



NANYANG  
TECHNOLOGICAL  
UNIVERSITY

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

# HORIZON

*Sharing ideas, Bridging minds*

ISSUE NO.10 Dec/Jan 2015

*Celebrating HSS's  
10th Anniversary*



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**EDITORIAL TEAM***Advisor***Dr Tan Joo Ean***Editor***Mr Terence Koh  
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Ms Phoebe Cheong***Contributors***Dr Belle Yick Yee Ying  
Ms Chua Yini  
Mr Jonathan Cheng Ee Ban  
Ms Lavisha S. Punjabi  
Ms Saranya Mahendran  
Ms Stephanie Ye****CHAIR'S MESSAGE**

Dear colleagues, students, alumni, and friends,

This year has been a momentous one for HSS. The yearlong celebrations of our 10th Anniversary culminated in an international symposium, "Humanities and the Social Sciences in Asia", which was held at the Regent Hotel. We invited distinguished scholars from renowned local and international universities to participate in the symposium, and it was attended by both academics and interested members of the public. The symposium speakers reflected on the importance of the humanities and social sciences in Asia as learning pedagogies move toward prioritizing creativity and independent thought in students.

The HSS 10th Anniversary Gala Dinner was held later that same day in the hotel ballroom. We had a great turn out — the event was attended not only by HSS staff, students and alumni but also by NTU President, Professor Bertil Andersson who was our guest-of-honour, NTU Provost Professor Freddy Boey, senior management from NTU, and faculty from renowned local and foreign institutions.

As technology and learning pedagogies progress, HSS continues to evolve in

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**AS TECHNOLOGY AND LEARNING PEDAGOGIES PROGRESS, HSS CONTINUES TO EVOLVE IN THE WAY TEACHING AND LEARNING TAKES PLACE.**”

the way teaching and learning takes place. In this issue, we are pleased to share with you all the initiatives HSS has employed in exploring technology-enabled learning for our students. From mobile applications, the “flipped classroom”, to Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), HSS faculty have utilised a wide array of learning tools to enable more in-depth and efficient learning.

The School has continued to develop vital research collaborations internationally through our research clusters. Our Humanities, Science and Society research cluster organised a two-day workshop, “Exposure and Effect: Measuring Safety, Environment and Life in Asia”, that set in place a framework for the interdisciplinary analyses of the issues surrounding nature and mankind's exposure to industrial by-products. Workshop participants included international scholar Professor Timothy Mousseau from the University of South Carolina, who is an expert on the consequences of radiation on wildlife in Chernobyl. The event also featured the Singapore debut of A2-B-C, a documentary exploring the aftermath of radioactive fallout for children residing within Fukushima, Japan.

Professor Joseph E. Taylor III, a renowned environmental historian from Simon Fraser University in Canada, was invited by our History programme to share his work on climate study and history. His public lecture, “Things one can only see in the rearview mirror: Thinking about thinking about climate”, showed how historians have played an important role in the study of climate as the patterns of the atmospheric change have to be studied over a period of at least thirty years.

HSS has continued to improve our research capabilities. The recent completion of the Language (L) Evolution (E), Acquisition (A), and Plasticity (P) laboratory will facilitate the interdisciplinary study of language acquisition and evolution in infants and young children.

As one of the youngest Schools in NTU, we believe that our best is still ahead of us. With the collective efforts of all our faculty, staff, students, alumni and other stakeholders, HSS will strive for continued success in both education and research. I wish all of you a productive and rewarding 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.

### ECONOMICS

Designation	Name	Commencement Date
Visiting Professor	Jan Frederik Kiviet	2-Oct-2014

### HSS GLOBAL ASIA RESEARCH CLUSTER

Designation	Name	Commencement Date
Post Doctoral Fellow	Cho Kyuhoon	5-Nov-2014
Su Tong	Writer-in-Residence	26 Aug 2014

### HISTORY

Designation	Name	Commencement Date
Assistant Professor	Sandra Khor Manickam	3-Nov-2014

### PHILOSOPHY

Designation	Name	Commencement Date
Visiting Professor	Franklin Thomas Perkins Jr	1-Sep-2014

### PSYCHOLOGY

Designation	Name	Commencement Date
Nanyang Assistant Professor	Gianluca Esposito	7-Oct-2014

Assistant Professor	Alan Lee Lap Fai	20-Oct-2014
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Assistant Professor	Cheon Bobby Kyungbeom	20-Oct-2014
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Assistant Professor	Ho Hau Yan Andy	8-Dec-2014
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### SOCIOLOGY

Designation	Name	Commencement Date
Assistant Professor	Zhan Shaohua	5-Dec-2014

## HSS BOOK, *COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS*, CITED AS A MAJOR REFERENCE BY THE WHITE HOUSE



▲ Professor Euston Quah

In their circulars for US Government agencies (circulars: A 4 and A 94), the US White House and Office of Management and Budget have cited *Cost-Benefit Analysis* as a major reference guide for agencies applying for grants using a cost-benefit analysis framework. *Cost-Benefit Analysis* is co-authored by Professor Euston Quah, the Head of the Division of Economics in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Professor Ezra J. Mishan of the London School of Economics.

Much of the cost-benefit analysis used by the Singapore government today, as well as the valuation practices utilised on projects for our environment, transport, home security, health, and even community and the arts, can be traced to Professor Quah's advice and his work for various Singapore ministries over the years. Professor Quah was also the keynote speaker when the Ministry of Finance launched the Centre for Public Project Management in 2011. The department oversees the evaluation

of proposed projects and policies and consults on all proposals from Ministries and Statutory Boards that exceed a certain funding amount. Cost-benefit analysis has been essential to Singapore's rapid development as it has enabled our policy makers to determine the feasibility of our investments by providing a means to determine the total expected cost of each option against the total expected benefits.

Professor Quah was also recently elected as the President of the Asian Law and Economics Association (2015-2017). The Association comprises of members from both the law and economics faculties from universities in countries such as Japan, China, Korea, Taiwan, India, Hong Kong, and the ASEAN. The Association holds an annual conference in its different member countries with participant speakers from all over the world. The Association has its own journal, the *Asian Journal of Law and Economics*, published by De Gruyter.

# HSS MARKS 10TH ANNIVERSARY WITH SYMPOSIUM AND DINNER

BY SARANYA MAHENDRAN

The year-long celebration of the 10th anniversary of HSS culminated with a whole day of festivities at Regent Hotel on 7 November 2014. An international symposium on "Humanities and the Social Sciences in Asia" was held during the day, followed by the HSS 10th Anniversary Gala dinner in the evening, which hosted esteemed guests, faculty and staff.

Held at the Nassim Room at 1.30pm, the Symposium offered international scholars, HSS faculty, students and members of the public a rare opportunity to listen to salient reflections on the importance of the humanities and the social sciences in Asia. Led by four distinguished scholars from renowned local and international universities, the symposium shed light on how the humanities and social sciences held the key to educational reform. The speakers also discussed how education systems were departing from rote learning pedagogies and are moving toward promoting creativity, critical thinking and autonomy within students in order to spur innovation.

The symposium kicked off with the broadcast of a specially taped interview with Professor Wang Gungwu, a renowned authority on East Asian history and the Chairman of the East

Asian Institute at the National University of Singapore. He heartily encouraged the progress of HSS as he said, "Ultimately, the creative spirit will have to come from people who think beyond science and technology.

"I'm delighted that you're holding this (symposium) to celebrate your 10th anniversary. I think it is a recognition that NTU doesn't want simply to be an engineering university," said Professor Wang.

