Dear colleagues, students, alumni, and friends,

From this edition onwards, our School’s newsletter Horizon will be known as Horizons. Switching to the plural might seem a small step but it is an important one, for it is aimed at representing this magazine’s plural might seem a small step but it is an important one, for it is aimed at representing this magazine’s plural nature. Switching to the plural might seem a small step but it is an important one, for it is aimed at better representing this magazine’s commitment to chronicling the numerous boundaries whose limits we explore at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences constantly push.

Within these pages, we celebrate not just the achievements and milestones of our faculty and students but also the 50th year of Singapore’s independence. Come 9 August, Singapore and Singaporeans will celebrate a half-century’s development and growth, as well as pay tribute to all the hard work put in by those who came before.

While HSS itself only celebrated its 10th anniversary last year, both the humanities and the social sciences have long histories in shaping this country. In our feature article, Horizons will pay tribute to those on our faculty who have contributed to the nation through their academic expertise and projects. We will also introduce the new generation of scholars at the helm of contemporary research here in HSS, men and women who are addressing some of Singapore’s current concerns.

HSS is also proud to have played host to the Third Congress of the Association of Asian World Historians (AAWH) in May, organized by both the AAWH and the History Programme here at NTU. The theme for the Congress was “Migration in Global History: People, Plants, PLAGues, and Ports”. Many distinguished scholars of history attended this remarkable gathering, among them Professor Haneda Masashi from the University of Tokyo, Professor Wang Gungwu from the National University of Singapore, and Professor Patrick Manning, the incoming President of the American Historical Association.

Horizons will also celebrate the most recent accomplishments of our faculty and students, among them the second prize claimed by first-year students from the Public Policy & Global Affairs Programme at the Singapore Public Policy Challenge 2015. The event, which is an important one, for it is aimed at better representing this magazine’s commitment to chronicling the numerous boundaries whose limits we explore at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences constantly push.

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WELCOME TO HSS!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division/Centre</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Commencement Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Division of Chinese</td>
<td>Writer-in-Residence</td>
<td>Wong Kai Tet</td>
<td>2-Jan-2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division of Chinese</td>
<td>Visiting Professor</td>
<td>Zhu Chunshen</td>
<td>13-Jan-2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division of Chinese</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>Lim Ni Eng</td>
<td>1-Apr-2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division of English</td>
<td>Writer-in-Residence</td>
<td>Githa Harikan</td>
<td>12-Jan-2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History Programme</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>Scott Michael Anthony</td>
<td>5-Jan-2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History Programme</td>
<td>Visiting Professor</td>
<td>Michael Arthur Aung-Thwin</td>
<td>15-May-2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language and Communication Centre</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>Werner Botha</td>
<td>23-Feb-2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division of Psychology</td>
<td>Visiting Professor</td>
<td>Adrian Raine</td>
<td>20-May-2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HIPS: FORGING THE FUTURE OF HSS

BY HIDHIR RAZAK

Every year, the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (HiSS) in NTU awards the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences International PhD Scholarship (HIPS) to outstanding students pursuing postgraduate studies. The scholarship aims to encourage Singaporeans and Singapore Permanent Residents to pursue highly rewarding careers in academia at any of the Schools within the College. Recipients of the scholarship with receive funding and support for their PhD studies, after which they will join their respective Divisions/Programmes in tenure-track positions.

This year, HiSS is proud to announce that the College has offered HIPS to 6 students highly passionate in their respective areas of study. They are Ms. Cheryl Julia Lee Wei Ling for the Division of English, Mr. Matthias Wong Meng Yan for the History Programme, Ms. Rachel Chen Siew Yoong for the Division of Linguistics & Multilingual Studies, Ms. Boey Yong Ai Grace and Mr. Lim Chong Min for the Philosophy Programme, and Mr. Dylan Loh Ming Hui for the Public Policy & Global Affairs Programme.

The selection process is highly rigorous. Interested applicants are usually asked to speak to the respective Heads of Division/Programme to discuss their possible employment in the University. What follows after application are interviews by Division/Programme, College, and University panels. HIPS only accepts applicants who are either Singaporean Citizens or Singapore Permanent Residents.

