while we are driving.

This video game study by Asst Prof Patterson and Adam tested four groups of students playing four different genres of games: a first person shooter game (Modern Combat), an arcade game (Fruit Ninja), a real-time strategy game (StarFront Collision), and a complex puzzle game (Cut the Rope).

NTU undergraduates who were non-gamers were selected and grouped

into the four games being tested. They had to play an hour of games a day, five days a week on their iPhone or iPod Touch for four weeks.

Asst Prof Patterson revealed that students who played Cut the Rope showed significant improvement on executive function tasks while those playing the other games showed no significant improvements.

“This finding is important because previously, no video games demonstrated this type of broad improvement to executive functions, which is important for general intelligence, dealing with new situations and managing multitasking,” said Asst Prof Patterson, an expert in the psychology of video games.

“This indicates that while some games may help to improve mental abilities, not all games give you the same effect,” added Adam.

The abilities tested in this study included how fast the players switched tasks (mental flexibility); their speed at adapting to a new situation (the ability to inhibit prepotent or predominant responses); and their ability to focus on information while blocking out distractors or inappropriate responses (known as the Flanker task in cognitive psychology).

Asst Prof Patterson attributed the improved executive function of the Cut the Rope gamers to the fact that each level of the game required different strategies. This forced gamers to think creatively and try alternate solutions. This was unlike the other video games which kept the same general mechanics and goals.

After 20 hours of game play, Cut the Rope gamers were more than a third faster at switching between tasks and adapting to new situations, and 60% better at blocking out distractions and focussing on tasks at hand.

The study will be published in the academic journal, *Computers in Human Behavior*, in August 2014, and is currently available online. This is the first video game study that reveals broad transfer to several different executive functions, providing further evidence that video games can be effective in training human cognition.

“This result could have implications in many areas such as educational, occupational and rehabilitative settings,” Asst Prof Patterson said. “With more studies, we’ll know what games improve specific abilities, and prescribe games that will benefit people.”

## 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. One research proposal from HSS was awarded MOE AcRF Tier 2 research grants with 18 others clinching MOE AcRF Tier 1 research grants. Congratulations to all our researchers!

### MOE TIER 2 GRANTS

#### ECONOMICS

**Title:** The Evolution of Cooperation, Endogenous Partner Selection and Homophily in Social Networks

**PI:** Assoc Prof Riyanto Yohanes Eko

#### Description:

In economics literature, “cooperation” has been the focus of various studies over the past several decades. Most of these studies focus on cooperation among two persons interacting over time, or in a situation with multiple players, the underlying social network is not explicitly accounted for. In this research, we wish to explore this topic by investigating the role of imperfect monitoring of partners’ actions in the domain of dynamic networks through controlled laboratory and field experiments. In this proposed project, we will explore the implications of imperfect monitoring of actions of others to whom an individual is connected to under the environment of dynamic networks. We wish to understand whether the result of extremely high cooperation under dynamic networks, as found by recent studies, is robust to settings with imperfect monitoring. We will also systematically vary the noise in monitoring and understand the implications of it for cooperative play.



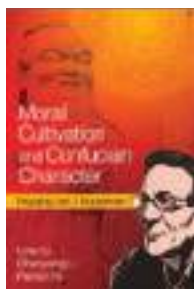
### MOE TIER 1 GRANTS

DIVISION	PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	TITLE OF PROJECT
Chinese	Assoc Prof I Lo-fen	Poems and Diplomacy: Cross-Cultural Communication in East Asia
Chinese	Asst Prof Kwan Sze Pui Uganda	Governing the Straits Settlements through Interpreter: Translation, Technology, Intertextuality
Economics	Asst Prof He Tai Sen	The Role of Languages in Shaping Economic Preferences: An Experimental Investigation Using the Mandarin-English Bilingual Subjects in Singapore
Economics	Asst Prof Tang Yang	Aggregate Effects of Diabetes on Economic Development
Division	Principal Investigator	Title Of Project
Economics	Asst Prof Qu Feng	Structural Changes and Parameter Instability in Macroeconomics Models Using Panel Data
English	Asst Prof Lee Hyun Jung	Performing the Nation in Global Korea: Transnational Theatre
English	Assoc Prof Terence Richard Dawson	This Project Explores Different Copies of Four Illuminated Books by the English Poet William Blake: The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, America, Europe, and The First Book of Urizen
English	Assoc Prof Cornelius Anthony Murphy	Dermot Healy: A Multi-Volume Literary-Critical Research Project
English	Asst Prof Brian Keith Bergen-Aurand	Surveying Queer Cinema: Investigates the global history of queer cinema – people, films, concepts – to produce The Queer Cinema Encyclopedia and several journal articles on specific instances of international queer theory and cinema
History	Asst Prof Goh Geok Yian	Consumer Culture in Premodern Southeast Asia: Singapore and Myanmar
History	Asst Prof Park Hyung Wook	Constructing Failure: Tissue Culture and Tissue Transplantation in Twentieth Century Biomedicine
LMS	Assoc Prof Francesco Paolo Cavallaro	Toponymy and Language Shift: Aspects of Language Change in South-East Asia
LMS	Asst Prof Luca Onnis	Distribution-based Learning of Speech Categories: An Intervention Study
PPGA	Asst Prof Chou Meng-Hsuan	Regionalism and the Global Higher Education Market (Re-Global): Asia and Europe in Comparison
Psychology	Asst Prof Albert Lee Kai Chung	Merely Thinking About Money Affects Attitudes Towards Procreation
Psychology	Assoc Prof Shen Biing Jiun	Using Electronic Mobile Technology to Investigate the Mechanisms of Daily Stress on Health and Recovery of Heart Patients in Marital Context
Psychology	Assoc Prof Annabel Chen Shen Hsing	Investigating the Neural Substrates of Verbal Working Memory in Children with Dyslexia: A Multi-modal Neuroimaging Study
Sociology	Asst Prof Genaro Castro Vazquez	A Comparative Ethnographic Study on Obesity and Overweight in Japan and Singapore: A Gendered and Sexualised Construction of the Body