Professor Vincente Rafael from the department of History and Southeast Asian Studies in the University of Washington started off the first plenary presentation by sharing his paper, titled "A Troubling, Impossible Thing: The Humanities in the Nation-State". He presented an honest view of the tensions and movements between the state and the humanities in Singapore,





admitting that the humanities is not always able to “suture cultural differences for the sake of fostering socio-economic development.”

Professor Uchino Tadashi, a professor of Performance Studies in the Department of Interdisciplinary Cultural Studies at the University of Tokyo, took a similar theme as he highlighted the clash between technocratic compulsions and the humanities.

“Contemporary top runners in worldwide corporate culture seem not to be interested in acquiring ‘irrelevant’ liberal-arts knowledge production,” he said. However, he emphasised that the decline of the humanities is in fact resistible, as he examined critical moments in the past three decades and identified factors that would help “undo the history of failure.”

In the final plenary presentation, Associate Professor Kwok Kian-Woon from the Division of Sociology in HSS and Associate Provost (Student Life) tackled the question of what constitutes a compelling intellectual agenda for “humanising modernity” with his presentation entitled “Asia, the Ambiguous, and Ourselves: Thoughts on the Agenda of Humanising Modernity”.

**A Night to Remember**  
The symposium ended with rapturous applause at 6pm, and the evening gave way to the HSS 10th Anniversary

Gala Dinner at 7pm at the Regent Hotel. Besides the symposium keynote speakers, Professor Kwok and Professor Tadashi, the dinner was graced by esteemed faculty from academic institutions around the world. Also present were NTU Provost Professor Freddy Boey, NTU Chief of Staff Professor Lam Khin Yong, the Dean of CoAHSS Professor Alan Chan, and the evening’s guest of honour, Professor Bertil Andersson, who is the President of NTU.

Professor Liu Hong, the Chair of HSS, started off the evening’s events as he commended the progress of HSS in his opening address.

“When HSS started a decade ago, we had only a handful of faculty and staff. Through tremendous hard work, dedication, sacrifice and long hours of traversing through numerous forms and procedures, we’ve built a robust system, a forward looking curriculum, and recruited the best talents into the school, enabling us to move forward from a solid foundation to compete with our ‘cousins’ in Clementi,” said Professor Liu with a grin.

Professor Chan also expressed his pride with the progress of HSS over the years in his speech. “When we have over 200 applicants from the world’s best universities vying for six postdoctoral fellowships in HSS, as we did last year, we know we have done something right,” said Professor Chan.

Highlighting the success and growth of HSS and NTU, Professor Andersson envisioned even greater achievements for HSS in the future. “HSS will play an increasingly important role in preparing students and researchers to meet the complex challenges of the 21st century,” he said, while highlighting current global issues such as globalisation and climate change.

Emeritus Professor Lim Chong Yah, who was chair of the School’s first

Dean Search Committee and a pioneer faculty instrumental to the formation of HSS, also addressed the audience. In his speech, he quoted American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s poem, *A Psalm of Life*, as he paralleled the poem’s exhortations about life and growth with the growth of HSS through the years. He brought the entire congregation to its feet as everyone joined in to give three thunderous cheers to the past, present and future of HSS.

Emeritus Professor Eddie Kuo, the Founding Dean of Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information (WKWSI) also gave a short speech as he outlined the strategic decisions he made as the Interim Dean of HSS during the School’s early years.

Likening the birth of HSS to that of the conception of a baby, he said, “As an interim dean, I was really a surrogate mother. I watched and admired the growth of HSS quietly from the other side of the campus. It has been a success story and I am happy to say I had a small part to play in it.”

Invited on stage with Professor Liu, Professor Chan, Professor Lam, Professor Boey and Board of Trustee member, Mr Goh Sin Teck, Professor Andersson provided the highlight of the evening with the ceremonial cutting of the School’s 10th Anniversary cake as everyone toasted to the continued success of HSS amidst a flurry of streamers.



## HSS WORKSHOP EXAMINES THE EFFECTS OF RADIATION EXPOSURE

BY JONATHAN CHENG EE BAN

Leading interdisciplinary historians, documentarians and scientists gathered at HSS to participate in a two-day international workshop from the 11th to the 12th of October 2014. The aim of the workshop was to discuss the scholarship with regard to nature and mankind’s exposure to industrial by-products and their consequences. The “Exposure and Effect: Measuring Safety, Environment and Life in Asia” workshop was organized by the Humanities, Science and Society research cluster at HSS, and was initiated by Assistant Professors Lisa Onaga and Harry Wu Yi-Jui from the Division of History at HSS.

As Assistant Professor Onaga noted, “This workshop sets into place a framework for ongoing and future interdisciplinary analyses of ‘Exposure and Effect’, generating new scholarly strategies and pedagogical tools for studying and teaching about the inheritance of industrialization.”

In the first panel on “Institutional Responses and Imaginaries”, Assistant Professor Wu, who has a joint appointment with the LKC School of Medicine, discussed the issues surrounding radioactive fallout and how the World Health Organisation (WHO) brought forward an institutional approach with regard to responsibility and healthcare. Professor Susan Lindee, the appointed Janice and Julian Bers Professor of the History of Science at the University of Pennsylvania, USA, and Visiting Professor at the Graduate School for International Development and Cooperation (IDEC) at Hiroshima University, Japan, also examined

the complicated transnational history of the Radiation Effects Research Foundation (RERF) and its role in defining health risks.

Assistant Professor Kaori Iida from the Graduate University for Advanced Studies (Sokendai) Hayama, Kanagawa, Japan, initiated the panel on “Negotiating Genetic Histories in Japan” with her research on Lysenkoism and how its association with communism stifled genetic research and scientific advancement in Japan after the mid-1950s. Assistant Professor Onaga also explored post-war Japanese scientific efforts to study the genetic effects of exposure to chronic low doses of radiation and how the Fukushima Health Management Survey continues to deal with similar questions today.

The event also featured the Singapore premiere of *A2-B-C*, a documentary exploring the aftermath of radioactive fallout for children residing within Fukushima, Japan. Director Ian Thomas Ash was present during the premiere for a Q&A session.

On the second day of the workshop, Professor Mousseau, a professor of biological sciences from the University of South Carolina, USA, who is currently a Visiting Professor at Chubu University in Nagoya, Japan, headed the panel on “Ecologies of Radiation”. He explored the consequences of



The panel speakers of the “Exposure and Effect: Measuring Safety and Environment and Life in Asia” workshop

radiation for wildlife in both Chernobyl and Fukushima, and also participated in a Taidan (a Japanese term for face-to-face public dialogue) with Mr Ian Ash.

Associate Professor Yi-Ping Lin from National Yang Ming University in Taiwan, and Assistant Professor Robert Stolz from the University of Virginia, USA, were the panel speakers on the engagement of scholarly disciplines surrounding the history and sociology of exposure to pollutants in Asia.

Associate Professor Lin spoke about a longstanding toxic tort case in Taiwan, exemplifying the difficulty of correlating the exposure of female factory workers to industrial solvents with the resulting negative health effects. Professor Stolz shared his expertise on both problems, and also imparted new knowledge about the “Minamata Disease” (methyl mercury poisoning) produced in modern Japan.

The participants of the workshop are currently working on collaborative publications (including an edited transcript of the Taidan) and other pedagogical tools for Teach311.org, an international multi-language scholarly project.

# THINKING ABOUT CLIMATE IN FIVE DIMENSIONS

Students from all across NTU were treated to an enthralling public lecture at LT 9 on the 14th of November 2014 at 1.30pm, as Professor Joseph E. Taylor III from Simon Fraser University, Canada, visited NTU to share his expertise on climate study and history.