“The scholarship is competitive but I had a lot of support from the people involved in the selection process,” reflected Ms. Lee, “It’s a rigorous process but not a ‘challenge’, I think. The interviews aren’t meant to trip you up. The school wants to enable you to do the things you want to do. But of course I say this all in retrospect; during the actual thing, I was a nervous wreck.”

After they accept the scholarship offers, the scholars are employed by the Division/Programmes in which they will be working as teaching assistants and will be granted paid leave to pursue their PhD studies. They will also be assigned mentors who will provide guidance during the course of their PhD studies as well as to keep them connected to their divisions back here in HSS. This year, all of the HSS recipients of HIPS will be pursuing their PhDs overseas; Ms. Chen at University of California, Berkeley, Ms. Boey at the University of Pennsylvania, Mr. Lim at University College London, Ms. Lee at Durham University, as well as Mr. Loh and Mr. Wong, who will both be studying at the University of Cambridge, and criticism of Han Chinese centrism, US imperialism, Eurocentric concepts of scholarship, of colonialism in general, and of global capitalism. Professor Tsu also provided examples of Sinophone communities: overseas Chinese in Singapore, the Taiwan emigration, and, of course, Mainland China. She used these examples to illustrate the issues and challenges of the complex relationships between language, dialect and geography, as well as political discourse the field of Sinophone Studies is confronted with.

Within this framework, she presented constructive views on the future development of the study of language. In particular, she discussed the difficulties confronting teaching and research in Sinophone Studies in the English speaking world caused by internal Sinophone relational difficulties which are not immediately evident to native English speakers, even of Chinese extraction. This encompasses uniquely Chinese problems of the politics of language, of internal divisions of language within a host or colonial country, or even of China itself, and how such divisions have affected the status of Chinese people.

Professor Tsu is a well-known academic, and her reputation was made tangible by the more than 300 people who gathered to hear her speech. Singapore academics attended and were accompanied by a large number of students. This public lecture series also draws an audience outside the academy and, in this case, the public was represented by a group of senior members of the Singaporean Chinese community.

The Tan Lark Sye Professorship in Chinese Language and Culture was established by the Association of Nanyang University Graduates in 1988 to commemorate the late Nanthah (Nanyang University) founder, Mr. Tan Lark Sye, who donated both the land and the original cash endowment of Nanyang University. The mission of the Tan Lark Sye Professorship is to promote research in Chinese language and culture, and to present research findings to both the general public and the academic community in an annual public lecture.

TAN LARK SYE PROFESSORSHIP PUBLIC LECTURE: PROFESSOR JING TSU ON LANGUAGE IN SINOPHONE STUDIES

BY DR. VENUS VIANA

Professor Jing Tsu gave a speech titled “How Sinophone Studies Bent the Mother Tongue” on January 10th 2015 at the SPH News Centre Auditorium. The speech was one of the Tan Lark Sye Professorship in Chinese Language and Culture Public Lecture Series, an activity co-organized by the Centre for Chinese Language and Culture, NTU, the Association of Nanyang University Graduates, and Lianhe Zachao, SPH. This lecture was chaired by Professor Liu Hong, the Chair of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, NTU.

The invited speaker, Professor Jing Tsu, is a professor of Chinese Literature and Comparative Literature as well as the Chair of the Council on East Asian Studies at Yale University. She is the author of Future, Nationalism, and Literature: The Making of Modern Chinese Identity, 1885-1937 (Stanford University Press, 2005), Sound and Script in Chinese Diaspora (Harvard University Press, 2010), Global Chinese Literature: Critical Essays (with David Der-wei Wang, Shi Ji 2010) and Science and Technology in Modern China, 1860s-1940s (with Benjamin A. Elman, Brill 2014).

Professor Tsu spoke of her conception of Sinophone Studies, which includes Sinic-language communities and their cultural, political and social expressions inside and outside China. She also traced the development of Sinophone Studies, which first emerged as an idea in the late 1990s. Then, Sinophone was studied together with a number of related disciplines including post-colonialism, post-socialism, and feminism, among others. Later, it was brought into a broader context of expanded studies of literature and culture outside the area of European languages, along the model of the French concept of the Francophone, or the French-speaking world. Since then, Sinophone Studies has enabled a multi-faceted reflection on...
A team of first-year students from the Public Policy & Global Affairs Programme (PPGA) clinched second place at the Singapore Public Policy Challenge 2015. The members of the team, comprising of Ms Ong Lyan, Ms R. Daminieree, Ms Tan Yutong, and Mr Jun Yeon, were awarded certificates of achievement along with a cash prize of $3400. These were presented to them by the guest-of-honour, Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean.