# PUBLICATIONS

## BOOKS

### **Moral Cultivation and Confucian Character: Engaging Joel J. Kupperman**



By Assoc Prof Li Cheng Yang (Philosophy Programme) and Prof Ni Pei Min (Grand Valley University) State University of New York Press, 2014

The authors take the work of Joel J. Kupperman as a point of departure to consider new perspectives on Confucian ethics. Kupperman is one of the few eminent Western philosophers to have integrated Asian philosophical traditions into his thought, developing a character-based ethics synthesizing Western, Chinese, and Indian philosophies. With their focus on Confucian ethics, contributors respond, expand, and engage in critical dialogue with Kupperman's views. Kupperman joins the conversation with responses and comments that conclude the volume.

### **The Chinese State, Oil and Energy Security**



By Dr Monique Taylor (Public Policy and Global Affairs Programme) Palgrave Macmillan, 2014

This book analyses the policy rationale

and institutional underpinnings of China's state-led or neomercantilist oil strategy, and its development, set against the wider context of economic transformation as the country transitions from a centrally planned to market economy. The Chinese government's

institutional capacities and policy instruments, namely the national oil companies (NOCs) and powerful central planning agencies, enable Beijing to pursue this state-led approach to energy security. Oil plays a vital role in the Chinese economy and was never intended to 'grow out of the plan' and privatise. In tracing oil industry development in China from 1949 to the present day, an elite-driven account of institutional change is provided, showing that the party leadership has driven the reform process and remains the pivotal player in energy policymaking.

### **《移民轨迹和离散论述：新马华人族群的重层脉络》**

#### **Migration Trajectories and Diasporic Discourses: Multiple Contexts of Ethnic Chinese in Singapore and Malaysia**



By Asst Prof Yow Cheun Hoe (Division of Chinese) Shanghai San Lian, 2014

游俊豪为读者梳理了新马华人移民的几个面向，

从国家、侨乡与文学，分析新马华人移民的历史与文化变迁。书里围绕着华侨华人的命题，探讨分散各地的华人如何接受新国度而又被这些国家所吸纳，还有他们跟作为移民起点的中国千丝万缕的关系，以及他们的共同经验和记忆如何凝聚为国内与跨国的族群。该书不仅仅反映了华人移民、其后裔、新移民的变动，而且显示作者对华人研究的积极与努力。

This book looks at the migration of overseas Chinese to Singapore and Malaysia, analysing their history and cultural change through the prisms of country, hometown and literature. It investigates how overseas Chinese

came to be accepted in their new country and their relationship with mainland China as an overseas Chinese. The book chronicles the changes faced by the Chinese immigrants, their descendants and the changes in new immigrants.

### **Prophets Unarmed:**

#### **Chinese Trotskyists in Revolution, War, Gaol, and the Return From Limbo**

By Prof Gregor Benton (History Programme) Brill Academic Publishers, 2014

The Chinese Trotskyists emerged from the Communist Party, in China and Moscow, in reaction to its 1927 defeat, for which they, like Trotsky, had an explanation (Stalin's policies) and a remedy (recognise defeat, concentrate on reconstituting the workers' and the democratic movement). Trotskyism's main section outside Russia, they were crushed by Stalin and by Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Zedong, thus becoming China's most persecuted party. Their strategy in the Japan war, when they failed to take up arms, was short-sighted and doctrinaire, and they had scant impact on the revolution. Even so, their association with Chen Duxiu and Wang Shiwei, their attachment to democracy, and their critique of Mao's bureaucratic socialism brought them a scintilla of recognition after Mao's death.