A renowned expert on environmental history, Professor Taylor referenced the title of his public lecture, "Things one can only see in the rearview mirror: Thinking about thinking about climate", as he explained that we can only see climate in retrospect.

"Thinking about the weather is thinking about what the atmosphere is like right now," he explained, "while thinking about climate refers to the pattern of the atmosphere over a longer period of historical time, usually at least thirty years."

According to Professor Taylor, this makes historians fundamental to our understanding of climate, as they can show us what past atmospheric conditions were like. Professor Taylor's own work on the 19th century *El Niño*, an annual warming of the ocean waters, persuaded scientists to change their oceanographic models. Even studies of art history have been used to illuminate the shifting atmospheric conditions of the so-called "little Ice Age" that had taken place from 1750 to 1850, as shown in Pieter Breughel's paintings from that era.



▲ Professor Joseph E. Taylor III

Professor Taylor also stressed that historical interpretation has much to learn from natural scientific methodologies. He criticized historians who have presumed a linear casual relation between El Niño cycles and environmental degradation in their historical narratives.

"Just because things align in time doesn't mean they are causally connected," he pointed out. He recollected working with Professor Warren Wooster, who specializes in Oceanography at the University of Washington, and acknowledged that working with him was an experience that had changed his approach to historical research and writing. During the time he worked with Professor Wooster, both men spent a year testing out various models of *El Niño* effects with contemporary data collected from buoys throughout the Pacific Ocean. The more accurate and complex models that resulted

from their collaboration have then reshaped how Professor Taylor interprets patterns of causation in his reconstructions of the past.

However, how do we link our knowledge of the past to an expectation or prediction of the future, in the context of studying climate change and its significance? Professor Taylor argued that all of us need to learn to think in "five dimensions." While Einstein suggested the importance of including Time as a fourth dimension to our typically spatial modes of thinking, Professor Taylor further complicates Einstein's theory by arguing that Time needs to be divided into the past and the future.

"We think about the past with different parts of our brain than we think about the future," Professor Taylor noted. He chided environmentalists and climate scientists who made models that link the past and the future in a strictly linear way, as these relatively simplistic models leave the hypothesis for climate change vulnerable to critique from climate change "doubters". Professor Taylor believes that the non-linear effects of climate change may prove to even be more drastic than what the linear models predict, and thus will develop in a more heterogeneous and contingent fashion. Scientific models of climate in the future, he concluded, have much to learn from history.

# LITERARY IRELAND COMES TO JURONG

BY STEPHANIE YE

Ireland has produced its fair share of literary heavyweights, from the iconic prose stylist James Joyce to the Nobel Prize-winning poet Seamus Heaney. In the last week of October, the world of Irish letters came to NTU as two distinguished writers, Paul Muldoon and Julian Gough, held readings and master classes on campus.

At 5pm on the 29th of October 2014, novelist Julian Gough charmed a packed audience at the HSS Creative Studio as he read *The iHole*, a tale about a personal device that harnesses the power of black holes, which had been shortlisted for the BBC International Short Story Award. The author, celebrated for his comic narratives such as the picaresque *Jude* novels, expressed his awareness of his wacky style being at odds with the common perception that Irish novels favour realism and are often rather grim. He noted that, ironically, his unhappy childhood in rural Ireland might have influenced this.



Gough was born in London in 1966 to Irish parents, and his family returned to County Tipperary in the Republic of Ireland when he was seven. A city kid who would fall asleep to the drone of planes from Heathrow Airport, Gough recalled his difficulties adapting to life amongst country people.

"It was very different and I didn't get on with anybody. I got beaten up all the time, because I didn't sound like them. They had been brought up to hate British people and I had a British accent. Eight hundred years of oppression and they took it all out on me," he said, laughing.



Irish novelist Julian Gough speaking to the audience at the HSS Creative Studio



1980, refers to the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 and is told from the perspective of a young person, while the second poem, which was penned only recently, was inspired by a trip to the Caribbean island that he took with his daughter.

Like Gough, the New York-based Muldoon has some darker

memories of his homeland. He grew up amidst the violence of the Troubles, a political conflict that took place due to disputes over the constitutional status of Northern Ireland. In his poem *The Sightseers*, a family's excitement over a new traffic circus ("the brand-new

And although he lives in Berlin now, he also made it clear that he harbours no lasting animosity towards his compatriots, as he quipped, "You always get grumpy with your own people, it's like a family."

On the following evening at 5pm, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Paul Muldoon took the centre stage at the Theatre @ the Nest in the Innovation Centre. Muldoon, who was born in County Armagh in Northern Ireland in 1951, read a series of poems that span throughout his three-decade-long career.

The Princeton professor bookended his reading with two poems titled *Cuba*, which together reflect his own life's journey. The first poem, published in

roundabout at Ballygawley, the first in mid-Ulster") takes a sharp turn when an uncle recalls a run-in with members of the reserve police ("They held a pistol so hard against his forehead/there was still the mark of an O when he got home").

During the Q&A session afterwards, the poet revealed that art did imitate life in that case, as such an incident had happened to one of his uncles. However, in a meditation about his writing process, Muldoon added that he often sets his own agenda aside while writing, as he prefers "to not have any desires or demands on the poem".

"To me, the adventure is in being able to give oneself over to what the poem wants to do and get some sense of what the poem needs to be in the world," he said. "I always feel that the poem is much smarter than I am."

Researchers from various fields of brain and mind research congregated in Singapore from the 1st to the 2nd of August 2014, as they attended the inaugural "BrainConnects 2014: NCGG/JSPS NTU/NUS Joint Research Collaboration Workshop" held at Nanyang Technological University (NTU) and National University of Singapore (NUS). The workshop was dedicated to investigating the utility of neuroimaging for developing cognitive training for older adults. Fifty-two participants, including nine speakers from Japan, were involved in this two-day workshop.



# BRAINCONNECTS JAPAN AND SINGAPORE

BY DR. BELLE YICK YEE YING



"BrainConnects" is a research endeavor that emerged initially from research collaborations between the NeuroImaging & Informatics Lab at the National Center for Geriatrics and Gerontology (NCGG) in Ohbu, Japan and the Clinical Brain Lab at NTU. "BrainConnects" has received funding from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) and NTU, and has also established collaborations with the Cognitive Engineering Lab at the Singapore Institute for Neurotechnology (SINAPSE) at NUS, as well as with neuroscientists from Nagoya University in Japan.

The aim of the workshop was to establish cognitive training strategies in order to recover and maintain cognitive functions in older adults. To achieve this, the workshop attempted to integrate knowledge from various fields of brain and mind research. With six lectures and 10 research reports organized over a period of two days, the topics

covered in the workshop ranged from the cellular to system levels of the brain, and the perspectives that were shared varied from that of pathology, psychiatry, psychology, information science, neuroimaging and engineering.

Professor Nitish Thakor, Director of SINAPSE and Provost Professor of NUS, started off the workshop with his opening address. The basic issues in cognitive neuroimaging were then reviewed during two keynote lectures by Associate Professor Toshiharu Nakai from NCGG and Associate Professor Annabel Chen from the Psychology Division of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) of NTU. Associate Professor Nakai summarized the physiological basis of the hemodynamic response function

(HRF) in older adults, while Associate Professor Chen systematically addressed the various aging models, functional network, and the concepts of cognitive reserve. Besides the keynote lectures, which reviewed imaging for cognitive aging, the presentation was classified into five topics: pathology, analysis techniques, network analysis, emotion contributions to decision-making, and clinical applications.

The "BrainConnects 2014 Workshop" was a great success. It has laid the groundwork for collaborative research between Singapore and Japan in cognitive training, in order to address the issue of cognitive decline in healthy aging. We look forward to BrainConnects 2015 that will be held in Nagoya, Japan.