Organised by the Public Service Division, the Public Policy Challenge is an annual case study competition set within the context of Singapore and its national policies. This year, 80 teams from various tertiary institutions responded to a case question on the types of employment opportunities that should be generated for Singaporeans in the future. Beyond just writing and submitting a policy paper, teams were required to present and defend their proposed policies in front of two panels of judges, each comprising of senior government officials, directors, and permanent secretaries from various ministries. Other participants from rival teams were also allowed to challenge presenters by asking them questions.

In the end, the PPGA team’s proposal stood out due to their emphasis on work-life balance, their desire for Singaporeans to follow their passions, and their attention to the need for a level playing field to better benefit Singaporeans from all walks of life.

The team attributed their burgeoning interest in Public Policy to the high-energy debates that form an integral part of their curriculum. “The experiences we gained in class were vital in the competition, where we had to tackle such a complex problem involving many stakeholders,” shared Ms Tan. Assistant Professor Yu Wenxuan, their mentor for this competition, also played a key role in their preparations. “His guidance resulted in us proposing creative policies that really gave us an edge over the other teams. We were also taught to think critically, to generate alternatives, and to weigh options,” the team shared.

The Public Policy and Global Affairs undergraduate programme in HSS will be welcoming only its third batch of undergraduates this August. Such an undergraduate programme in HSS will soon into its history is a testament to the hard work of both the students and the faculty in the division. It reflects positively on the quality of the courses it offers and the training it provides to potential policy makers of tomorrow.

SINGAPORE PUBLIC POLICY CHALLENGE 2015: PPG STUDENTS CLINCH 2ND POSITION

BY R. DAMINIREE
From the 29th to the 31st of May earlier this year, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences Building was the venue for the Third Congress of the Asian Association of World Historians (AAWH). Co-organized by the History Programme this year, the event saw around 250 scholars, academics, historians, and students from around the globe descend upon Number 14 Nanyang Drive.

For all three days, panels, speeches, and presentations were delivered, all revolving around the central theme, which was “Migration in Global History: The Asian Association of World Historians 2015. Co-organized by the History Programme this year, the event saw around 250 scholars, academics, historians, and students from around the globe descend upon Number 14 Nanyang Drive.”

Speakers included the AAWH Steering Committee, the Association’s official journal. Before declaring the start of the Congress, Professor Manning also paid tribute to the journal’s first Chief Editor Professor Cho Ji-Hyoung, a founding member of the AAWH, who passed away earlier in February due to heart disease.

The first keynote speaker, Professor Hisaeda Masaishi from the University of Tokyo, was the first to touch on the conceptualization of “global” history and its distinction from “world” history. While speaking at the HSS Auditorium on the topic of Japanese perspectives on world history, he helped to elucidate the differences between the two.

“World history,” he explained, “adopts the world as its ultimate space unit along a time span that comprehends all stages of human existence. Global history [in context], adopts the interconnected world created by the process of globalization as its unit of analysis, which then provides the ultimate context for the analysis of any historical entity, phenomenon or process.”

He then went on to the problems of Asian historians coming when attempting to both study and teach history in Japan, particularly the two kinds of histories he defined.

“It has been a habit from the 1960s in Japan in the area of History to study each civilization or region by stressing on their independence and particularly,” he said. “This promoted a sense of Japanese national identity and history, one that is singular, juxtaposing ourselves against the gokoku (foreign countries). There is thus a tall and strong wall between Japan and the world.”

Professor Hisaeda then suggested that this wall will be broken down, but through a reconciliatory approach.

“Identity influences one’s perception of history. Of course, we still need to have an identity. However, our sense of history and identity must be multi-layered.”

Multi-layered identities will then allow for multi-layered views and perceptions of history, which will then allow not just the Japanese but also other historians to break the walls between themselves and the study of both world and global history.