### **The Wheel-turner and His House:**



#### **Kingship in a Buddhist Ecumene**

By Asst Prof Goh Geok Yian (History Programme) Northern Illinois University Press, 2014

This book traces the archaeological and historical record of Anawrahta and his seminal position in forming modern Myanmar, based on the few sources that have been recovered. *The Great Chronicle*, an important history of the country written by the 18th-century Burmese nobleman U Kala, forms the basis for much of the knowledge we have about Anawrahta today. The book examines U Kala's work in light of the context of U Kala's own time, points out the bias of his royal court and comments on the elaborate narratives he produced. It looks at other sources as well, including unpublished palm-leaf manuscripts, to disentangle earlier knowledge about Anawrahta and 11th-century Bagan. Placing the overall study of Burmese historical tradition within the larger manuscript culture of Asia, the book presents a critique of theoretical issues in history, especially the relationship between the past and memory.

## JOURNAL ARTICLES

### **Technology Transfer with Transboundary Pollution: A Signaling Approach**

By Asst Prof Hong Fu Hai (Economics Division) Canadian Journal of Economics Vol 47, No. 3, 2014

Technology transfer from the North countries to the South is an important way of increasing cost-effectiveness in making Greenhouse Gas emission abatements. This paper analyses technology transfer in a context of transboundary pollution from the perspective of information economics. We find that asymmetric information between the North and the South leads to inefficiency of technology transfer, and discuss the welfare implications of this outcome.

### **Efficiency Wage Theory: Evidence for Singapore Manufacturing Sector**

By Prof Chew Soon Beng (Economics Division) and FYP students Chua Sin Chet, Lim Yun Wen and Ter Teng Teng

Singapore Economic Review, Vol 59, No. 3, 2014

This paper attempts to test whether there is econometric evidence in support of the efficiency wage theory in Singapore's manufacturing sector. We find evidence in support of efficiency wages for 3 out of 18 industries within the manufacturing sector in Singapore based on both OLS and 2SLS regression results, and for another 2 industries based only on OLS and yet another 2 industries based only on 2SLS. Two ways to account for efficiency wages are to show that higher wages have resulted in reduced shirking by workers, and that higher wages have resulted in an increase in worker productivity. We interviewed the union officials in Singapore about the results. However, they argue that that the NTUC doesn't believe in efficiency wages. We told them that our econometric results are consistent with the progressive wage model promoted by NTUC.

### **Belonging to the Nation: Generational Change, Identity, and the Chinese Diaspora: Introduction**

By Prof Gregor Benton (History Programme) and E.T. Gomez Ethnic and Racial Studies, Forthcoming 2014

This study, which introduces a series of connected case studies, is the first to review developments in the ethnic and national identity of the descendants of Chinese migrants in world comparative perspective. It examines core questions such as why, in spite of debates worldwide about identity, exclusion and rights, minority communities continue to suffer discrimination and attack. The studies examine national identity from the perspective of migrants' descendants, and in their finding that the descendants' national identity may be more rooted than is often thought. Concepts such as "new ethnicities", "cultural fluidity", and "new" and "multiple" identities highlight identity changes across generations and the need to challenge and reinterpret the meaning of "nation" and to review

problems with policy initiatives designed to promote nation-building in multi-ethnic societies.

### **Obscenity, Moral Contagion and Masculinity: Hijras in Public Space in Colonial North India**

By Asst Prof Jessica Hinchy (History Programme) Asian Studies Review Vol 38, No. 2, 2014

In the 1850s, the British "discovered" a community of transgender eunuch performers, the *hijras*, and legislated for their surveillance and control under the Criminal Tribes Act (CTA) in 1871. This paper examines how the British dealt with transgender colonial subjects and the implications for our understanding of colonial masculinities. In particular, the paper analyses colonial attempts to erase *hijras* as a visible socio-cultural category and gender identity in public space through the prohibition of their performances and feminine dress. This case study demonstrates how masculinity intersected with a broad range of colonial projects, agendas and anxieties. It also argues that attempts to discipline masculinity and obscenity were uneven in practice, meaning the CTA had varying localised impacts upon *hijras*.

### **From Village Elections to Village Deliberation: A Case Study of Deliberative Democracy Experimentation in China**

By Prof He Bao Gang (Public Policy and Global Affairs Programme) Political Theory, Vol 42, No. 1, Pages 58 – 81, 2014

Village democracy in China has expanded from village elections to the institution of village deliberation. This transformation would necessarily involve a number of trial studies on village deliberation. The paper examines one village deliberative democracy experiment in Bianyu village, Wenling city, Zhejiang Province. It provides a basic background to Bianyu village,

discusses the design of the experiment, and examines its outcomes. The paper concludes with an assessment of the prospects for village deliberative democracy in rural China.