► Irish poet Paul Muldoon held the audience captive with his poems



# HSS: EMBRACING THE FUTURE THROUGH TECHNOLOGY ENABLED LEARNING

In exploring technology enabled learning initiatives at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS), Lavisha S. Punjabi speaks to the Dean of the College of Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences (HASS), faculty members and students from various divisions of HSS, as well as the Deputy Director of the Centre for IT Services (CITS).

With the constant advent of new devices, such as smartphones, wearable technology and driverless cars, technology has now become ubiquitous in human society. Today, technology has infiltrated almost every dimension of our lives, and as a result, it has affected how teaching and learning is carried out.

## TRANSFORMING LEARNING THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

At NTU's School of Humanities and Social Sciences, educators use a diverse range of technological aids to enhance their students' learning experience. At one end of the spectrum, there are initiatives by the faculty that leverage on the use of technology within the classroom. These include screening videos to develop sensory experiences, in order to articulate key concepts more clearly, and the use of clickers for real-time quizzes to give immediate feedback to students. These methods help educators create a springboard for discussion and collaborative learning for their students.

For instance, Assistant Professor Kamaludeen Mohamed Nasir from the Division of Sociology in HSS utilises Facebook, Youtube, blogs, documentaries, and other videos in his following courses: "Qualitative Research Methods", "Contemporary Singapore Society", and "Deviance and Society".



Assistant Professor Kamaludeen Mohamed Nasir

These videos are useful in helping students develop an interdisciplinary perspective, encouraging them to open up their minds.

"My motivation in introducing these strategies is to give students an insight into the 'real world'. Just like how archaeologists engage their audience by using the artefacts that have been discovered, sociologists can make use of digital technology to explain social realities. We have to be attuned to how digital media is changing the everyday lives of people in significant ways—from religious activities to state society relations, to organizing social movements," explained Assistant Professor Kamaludeen, who is collaborating with a colleague on writing *Digital Culture and Religion in Asia*, a book which discusses how Asian societies have been altered profoundly by the Digital Age.

On the other end of the spectrum, there are also initiatives that leverage on the use of technology outside the classroom. This includes the flipped classroom initiative, in which core concepts are learnt prior to the lesson—usually via recorded lectures and supplementary readings. The flipped classroom allows students to have more productive face-to-face time with the professor in class, as challenging concepts can now be explored in a manner where most, if not all, students can remain engaged.

An example of the use of the flipped classroom is the Level 5 French language course, LF9005, which will be rolling out its flipped classroom programme in January 2015. With this arrangement, students will be completing foundation exercises and learning basic concepts, such as grammar, ahead of time.

"All that easy stuff that used to take up the bulk of the class will be done ahead of time. The really interesting things, such as the use of the language



▲ Professor Alan Chan Kam Leung

that previously used to begin towards the end of class, will become the topic the class starts with. We're going to really be able to delve farther and farther into the speaking of the language during class time, rather than outside of class. This will allow me to be there for the interesting moments, when they really need a coach to be guiding them," explained Dr. Karen McCloskey, a lecturer at the Centre of Modern Languages in HSS.

Dr. McCloskey was also involved in developing a mobile phone application for her students to connect and speak in real-time outside of the classroom. The prototype, the "Virtual Language Table", was piloted in her French Language courses, and is now being developed for the English Language courses instead.

"The app made communicating with fellow francophones easier, as we did not have to meet to have a discussion in French!" proclaimed third-year Business student, Ms Jeelene Ker.

Online courses like NTU's Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are also gaining momentum, as they

boost our capacity to globalise the educational landscape, and they also help to overcome limitations faced by educators today.

Professor Alan Chan Kam Leung, Dean of the College of Humanities, Arts, & Social Sciences (HASS) stated that "now technology is allowing us to disseminate learning to a much wider audience. I think that is good for education and for the world".

In order to promote a better understanding of the impact of technology-assisted learning in today's academic and learning environment, Professor Chan has been developing a MOOC on Chinese Philosophy. The course, broadly divided into two parts, Confucian Philosophy and Taoist Philosophy, will be launched in August 2015. It can be accessed by anyone with a computer or a smart device and an internet connection via Coursera—an educational platform that partners with top universities and organizations worldwide to offer free online courses for everyone.

The diversity of forms in which technology aids have manifested demonstrates that no one size fits all—it all depends on the nature of the course itself. Furthermore, this diversity of teaching modes helps to accommodate a wider range of learners.

"People have different learning styles and it is good to have different modes of delivering courses available. In this way, I think we have a more inclusive university curriculum," explained Assistant Professor Andres Carlos Luco, who is a faculty from the Philosophy Programme at HSS.

Assistant Professor Luco is involved in the development of a 1 AU General Education Requirement (GER) e-learning course entitled "Ethics and Moral Reasoning". The course will be piloted in January 2015 to all first-year Business undergraduates, and will be

rolled out in August 2015 for all NTU first-year undergraduates, including those who were in their first year in AY14/15.

“The flexibility of e-learning is an advantage, particularly for self-motivated learners. One could complete a lesson in the middle of the night or over the weekend because there are no set times where one has to be at a place. I hope that is an advantage for some of our students who have busy schedules, particularly those who have to work and attend university at the same time,” added Assistant Professor Luco.

Despite this colourful diversity in the landscape of education, however, one thing has not changed.

“Technology-assisted learning can take many forms. However, regardless of their different forms, it must all help to achieve the desired learning outcomes. The idea here is that technology can actually help us to achieve those goals,” explained Professor Chan.

While the means may change over time, the ultimate goal is to aid NTU



▲ Dr Karen McCloskey

graduates internalize the 5Cs expressed in the NTU Education framework—character, competence, creativity, communication, and civic-mindedness.

### SUPPORTING THE WAY FORWARD WITH TECHNOLOGY

“Support is readily available. Under the Provost’s office, there is a whole team that stands ready to assist any faculty member to enhance the technology component of their courses, all the way to doing new MOOCs,” revealed Professor Chan.

At the heart of technology in NTU is the Centre of IT Services (CITS). Among its many vital roles, CITS facilitates the incorporation of technology into teaching and learning. One of the ways CITS supports technology-assisted learning in NTU is through organizing conferences, seminars, and workshops, where experts from around the world are brought in to share their best practices with NTU faculty. CITS also provides various levels of training to develop the faculty’s understanding of innovative pedagogical approaches, and to improve their competence with their use of learning tools. CITS also offers learning design expertise in order to help the faculty design and revamp their courses for online learning, improving student engagement and producing better outcomes.

“Faculty may understand how to use the different technologies, but may not understand when to use them appropriately in class. Learning designers in CITS help faculty overcome this via the learning design consultancy that we provide during the development of Technology-Enabled Learning (TEL) courses, but support is also available on an ad-hoc basis. We also help to support the faculty in this regard by conducting Faculty Development workshops regularly in NTU,” explained Mr Mohamad Ridwan bin Othman, Deputy Director of Learning Solutions and Applications at CITS.



▲ Mr Mohamad Ridwan bin Othman

CITS is also extending support to faculty members who may require more time to generate more enthusiasm and excitement in their classes.

“If a faculty member has a proposal and needs time to develop the new course, then we can give that faculty member time off. We call it course reduction. If you are teaching a course in a certain way and want to totally revamp it and introduce technological components into it, you probably need some extra time. Sometimes it is not so much the delivery of content. How do you ensure that the content is properly contextualised, interpreted and understood?” explained Professor Chan.