“We need to shape multi-layered identities in the face of the globalised world,” Professor Masaishi stressed. The Globalised World: The Continental and the Maritime The second keynote address was delivered by University Professor and Chairman of the East Asian Institute at the National University of Singapore (NUS), Professor Wang Gungwu. Professor Wang spoke about the disproportionate attention given to recorded (written) history, which he believed is largely focused on continental events and therefore incomplete as it is largely ignorant of maritime movements that have shaped the world as we know it today.

He supported his claim by thoroughly examining the continental and maritime histories of three civilizations that have played a gargantuan role in shaping the global power dynamics of today: the Mediterranean civilization (Southern Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa), the Indic civilization (Southern Asia), and the Sinic civilization (East Asia).

“Ninety percent of goods in international trade are still transported by sea,” he said. “India and China are now aware of the need for navies. Due to China’s economic growth, it has been able to channel resources and invest in one, resulting in the current tensions we now see in the South China Sea. This is partly because the status quo of the United States navy, seen as a stabilising force in this part of Asia, is now being challenged.”

Before ending his keynote address, Professor Wang impressed upon the audience the need to confront the imbalance between the study of continental and maritime history.

“The global has become maritime,” he said. “We need to review our view of global history.”

The Third Congress of the Asian Association of World Historians was an important milestone for the young but rapidly growing History Programme here in HSS.
What is the role of translation in producing a modern Chinese consciousness? How have translators situated China at the intersecting axes of the classical and the modern, the Sino- and the Euro-centric? How did such processes change or develop during the nineteenth century? How did translators cope with the exigencies of knowledge transmission and the pressures exerted by linguistic power disparities?

Addressing these issues and riding on translation studies’ increasing influence in China Studies matters, NTU and Harvard University recently co-organized an international workshop titled “China in Translation: Practice, History, and Theory.” The workshop was held at Harvard University from 21st to 22nd November 2014.

The event aimed to foster interdisciplinary dialogue by bringing scholars together to examine the ways in which translation affects the ontological and epistemological formation of modern China. Organized into four thematic panels—Practice, Theory, History, and Transculturalization—the papers delivered at the event addressed a range of issues in disciplines such as literature, history, science, philosophy, and cognitive neuroscience.

Overall, the workshop generated stimulating debate over the linguistic, historical and philosophical paradigms affecting the discursive production of modern China. Organized into four thematic panels—Practice, Theory, History, and Transculturalization—the papers delivered at the event addressed a range of issues in disciplines such as literature, history, science, philosophy, and cognitive neuroscience.

The Division of Chinese in NTU’s School of Humanities and Social Sciences celebrated its 10th anniversary last September with much fanfare. As one of the Division’s pioneering batch of students, I take pride in being a member of a growing community of like-minded and passionate alumni, all of whom are contributing to the field of Chinese literature and language in Singapore through a variety of meaningful ways.

I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Chinese and a Minor in Translation from NTU in 2009. Despite the Division’s short history, it was not a difficult decision for me to choose to enroll in their programme back in 2005. Other than fulfilling my wish of following in my parents’ footsteps, I found the course offerings extremely diverse, engaging, and relevant to Singapore’s historical and social context, particularly the courses on Southeast Asian Chinese studies, which provide students with the necessary grounding to engage with the socio-complexities and multi-faceted histories of the Chinese communities in the region.

Additionally, the Division has been very generous in providing students with opportunities for internships and international exchange programmes, as well as scholarships to recognize students’ academic performance. Besides participating in an exchange programme to Shanghai Fudan University in 2006, I also received the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Foundation Chinese Studies Scholarship and the Annie Tan (Mrs Wan Boo Sow) Award in 2009 and 2009 respectively.

I am most thankful for the abundance of opportunities available to Chinese major students at NTU. The Division is a close-knit community and the faculty is highly dedicated and supportive of students’ endeavors. With encouragement from my NTU professors, I pursued a Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) Degree in Humanities (Literature) at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology in 2011. Bridging my interest between Hong Kong and Malayan Sinophone literature, my thesis, which was titled “Renegotiating Diasporic Identities: The Sinophone Articulations of Liu Yichang”, examined the literary representations of the cultures and changing identities of the Malayan Chinese community in Hong Kong author Liu Yichang’s works written during the 1950s. The rigorous academic training at NTU prepared me for the demands of postgraduate studies and, more importantly, allowed me to find my niche in contributing to a distinctively Singaporean angle to the study of Hong Kong Literature.