**The “Republic of Research Administrators” in Europe: how to get the researchers moving**

Asst Prof Chou Meng Hsuan (Public Policy and Global Affairs Programme)  
PS: Political Science & Politics, Vol 47, No. 3, Pages 612-615, 2014

This paper examines the difficult political and institutional constraints that shape how knowledge, students, and scholars move around the world. After mobility barriers are removed, the belief is that knowledge will circulate freely, making Europe one of the most dynamic economic regions in the world. How the free movement of knowledge, or the “fifth freedom,” is implemented thus provides an entry point for studying regional initiatives as part of and in response to the internationalization of higher education. This paper discusses EU efforts in implementing the fifth freedom to reveal a less-examined dimension in fostering knowledge mobility: that is, the administrative apparatus essential to facilitating the movement of researchers across national borders. The paper shows how implementation of the main instrument for enabling the fifth freedom has contributed to establishing an administrative apparatus whose actions help (or hinder) the flow of knowledge in Europe.

**Identifying Cognitive and Interpersonal Predictors of Adolescent Depression**

Asst Prof Randy P. Auerbach, Dr Judy C Kim (Harvard Medical School), Assoc Prof Ho Moon Ho Ringo (Division of Psychology)  
Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, Vol 42, No. 6, Pages 913-24, 2014

Emerging research has begun to examine cognitive and interpersonal predictors of stress and subsequent

depression in adolescents. This research is critical as cognitive and interpersonal vulnerability factors likely shape expectations, perspectives, and interpretations of a given situation prior to the onset of a stressor. In the current study, adolescents, ages 12 to 18, participated in a 6-month, multi-wave longitudinal study examining the impact of negative cognitive style, self-criticism, and dependency on stress and depression. Results of time-lagged, idiographic multilevel analyses indicate that depressogenic attributional styles and self-criticism predict dependent interpersonal, but not non-interpersonal stress. Taken together, the findings suggest that self-criticism may be a particularly damaging vulnerability factor in adolescence, and moreover, it may warrant greater attention in the context of psychotherapeutic interventions.

**An Untidy Finish: Atonement as Political Gothic**

By Asst Prof Samara Anne Cahill (Division of English)  
The AnaChronisT, Vol 17, Pages 245-263, 2014

*An Untidy Finish* analyses Ian McEwan’s bestselling novel *Atonement* as an exploration of the ethical crafting of both fictional and historical narrative. Formally mimicking the comforting conventions of religious ritual and realist description, *Atonement* shows that, paradoxically, “reality” is much more accurately represented within a gothic rather than a realist framework. An unflinching interrogation of the politics of class, canonization, and war, *Atonement* reveals realism as an enabling fiction that sacrifices humanity for a tidy finish.

**“Hume Sweet Hume”: Skepticism, Idealism, and Burial in *Finnegans Wake***

By Asst Prof Richard Alan Barlow (Division of English)  
Philosophy and Literature, Vol 38, No. 1, Pages 266-275, 2014

What is the relationship between the Irish modernist writings of James

Joyce and the Scottish empirical philosophy of David Hume? This paper discusses Joyce’s conception of Hume as a philosopher and explores the presence of Hume’s work in Joyce’s final masterpiece, *Finnegans Wake*. It also delves into how Joyce conceived of Hume’s thought, and the extent he engaged with it. Crucially, for our understanding of Hume’s role in *Finnegans Wake*, the paper also looks into how Joyce regards Hume as the end of a process of philosophical development and presents evidence of how well Joyce was acquainted with Hume’s work and his discussions about it.

**Variation in Pronominal Indexing: Lexical Stipulation vs. Referential Properties in Alor-Pantar Languages**

By Dr Sebastian Fedden (University of Surrey), Prof Dunstan Brown (University of York), Asst Prof Frantisek Kratochvil (Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies), Asst Prof Laura C. Robinson (University of California Santa Barbara), Dr Antoinette Schapper (Leiden University)

This paper examines the role of referential properties and lexical stipulation in three closely related languages of eastern Indonesia, the Alor-Pantar languages Abui, Kamang and Teiwa. It focuses on the continuum where event properties (e.g. volitionality, affectedness) are highly important at one extreme or play virtually no role at the other. These languages occupy different points on this continuum. In Abui event semantics play the greatest role, while in Teiwa they play the least role. Kamang occupies an intermediate position. Teiwa has conventionalized the relation between a verb and its class along the lines of animacy so that classes become associated with the animacy value of the objects with which the verbs in a given class typically occur.