With such extensive support and the prospect of exciting, limitless opportunities ahead, it is no wonder that faculty from around the world are attracted to NTU. “The great thing about NTU is that it’s full of technology. If you love technology, this is the place to be teaching. It’s a match made in heaven for me because I’ve always worked with technology, and to have all

of these exciting possibilities gets me thinking on how I could apply them in what I do,” Dr. McCloskey proclaimed.

### SUSTAINED REFLECTION ON CRITICAL QUESTIONS

The implementation of technology in teaching has raised several reflective questions for educators and researchers. By watching their recorded lectures, educators are able to analyse their teaching and delivery from a different point of view.

“You tend to think more critically about the delivery—am I going too fast, what should I focus on? Because of this, the process takes a lot more time than you might expect. If a recorded lecture is two hours long, one may have taken four hours to create it due to their ability to go back and edit the recording,” shared Assistant Professor Goh Geok Yian from the History Programme at HSS. Assistant Professor Goh will be converting half of her module, “HH1002: Asia Pacific in Global History: Pre-1800”, to a flipped classroom e-learning format.



▲ Mr Jonathan Sim



▲ Lecture at University of Liverpool

Mr Jonathan Sim, a Research Officer at HASS who has assisted Dean Chan in the development of his MOOC, also echoed the increased time demands involved with the introduction of technology enabled education. He said, “The kind of preparation that a MOOC takes is much more than a lecturer would require for a [live] lecture. The content preparation may be the same, but the filming for a MOOC is not easy. It is very difficult to look straight at the camera and talk to the camera. With every cut, one may get more distressed and has to try to not appear so on camera.”

In addition, online courses are usually structured in short modular segments to attract the viewers’ attention, as the attention span of someone sitting in front of a computer or a handheld device tends to be no more than six to eight minutes long.

“Are we then offering dim sum [bite-sized] learning? Is that the best way

to learn?” queried Professor Chan, as he pointed out the issue of shortened attention spans.

“Many educational channels on YouTube have gone so far in their efforts to attract attention and have made lessons entertaining,” said Mr Sim. “And there is a tension—do we want to present serious academic matters in a manner with gravitas or in a comedic way?”

Technology-assisted learning initiatives have indeed sparked questions for educators to collectively reflect and research on. Nevertheless, it is clear that educators will remain indispensable, however ubiquitous technology may be.

Professor Chan made a strong case for this as he concluded, “How do we ensure that students understand what they have read at home? The classroom experience remains critical in ensuring there is proper discussion and understanding. In that context, learning will flourish.”



# THE WANDERING POET

BY CHUA YINI



Assistant Professor Divya Victor's book *Natural Subjects* was selected for the 2014 Bob Kaufman Book Prize by the Trembling Pillow Press.

“

**I LOVE DEADLINES BECAUSE THEY MAKE ME BUILD WRITING LIKE A MUSCLE: OVER AND OVER UNTIL IT HURTS AND BREAKS AND GROWS STRONGER... ”**

Poet Divya Victor confesses that her vocation is her biggest quirk.

“It’s a very odd thing to be, admittedly. And I do it professionally,” says the Assistant Professor who has recently joined the Division of English in HSS.

Born in Nagercoil, India, Assistant Professor Victor moved to Singapore when she was 11 years old. She later relocated to the United States of America where she resided in Baltimore and Seattle. She obtained her Masters in English from Temple University in Philadelphia, completed her PhD at the University of Buffalo and has recently returned to Singapore to teach poetry in NTU.

Through the years, she has poured herself into her passions. She started her own collaborative printing press, ran a few reading series, worked at a bookstore, and wrote several books. To Assistant Professor Victor, the art of writing and living are intimately intertwined, a “practice of freedom”.

“I see it [writing] as an active praxis in which I enact a politics and a way of being in the world, rather than just an articulation or expression of ideas. Being a writer means being a documentarian, reporter, critic, and an agent for change,” she says.

As someone who believes in actively searching for ideas, she draws her

inspiration primarily from political events, instances of historical injustice and inequity. She sees opportunity in moments of complex necessity like deadlines.

“I love deadlines because they make me build writing like a muscle: over and over until it hurts and breaks and grows stronger,” she says. The self-professed feminist has recently released *Things To Do With Your Mouth* (Les Figues, 2014)—her new poetry collection centered on the themes of female silence and a fear of the outspoken, bold female figures in history.

As a poetry teacher, she is aware of the juxtaposition of the roles of teacher and writer, and the challenges of grooming young writers under her charge.

“I think most practitioners bear the pressure of the art market or the publishing industry and any work bends, flexes, breaks or thrives under those pressures,” she says.

This is why she strongly believes in teaching students to break out of such stifling societal straitjackets by asking them to “define and refine a practice or writing that is savvy to their own linguistic, cultural, political needs”, rather than cave in to restrictions set by their teachers or by commercial interests.

“Ultimately, the best writers have always figured out how to be themselves in time—we have less patience for the obsequious copycats of dead Modernists and Beats. Singapore has a really unique linguistic and cultural fingerprint. The real task is empowering young writers to press that print to the page; to help them become bold enough to claim a voice that is their own,” she adds.



# MAKING A COMEBACK AT HER BELOVED ALMA MATER

BY LAVISHA S. PUNJABI

“

**I WAS VERY ATTRACTED TO THE VIBRANT RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT AND COLLABORATIVE SPIRIT. I KNEW THAT IF I CAME HERE, THERE WILL BE MANY MENTORS I CAN LEARN FROM AND COLLABORATE WITH... ”**

Although she joined the Division of Psychology in HSS only in July this year, Assistant Professor Setoh Pei Pei needs no introduction to the university because she was a Masters student at NTU in 2007.

“It is really nice to be back,” she said. “I am grateful that NTU has offered me so many opportunities. After being away for six years, NTU is both familiar and new at the same time. When I was a Masters student, HSS and Psychology just started, and we were located at S3 building. Now HSS is at a different location, and has grown so much.”

Assistant Professor Setoh completed her Bachelor’s in Social Science, majoring in Psychology, at National University of Singapore in 2002. She obtained her Masters at Nanyang Technological University in 2007, a second Masters in Psychology and her PhD from University of Illinois in 2013 and 2014, respectively.

Impressed by the bright and productive faculty and their interesting research, she believes NTU is the best place to conduct research on psychology in Singapore. She hopes to work with her colleagues to build a baby research specialization at NTU and put Singapore’s babies on the map as wonderful research participants.

“I was very attracted to the vibrant research environment and collaborative spirit. I knew that if I came here, there will be many mentors I can learn from and collaborate with, and there are colleagues whom I can work together with to grow a research specialization on developmental psychology,” she added.

Assistant Professor Setoh is currently working on setting up her lab and recruiting members. She is primarily interested in studying what babies think about the world around them. Her research seeks to answer questions such as: “Do babies think you should share your cookies equally with others? Do babies think you should offer help to someone in need?”

“I do this by showing babies, between three months to three years old, a live puppet show, a movie, or playing a little game with them, and I measure how long they look, where they look, and their reactions,” explained Assistant Professor Setoh.

“These questions help us understand what principles guide human moral cognition, and have educational and clinical implications,” she added.

Assistant Professor Setoh is also eager to begin teaching “Human Development” next semester—her first module on developmental psychology.

“I’m excited to begin teaching, and to share about child development! I hope the students will enjoy the subject as much as I do!”

# JACK OF ALL TRADES, MASTER OF TRANSLATION

BY LAVISHA S. PUNJABI

Life takes many turns. When Assistant Professor Arista Kuo was younger, her family had hoped she would become a musician like her aunt and grandmother. Although she learnt to sing and play the piano, she chose to pursue a career in finance instead; taking up a double major in International Relations and International Business at National Chengchi University in Taiwan.