Earlier last year, I was extremely fortunate to be offered a place in Harvard University’s East Asian Languages and Civilizations Ph.D. programme under the supervision of Professor David Der-Wei Wang to work on modern Chinese literature. While studying and working with internationally renowned scholars have presented a whole new set of challenges, the experience thus far has been tremendously rewarding and intellectually stimulating. Over the course of my doctoral study, I hope to contribute to the diversification of East Asian literary studies in the United States by providing a Southeast Asian perspective to my work. Expanding on the scope of my Master’s thesis, I plan to examine the changing identities of Southeast Asian Sinophone communities through the study of their literature and cultures produced and circulated during the 20th century, especially during the independence movements of the 1950s and 1960s. Beyond just shedding light on this significant phase in Southeast Asian history, I believe that this project also stands to highlight critical questions regarding the articulation of national identity in multi-cultural societies—questions that are still highly relevant to contemporary Sinophone communities confronted by new waves of migration.

Having spent the last few years studying abroad, the old saying, that one is sometimes required to travel foreign routes in order to further understand one’s own roots, resonates deeply with me—it is poignantly evocative of the similarly multi-locale experiences of many Sinophone writers. While interacting with other students from China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Taiwan, I have also become more acutely aware of my identity as a Singaporean Chinese: despite sharing a common language, I confront new waves of migration. I have chosen a worthwhile journey. I am elated to have found a scholarly direction that recognizes my identity as a Singaporean Chinese with my calling as a researcher of modern Chinese literature. This academic path may be long and arduous, but I believe that the strong academic foundations that HSS has laid for its students and the continued support of my NTU professors and peers will continue to make this course that I have chosen a worthwhile journey.
THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES IN SINGAPORE’S NATION-BUILDING

BY HIDHIR RAZAK

The School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) was officially opened in the year 2004, thirteen years after Nanyang Technological University (NTU) was first inaugurated in 1991 as a teaching university to meet Singapore’s need for skilled graduates. At the time of its birth, much of NTU’s research and teaching revolved around the fields of engineering and science to support nascent technology-driven industries and sectors. With the setting up of HSS, the University has been able to broaden its sphere of research and education, consequently increasing its contribution to the development of Singapore.

Beyond just industrial growth, however, HSS has contributed to nation building through other ways. Many of the challenges and problems facing the newly independent nation. And it is in the field of the humanities and the social sciences that the study of people and their social products—language, culture, ideas, politics—takes place.

Questions faced then about Singapore’s economy, social cohesion, governance, along with similarly pressing concerns about identity, language, and nationhood, all had at its centre the people, residing in the newly independent nation. And it is in the field of the humanities and the social sciences that the study of people and their social products—language, culture, ideas, politics—takes place. Many of these challenges still persist. In the face of the globalised world, many of them have evolved in complexity. But the solutions to such challenges are what HSS is invested in addressing and it has been doing so through three primary ways: education, research, and, by relying on the results of its research efforts, informing policy decisions.

Education: Meeting the Needs of Singapore’s Future

HSS is charged with the education of more than 2800 undergraduates at any one time, each one of them enrolled in a direct honours programme in one of the nine disciplines offered by the School, namely: Chinese, Economics, English, History, Linguistics & Multilingual Studies, Philosophy, Psychology, Public Policy & Global Affairs, and Sociology. These fields are all, in one way or another, engaged with the study of people, culture, society, and how all three are intertwined. Though these programmes provide students with both in depth knowledge as well as exposure to a variety of fields within each subject, HSS contextualizes their education within Singapore and a rapidly rising Asia. While educating future graduates with a global outlook, HSS ensures that they remain rooted, enabling them to become both relevant to Singapore and key to keeping Singapore relevant in the future.

“I learnt to cover all the aspects with the relevant references to a topic,” said Ms. Deborah Jeanne Wong, who graduated in 2014 with a BA (Honours) in English and a Minor in Creative Writing, and who is currently a journalist with Singapore Press Holdings. “I learnt to address issues with a measured, objective perspective.”