“The International Relations course allowed me to explore many different areas from economics to public communication. Later, I found a special interest in business and decided to major in International Business too,” she explained.

Her life took another turn, however, after she conducted some translation tasks during her university days. The practical experience of doing translations inspired her to pursue a Masters in Translation and Interpreting at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne in the United Kingdom.

After completing her Masters, as much as she wanted a career in translation, she found it hard to reject a great opportunity to work in the financial sector as a fixed income manager, underwriting and trading corporate bonds. In her spare time, however, she continued to pursue her passion for translation by working as a freelance translator and interpreter.

“One day, sitting in the office looking outside at the sky, I suddenly realised

that this was not something I wanted to do for the rest of my life despite it being an incredible journey,” she revealed. She quit her job and started working as a freelance translator, subtitler and interpreter.

“More than language, what really interests me is the opportunity to get to know different cultures and professions. Translation allows me to be exposed to different settings. When I was in the UK, I once interpreted for a Taiwanese lawyer who was learning the UK legal aid system. I visited prisons and courts, interacted with barristers, solicitors and even culprits. The whole process was an amazing learning experience, and I also gained a better understanding of different legal systems,” explained Assistant Professor Kuo.

As she gathered more practical experience in the field, however, she discovered “a gap between academia and industry”.

“Most people don’t know much about the discipline and it’s not yet an established profession in many countries. So, I decided to pursue a PhD, hoping to contribute a little bit by combining the theory with my own

“**MORE THAN LANGUAGE, WHAT REALLY INTERESTS ME IS THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET TO KNOW DIFFERENT CULTURES AND PROFESSIONS...**”

practical experience and bring it back to classroom teaching.” Assistant Professor Kuo was awarded a PhD in Translation Studies at Imperial College London this year.

Since joining the Division of Chinese in HSS this semester, Assistant Professor Kuo has enjoyed teaching her courses because of the diversity and the vibe her students bring to her class.

“My students are from a variety of departments and years, not only from the Chinese Division. It was challenging for me to accommodate their different needs but I enjoyed this experience.”

Her students, too, have enjoyed her classes.

“Assistant Professor Kuo is good at incorporating current affairs into classroom teaching and making use of the materials collected from a diverse range of sources,” said third-year Chinese Studies undergraduate, Katie Wong, 23.



# SHARING THE EXPERIENCE OF SAILING UNCHARTED WATERS

BY LAVISHA S. PUNJABI

Would you pursue a PhD on a topic that few have studied?

While the pragmatic or risk-averse might brush off such an adventurous thought, Assistant Professor Ana Cristina Dias Alves from the Public Policy and Global Affairs (PPGA) Programme in HSS did otherwise. She held on to her idea, studied a topic which initially had few academic publications, and cultivated the seeds of a field that now prospers. She set sail on her journey after she completed her Bachelor’s in International Relations and Master’s degree on Chinese communities in South-East Asia at the Technical University of Lisbon in 1996 and 2005, respectively.

“In the early 2000s, there was some news of Chinese engagement in Africa. I had an interest in Africa as I am Angolan. So I started following the news and looked around for possible PhD supervisors in that area but in the early 2000s, there was nobody in academia doing work on China-Africa relations at that stage. I looked in South East Asia, Europe and in the United States but I couldn’t find anyone,” chronicled Assistant Professor Alves.

Assistant Professor Alves did eventually make a breakthrough in her search for her PhD supervisor in 2005 and began her PhD journey at the London School of Economics in 2006.

“When I started my PhD, I was the first PhD student doing work on China-Africa relations. Now my PhD supervisor has about 10 people working on that subject. The field has grown quite a lot and now there’s dozens of researchers working on it,” described Assistant Professor Alves.

She added: “Although the field is getting crowded now, it is good because it opens new areas in the field. People are looking at different dimensions of the relationship and getting more empirical research done. And that’s what makes it interesting because there are so many perspectives even on the same topic.”

Students in the PPGA Programme have also been drawn to this area, with about half of them taking her elective course titled “China in Africa”.

“In retrospect, I took up ‘China in Africa’ mainly due to the fact that I didn’t know much about China’s engagement in Africa prior to this course and by doing so, I raised a number of eyebrows among my hall and non-PPGA friends when they heard of what am I studying,”

explained second-year PPGA student, Ms See Xue Qi Sylvene, 20. “With the rise of China as a backdrop, ‘China in Africa’ will be of much relevance to explain and predict future decisions China might make in light of it becoming a responsible global player in the international community.”

When quizzed on whether her pioneering work in the field had put her in a good position to teach, Assistant Professor Alves humbly answered, “Sharing anecdotes of my experiences in ground research with the students makes the lectures more interesting. This is because of the real advantage that I have accumulated a lot of ground experience, not necessarily that I was part of the pioneering group of people.”

“**WHEN I STARTED MY PHD, I WAS THE FIRST PHD STUDENT DOING WORK ON CHINA-AFRICA RELATIONS. NOW MY PHD SUPERVISOR HAS ABOUT 10 PEOPLE WORKING ON THAT SUBJECT**”



# MAKING THE LEAP *in Language*



A fundamental question in cognitive science and linguistics is how children learn to understand and speak one or more languages in just a few years of life despite their limited cognitive abilities. In order to better understand how infants literally “leap” into language, the Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies (LMS) in HSS has set up a groundbreaking laboratory that will enable its faculty and students to carry out leading-edge research in Language (L) Evolution (E), Acquisition (A), and Plasticity (P).

Christened the LEAP lab for short, the LEAP laboratory carries out “research on learning abilities, with a focus on understanding the basic mechanisms of language acquisition.” The LEAP lab will enable LMS students in HSS to study the cognitive and social forces that shape language change, determine the developmental origins of grammar, and discover how we can re-train the adult brain.

“In particular, we focus on so-called ‘inductive/statistical’ learning, on how implicitly people form generalizations and discover patterns in the speech they hear and produce,” explained Assistant Professor Luca Onnis, a faculty member from LMS Division and the founder and director of the LEAP lab. “We have an interest in comparing infant and adult populations, whether learning is comparable at some level in these two populations—what is in common but also what differs.”

## AN EXPERIENCE THAT SHAPES LEARNING ABILITIES

According to Assistant Professor Onnis, the value of the LEAP lab extends far beyond its utility of being a mere physical amenity. What is far more important is the invaluable “effects of experience on learning itself” that HSS students will stand to gain from participating in LEAP lab research.

“As we learn a language, our learning abilities may become shaped by our experience with language itself, so how do we respond cognitively when we learn another language? There are many descriptive accounts of language acquisition, but we would like to contribute something more, something that is computationally explicit, psychologically plausible, and explanatory,” said Assistant Professor Onnis.

Assistant Professor Onnis also pointed out that any prospective student “with an interest in experimental methods, a background in linguistics, psychology, or a related discipline and a desire to engage directly with the local multilingual infant and toddler population” can join the lab as research assistants or graduate students.

## PUSHING THE ENVELOPE WITH ONLINE EXPERIMENTS

Although there were human resource constraints in getting enough experienced research assistants, the LEAP lab has continued to move forward by making their experiments available online and “gamifying” several experimental tasks.

“Matthew Lou-Magnuson (PhD LMS student) and Wenjie Wang (undergraduate LMS student) have been behind the scenes, helping to programme a suite of online tools (for running experiments on the web). We hope to make the platform available to other researchers in HSS so that they can, for instance, administer experimental studies online,” said Assistant Professor Onnis.

With this online setup and international collaborations, LEAP lab is able to test

“the effects of learning on learning”. “We found that language biases the expectations that people bring with them when they learn novel stimuli in the lab,” said Assistant Professor Onnis. “Learners are not a ‘tabula rasa’ and what you learned previously impacts what you can learn next. This tells us a lot about the brain’s malleability for relearning, and can help us devise better learning methods”.

“Our first language acquisition study focuses on the role of caregiver-child interaction in language acquisition. While a default way would be to look at individual differences in infants, we focus on the individual differences of parents. We ask how parental speech is related to language development in the infant,” he added. The project has been submitted to MOE as a Tier 2 grant proposal.

The LEAP lab team is also aiming to study “how the specific multilingual household patterns in Singapore contribute to speed or slow language development in Singapore”. The team has just completed the set up for a dedicated baby lab space to study parent-child interactions and test the cognitive and linguistic development of babies.



## CREATING A PLATFORM FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH COLLABORATION

With so many leading language and cognitive experts in HSS, Assistant Professor Onnis has set out to maximise the research capabilities of the LEAP lab by collaborating extensively with faculty from all across HSS, NTU, and other universities around the world.

“Language is a higher-order human faculty that requires multiple cognitive and social skills. It’s an extremely complex human ability. I believe it is better studied in teams of researchers with complementing expertise. To that end, in HSS, we have formed an initial consortium for developmental science, together with colleagues in LMS (Associate Professor Ng Bee Chin), Psychology (Assistant Professors Suzy Styles, Setoh Pei Pei, and Gianluca Esposito), and Chinese (Assistant Professor Helena Gao). I think working all under the same unified school is a real bonus and strength, and in fact it is one of the features that attracted me most to NTU and HSS,” he added.

“We hope that one day this developmental science consortium may become a centre, attracting

funds and researchers. While we are excellent researchers individually, I feel we are much stronger and more visible as a team. If you look at the best programmes in the world (see successful cognitive science programmes) they all bring together experts from different disciplines under one roof.”



# LEAP Lab

LEAP lab is located at NTU's Innovation Centre, Block 1, Unit 101b. Find out more about the LEAP lab in its official website at [compling.hss.ntu.edu.sg/leap](http://compling.hss.ntu.edu.sg/leap). You can also participate in a brief cognitive training experiment here: [http://compling.hss.ntu.edu.sg/LBL\\_Eng/](http://compling.hss.ntu.edu.sg/LBL_Eng/), while this other page is for Korean speakers: [http://compling.hss.ntu.edu.sg/LBL\\_Kor/](http://compling.hss.ntu.edu.sg/LBL_Kor/).

# PUBLICATIONS

## BOOKS

### **Number and Quantity in East Nusantara**

By Professor Marian Klamer (Leiden University) and Assistant Professor František Kratochvíl (Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies) *Asia-Pacific Linguistics*, 2014

This volume showcases the expression of number and quantity in a dozen minority languages spoken in Eastern Indonesia. While several papers offer a typological and comparative perspective, most contributions provide detailed descriptions of the numeral systems, universal quantifiers, classifiers, and the expression of nominal and verbal number in individual languages. Languages featuring in this volume include the Austronesian languages Sumbawa, Tolaki, Helong, Uab Meto, and Papuan Malay; the Timor-Alor-Pantar languages Abui, Bunaq, Kamang, Makalero, Sawila, and Western Pantar, and the West-Papuan language Tobelo.

### **Fiscal Sustainability and Competitiveness in Europe and Asia**

By Professor Tan Kong Yam (Division of Economics), Professor Rajan Ramkishan and Associate Professor Tan Khee Giap (Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy) *Palgrave Macmillan*, 2014



Over the last two decades the fiscal positions of many advanced economies have deteriorated significantly, leading to ever-growing levels of public debt and mounting concerns about debt sustainability. Fiscal positions are set to weaken further on account of the worsening demographics which are likely to place upward pressure on public social expenditures. This book examines key issues and policy concerns relating to fiscal sustainability and competitiveness in European and Asian economies. In addition to estimating the extent of fiscal capacity or lack thereof for these economies, this book supplements the empirical analysis with country case studies.

## JOURNAL ARTICLES

### **New Immigrant: On the First Locally Produced Film in Singapore and Malaya (in English)**

By Assistant Professor Hee Wai Siam (Division of Chinese) *Journal of Chinese Cinemas*, 2014 Vol 8, No. 3, Pages 244-258

Based on historical evidence from a large number of newspapers from the 1920s, this article disputes the assertion that the film *Xin Ke (New Immigrant)* was never released. The article demonstrates the historical significance of *Xin Ke* and establishes its status as the first Singaporean-Malayan film. It describes the origins of, and public response to, the Nanyang Liu Bei-Jin Film Company. It also examines the life of Liu Bei-Jin, the former Namchow mechanic who became the film company's head. It looks at the problems the film confronted at the time of its production, including censorship imposed by the British colonial government during the 1920s. It also examines the manner in which the film addresses the disputes between the two major Chinese communities in Nanyang, namely the "Xin Ke" (new immigrants) and the Peranakan (Straits Chinese).

### **Beyond early linguistic competence: Development of children's ability to interpret adjectives flexibly**

By Assistant Professor Helena Gao (Division of Chinese), Professor Phillip David Zelazo (University of Minnesota), Dr Dean Sharpe, Dr Azad Mashari (University of Toronto) *Cognitive Development*, 2014 Vol 32, Pages 86-102

This paper investigated the circumstances in which three- to five-year-old children can and cannot interpret adjectives flexibly. In Experiment One, children were required to interpret big and little both in reference to a basic level kind (e.g., "This is a big marble") and in reference to a superordinate kind (e.g., "This is a little toy"). Experiment Two examined three-year-olds' flexible interpretation of big and little with respect to a medium-sized stimulus that was alternately compared with a smaller stimulus and a larger stimulus (e.g., "Which one of these two circles is the big one?"). The results replicate evidence of the roots of flexible adjective interpretation but also show protracted development of the ability to coordinate two incompatible interpretations of a single situation.

### **Non-Connectedness of the Set of Bankruptcy-Free Money Equilibria in the Static Economy: a Constructive Example**

By Assistant Professor Kang Kinwook (Division of Economics) *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 2014 Vol 18, Pages 1539-1546

A static economy, in which nominal taxes and transfers are balanced, as proposed by Balasko and Shell (1993), typically has a continuum of equilibrium money prices. This paper presents a constructive example in which the set of equilibrium money prices is not connected. By allowing negative consumption as a mathematical construct, closed form solutions for equilibrium tax-adjusted income are

derived. The main result of the example implies that bankrupt taxpayers with negative tax-adjusted income can be free from bankruptcy as the price of money increases. This paradoxical outcome is similar to that of the transfer paradox, as suggested by Gale (1974), where tax-transfer plans make taxpayers better off.

### **Salesman in Abu Dhabi: The Geopathology of Objects**

By Assistant Professor Kevin Andrew Riordan (Division of English) *Modern Drama*, 2014 Vol 57, No. 3, Pages 409-432

In Theater Mitu's Abu Dhabi production of *Death of a Salesman*, most of the parts were played by physical objects. With their meticulous attention to the material relationships onstage, Mitu reveals how *Salesman*—and modern drama—moves and is made to move unevenly in the global repertory. Spurred by this production, the article puts into conversation the recent critical discourses on global theatre and performing objects. Global studies of theatre tend to distance themselves from individual performances as performances. The study of performing objects checks these more sweeping critical tendencies by reminding us of the obstinate materiality, contingency, and strangeness of live theatre. In its defamiliarization of a familiar tragedy, Mitu's *Salesman* negotiates this methodological difference and illuminates the physical ways that performance moves onstage and off, and both in and out of our critical gaze.