In line with meeting the needs of tomorrow’s working world, there are also those within HSS who are given the option of pursuing a Double Degree in Engineering and Economics. The double degree programme marries the art of translating science into technology for daily use with the study of resource scarcity and the contemporary globalized economy. Students can also opt to take on a second major from any of the programmes within the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, meaning that it is possible for HSS students to graduate with another major from either the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information or the School of Art, Design, and Media. For students in the Division of Psychology, a second major in Biological Sciences is also available and the students in the Division of Economics have an option to take a second major in Business. The School also offers four minors for students who are interested in the fields of Creative Writing, Environmental and Urban Studies, Global Asia, and Translation. All these options serve to provide students with better preparation for their future career paths.

“My time with the Division of Chinese and HSS has definitely helped me get to where I am today,” said Mr. Han Kian Yan, who graduated from the Division of Chinese last year with a BA (Honours) in Chinese and a Minor in Creative Writing, and who is currently a journalist with Singapore Press Holdings. “I learnt to address issues with a measured, objective perspective.”

“One such project by the Division of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences that the School of Psychology and “Logic and Critical Thinking” offered by the Philosophy Programme in HSS. These courses are designed to enrich and complement the skills and knowledge students are already obtaining from their respective programmes in NTU.

Research: Understanding What Was, What Is, and What Will Be

With almost 200 faculty members and 300 graduate students in HSS, research is one of the key pillars driving the School’s growth. HSS is one of the fastest growing university faculties in the region and research output has exploded since its founding. Interdisciplinary Research Clusters have also been developed to promote interdisciplinarity by building on the School’s comparative strengths. The five research themes that have emerged are Humanities, Science, and Society (HSS@HSS), Environment and Sustainability, Global Asia, Cognition and Neurosciences, as well as Literary and Cultural Studies. These encompass just some of the many research projects HSS faculty members are engaged in. Such research benefit not only the school and students but also Singapore and Singaporean society, both being the primary focus of many of the research projects helmed by HSS faculty.

One such project by the Division of Linguistics & Multilingual Studies (LMS) and the Language and Communication Centre (LCC) here in HSS culminated in the publishing of a special edition of the journal World Englishes titled “English in Multilingual Singapore”. Edited by both Professor Kingsley Bolton, Head of the LCC, and Associate Professor Ng Bee Chia from LMS, the special issue of the journal published just last year in September brings together some of Singapore’s rich and diverse linguistic heritage.
Professor Teo You Yenn from the Division of Linguistics & Multilingual Studies. The article reports on a particular study pointing to the need for a reconceptualisation of English as a new mother tongue in Singapore, which then sets the need for a review of what the term “mother tongue” means. This research, local and specific in scope, is relevant to Singapore, its society, and its development. Moreover, it is also global in outlook, helping to refuel Singapore’s place in the region and the world, as well as enriching our understanding of the development of the English language itself.

Singapore society is also at the centre of work being done by Associate Professor Teo You Yenn from the Division of Sociology. Her recent work touches on Singapore family policy, social welfare, and local issues of fertility and childbearing, all topics pertinent to the ever-changing face of Singapore. She also contributes to the national discourse on social issues by contributing articles to media publications such as the Today Paper and The Straits Times.

They are just a few of the many scholars in HSS engaged with research that has Singapore situated at the centre. Drawing on Singapore’s position as a major point of intersection between cultures and ideas, many other researchers and scholars in HSS are leading the charge into areas that are not only interdisciplinary but also transcultural and transnational, meaning that their research products carry ramifications not just for Singapore but also its evolving position and role in the globalised world. Among the scholars foraging into new uncharted territory include Assistant Professor Kamaludeen Bin Mohamed Naisir from the Division of Sociology, Assistant Professor Samara Cahill from the Division of English, and Associate Professor Uganda Kwan from the Division of Chinese.

**Policy: The Work of Generations**

The results of research projects are most tangible when they affect policy decisions and society and many of the work done by HSS faculty have gone on to influence key aspects of Singapore. While HSS itself is only ten years old, the service provided to Singapore by its faculty extends far beyond just a decade’s worth.