### **Colonial Modernity and Urban Space: Naguib Mahfouz's Cairo**

By Assistant Professor Bede Tregear Scott (Division of English) *Journal of Urban Cultural Studies*, 2014 Vol 1, No. 2, Pages 255-272

This article explores the spatial dimension of colonial modernity in Naguib Mahfouz's 1947 novel *Midaq Alley*. The author discusses the way in which modernity reconfigures urban space in Cairo so that the radical disjunctions and discontinuities it initiates become encoded within the

topography of the city itself. He then addresses the impact this reconfiguration of space has on the inhabitants of Midaq Alley, forcing them to engage with modernity as a concrete presence in their daily lives. Using Mikhail Bakhtin's terminology, modernity in the novel takes on a chronotopic quality—fusing time and space, history and geography—and as a consequence, those characters who aspire to move from one temporality to another are required to do so by following a particular spatial trajectory.

### **Beyond the World-System: A Buddhist Ecumene**

By Assistant Professor Goh Geok Yian (History Programme) *Journal of World History*, 2014 Vol 25, No. 4, (in press)

The Southeast Asian and Southern Indian Ocean region between the 11th and 14th centuries was characterized by fluid relations and dynamic exchanges which connected three main centers of Buddhist learning and practice: Bagan (Burma), Northern Thailand, and Sri Lanka. A Buddhist ecumene refers to a geo-spatial religious and political subsystem, which existed within a larger Buddhist commonwealth or world system from 1000s to 1300s. The idea of the ecumene was manifested in the intellectual environment of 15th- to 19th-century writers of Burma, Thailand and Sri Lanka. The beginning of this ecumene coincided with the reign of Anawrahta, an 11th-century king of Bagan, and cakravartin. The strongest evidence for this ecumene and the king is derived from texts, with support from art history and artifacts.

### **Singapore Colloquial English: Issues of prestige and identity**

By Associate Professor Francesco Cavallaro, Associate Professor Ng Bee Chin, Dr Mark Seilhamer, (Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies) *World Englishes*, 2014 Vol 33, No. 3, Pages 378-397

Singapore Colloquial English (SCE) or 'Singlish' is a variety very distinct from Singapore Standardised English (SSE), and its use is a polarising issue in Singaporean society. Participants of matched-guise studies investigating Singaporean attitudes toward SCE have assigned lower solidarity ratings for SCE than for SSE. This is in stark contrast to anecdotal and public opinion that SCE is a language of solidarity and identity for most Singaporeans. By including participants from non-tertiary sectors, a wider range of stimulus guises and supplementing matched-guise results with interview data, this study seeks to reveal the covert prestige that SCE does, in fact, appear to enjoy in Singaporean society. The study has implications for the extent to which we can extrapolate results from matched-guise studies, a widely used instrument for the study of language attitudes in the last 50 years.

### **Gene X environment interactions on intergroup bias: The role of 5-HTTLPR and outgroup threat**

By Assistant Professor Bobby Cheon (Division of Psychology), Professor Hong Ying-Yi (Nanyang Business School), Professor Robert W. Livingston (University of Sussex), Assistant Professor Joan Y. Chiao (Northwestern University) *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, 2014 Vol 9, No. 9, Pages 1268-1275

Perceived threats from outgroups is a consistent social-environmental antecedent of intergroup bias. The serotonin transporter gene polymorphism (5-HTTLPR) has been associated with individual variations in sensitivity to context, particularly stressful and threatening situations. Here, we examine how 5-HTTLPR and environmental factors signalling potential outgroup threat dynamically interact to shape intergroup bias. Across two studies, we provide novel evidence for a gene-environment interaction on the acquisition of intergroup bias and prejudice. These findings reveal a candidate genetic mechanism for the acquisition of

intergroup bias, and suggest that intergroup bias is dually inherited and transmitted through the interplay of social and biological mechanisms that regulate perceived intergroup threats.

***Effects of face feature and contour crowding in facial expression adaptation***

By Assistant Professor Xu Hong, Liu Pan (Division of Psychology), Dr Leila Montaser-Kouhsari (California Institute of Technology)  
Vision Research, forthcoming, 2014

Prolonged exposure to a visual stimulus, such as a happy face, biases the perception of subsequently presented neutral face toward sad perception, the known face adaptation. In the current study, we used crowding to manipulate discriminability of the adapting face and test its effect on face adaptation. Instead of presenting flanking faces near the target face, we shortened the distance between facial features (internal feature crowding), and reduced the size of face contour (external contour crowding), to introduce crowding. We are interested in whether internal feature crowding or external contour crowding is more effective in inducing crowding effect in our first experiment. In Experiment Two, we went on further to investigate its effect on adaptation. Experiment Three found that the reduced adaptation aftereffect in combined crowding by the external face contour and the internal facial features cannot be decomposed into the effects from the face contour and facial features linearly.

***Institutional transformation of ASEAN: ZOPFAN, TAC, and the Bali Concord I in 1968–1976***

By Assistant Professor Kei Koga (Public Policy & Global Affairs Programme)  
The Pacific Review, 2014  
Vol 27, No. 5, Pages 729-753

Focusing on the causes and processes of institutional transformation which have occurred within ASEAN, this article

explores ASEAN's transformation from 1968 to 1976, by using a theoretical model, developed from historical institutionalism and the punctuated equilibrium model. In particular, this article examines the process of ASEAN's creation of the Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) in 1971, and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) and the Bali Concord in 1976, and argues that this model shed light on the significance of ZOPFAN that created a foundation of TAC and the Bali Concord, for which conventional wisdom has dismissed as an insignificant institutional concept by academics and practitioners.

***China and Technical Global Internet Governance: Beijing's Approach to Multi-stakeholder Governance within ICANN, WSIS and IGF***

By Professor He Bao Gang (Public Policy and Global Affairs Programme)  
China: An International Journal, 2014  
Vol 12, No. 3, Pages 72-93

Since the late 1990s, the Chinese government has engaged in a process of attempting to reform the technical global internet governance regime, which is currently dominated by the US government and non-state actors. This article aims to contribute to the literature on Beijing's approach to this issue by providing a detailed empirical account of its involvement in a few core regime organisations. It argues that Beijing's reform approach is guided by its domestically derived preferences for strong state authority and expanding China's global power, but that its reform efforts are unlikely to succeed based on countervailing structural hard- and soft-power factors.

***Segmented Assimilation and Socio-economic Integration of Chinese Immigrant Children in the United States***

By Professor Zhou Min (Division of Sociology)  
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Research on the new second generation has paid much attention to testing one of the hypotheses posed by segmented assimilation theory—downward assimilation into America's underclass—and neglected to examine other possible outcomes. In this paper, I address a much understudied pathway—assimilation via the ethnic community—based on a case study of Chinese immigrant children in the United States. I show that the children of Chinese immigrants have made inroads into mainstream America through educational achievement, but that they have done so not only because of a strong value on education but also because of the resources generated in the ethnic community that help actualise that value.

***Protected Sites: Reconceptualising Secret Societies in Colonial and Postcolonial Singapore***

By Assistant Professor Kamaludeen Mohamed Nasir (Division of Sociology)  
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Street gangs in Singapore are commonly known as secret societies. The irony behind this term is that these secret societies have not only been contributing to the making of modern Singapore for more than a century, they have often carried out their dealings in the public sphere. These overt operations of the underworld are possible, in part, due to the symbiotic relationship forged between the Chinese triads and the police which have continued till today. Through examining the notion of protected sites, this article explores how the postcolonial state has taken on a similar pragmatic approach as that practised by its colonial predecessor in the management of the criminal underworld.