One such faculty member who has dedicated his civil and academic career to Singapore is Emeritus Professor Lim Chong Yah, who has been called the face of Singapore economics. Only the third person to ever receive the title “Emeritus Professor” from NTU, Emeritus Professor Lim Chong Yah has had a long and illustrious career in both the academic world and in the civil service sector. As the first Chair of the National Wages Council, he was instrumental in the setting up of the organization that continues to review income levels of Singaporeans every year. Under his watch, Singapore has survived a hyper-inflation crisis in the 70’s as well as two economic recessions. His knowledge and expertise was also key in Singapore’s economic restructuring from a labour intensive, low-value added economy to a capital intensive, high-value added one.

Also belonging to Professor Lim Chong Yah’s generation is Visiting Professor Shirley Chew, who is attached with the Division of English at HSS. A graduate of the old University of Singapore, she was conferred the title of “Emeritus Professor” by Leeds University, where she was the Chair of Commonwealth and Postcolonial Literatures from 1993 to 2003. Still heavily engaged in research, she is founder and editor of Moving Worlds: a Journal of Transcultural Writings, co-published by Leeds University and NTU. Her research in colonial and postcolonial literature often intersects with the relationship between the local and the global, between tradition and modernity, and how increasingly porous borders are affecting notions of citizenship and belonging—all issues policy decision makers are heavily invested in.

Research with Singapore at the centre has also been carried out by the next generation of scholars, such as Professor Euston Quah from the Division of Economics and Associate Professor Kwok Kian Woon, Professor Euston Quah, who chairs multiple academic associations and societies in Singapore and Asia, is one of Singapore’s most cited economists, and whose work on environmental cost-benefit analysis has been instrumental in Singapore’s approach to environmental issues, such as Southeast Asia’s haze problem and climate change.

On the other hand, Associate Professor Kwok Kian Woon from the Division of Sociology is actively engaged in research projects pertaining to the state of mental health in Singapore. With the Institute of Mental Health, Associate Professor Kwok is engaged with a study titled “Mind Matters: A Study of Mental Health Literacy”, a project that aims to inform policy and laws aiming to address and improve the ways mental health is viewed and treated in Singapore.

So much of research done by HSS faculty has gone on to impact public policy and many continue to engage with civil discourse regarding pertinent issues of today. Those listed are just a few among many being carried out in cooperation with the private sector and public institutions. Younger faculty members, such as Assistant Professor Tan Ying Ying and Assistant Professor Kamaludeen Bin Mohamed Naisir, are following close behind, treading the footsteps of their predecessors. Moreover, young budding academics from across all the disciplines are being nurtured through an extensive and generous array of research scholarships and assistantships, among them the NTU Research Scholarship and the Nanyang President’s Graduate Scholarship.

The humanities and the social sciences have had long and illustrious histories in Singapore. As Singapore marks its 50th anniversary this year, it also reflects on its stability, growth, and social cohesion, none of which would have been possible without both the humanities and the social sciences as keystones of its foundations. HSS inherits this proud tradition and honours it by serving the nation wherever and whenever it can. It will continue to do so, leading the way into paths yet uncharted, into territories yet to be explored. The world is continuously changing and Singapore has done well to continuously evolve with it. To survive, it must continue to do so. Having helped Singapore achieve what it has now, HSS remains committed, ready to bridge the Singapore of today with the Singapore of tomorrow.
BACK TO BASICS: THE COMMUNICATION CUBE

BY HIDHIR RAZAK

First mooted by Professor Alan Chan, Dean of the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences in NTU, HSS’s Communication Cube has been helping NTU undergraduates with their oral and written communication skills since it was first set up in September 2012. Under the watch of the Head of the Language and Communication Centre (LCC) Professor Kingsley Bolton and LCC lecturer Mr. Roger Winder, the Communication Cube has since expanded its operations.

Among the new initiatives already rolled out, the Communication Cube now offers coaching services to postgraduate students from the second semester of the 2014/2015 academic year. Previously, coaching services were primarily aimed at helping undergraduate students.

“Postgraduate students tend to have more at stake,” shared Ms. Candice Balete, a postgraduate student at the Division of English who has been a Communication Coach since her final year as an undergraduate at HSS. “I’ve seen postgraduate students bring in their CVs and personal statements (for evaluation) that they will use to apply for actual grants or scholarships.”

From August 2015 onwards, with the opening of the new Learning Hub at the South Spine, the Communication Cube will have at its disposal twenty-two consultation cubicles, one meeting space equipped with a projector, as well as five discussion spaces, three of which will be equipped with their own projectors. This contrasts sharply with the three discussion rooms it has been using from 2012.

The upgrade in the facilities allocated to the Communication Cube is a reflection of number of students seeking help from the Communication Cube. Between 2012 and 2013, the Cube saw around 500 bookings made in each semester. That number has since gone up to almost 500. The students who sought sessions with the coaches required help with a range of school related work. 34.5% of those who booked sessions required help with their written reports while others wanted feedback on their essays, presentations, even Final Year Projects.

“Grammar, word choice, paragraphing, and sentence structure are areas that can be improved,” said Ms. Kuah Ting Ting, another Communication Coach, when speaking about the issues NTU students commonly have with their written work. “The best pieces of work are those that offer deep insight in clear, simple language.”

By emphasising on the basics such as the ones Ms. Kuah identified, the Communication Cube helps NTU students to become better communicators who will be better equipped to face future challenges.

A PASSION FOR BILINGUALISM

BY SARAH ALMODIEL

Pursuing an academic career in the Division of Chinese was something that seemed natural to Assistant Professor Lim Ni Eng. He spent his younger years studying in schools boasting histories deeply rooted in Chinese language and culture, namely Catholic High School (Primary) and Hwa Chong Institution. He then enrolled in the Chinese Studies Department at the National University of Singapore (NUS), where he earned his bachelor and master degrees. Among the variety of courses offered by his department then, ranging from courses on Chinese Philosophy to Chinese History, Assistant Professor Lim found himself excelling in the field of linguistics, describing his mind as more analytical and logical driven, lending itself better to the study of linguistics. This led him to the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), where he received his PhD in Applied Linguistics.

Before leaving for UCLA, Assistant Professor Lim taught Mandarin at several secondary schools in Singapore and continued to teach while he was in the United States. When asked if bringing the language to more people is a passion of his and it is—he explained that he is more passionate about bilingualism, something that he is intimate with, having grown up speaking English to his mother and Mandarin to his father.

“Being bilingual trains your mind to be flexible,” he shared. “You speak one language, you think one way. You speak two languages, you think two different ways. And I think that’s very important.”

While he is now at the Division of Chinese here in HSS, as his core, Assistant Professor Lim considers himself a linguist, having been part of the Division of Linguistics & Multilingual Studies for a time. He explained further that his study of linguistics does not limit him to any one specific language. It is his love for the Chinese language that brought him into his current Division. His research interests follow this pattern; rooted in linguistics, but spurred on by his interest in Chinese language and culture. These include Conversation Analysis and Interactional Linguistics, which looks at how people actually talk, rather than the language itself.

“We like to think of language as a self-enclosed kind of entity on its own where you either have language or you don’t. But to really understand language, you need to have that other person in front of you, to look at how you use language in your interactions, because it’s always recipient designed,” he explained. “It’s not just about your words, but about what you are trying to deliver through your words.”

Assistant Professor Lim also has interests outside of academia. Having played the board game Go, also known as Weiqi, competitively when he was younger, he hopes to return to that one day, perhaps when he is not busy spending most of his free time with his 5-year-old daughter.

...TO REALLY UNDERSTAND LANGUAGE, YOU NEED TO HAVE THAT OTHER PERSON IN FRONT OF YOU, TO LOOK AT HOW YOU USE LANGUAGE IN YOUR INTERACTIONS...
Rats piqued his interest in the field of psychology. Or rather, a neuro-scientific study of rats did. While Assistant Professor Bobby Cheon has always had a lay interest in the subject, he credited the rats specifically for igniting his passion in psychology.

As an undergraduate at the University of Virginia, one of the experiments he did involved comparing spatial and orienting behaviors of rats before and after surgically disrupting a section of their brain tissue. “It was a profoundly powerful demonstration of the brain-behavior link that had only been described to me in textbooks previously,” he said, “and I was hungry for more hands-on demonstration of the brain-behavior link that had only been described to me in textbooks previously.”

Pursuing psychology as his main field of research then sprouted a deep-seated connection to the area of Cultural Influence that he attributed to his bicultural experience as a Korean growing up in the United States, describing culture’s influence on people’s values, beliefs and social behaviors as being very salient and engaging to him. Boosted by his love for travelling and for gaining exposure to new cultures, he wanted to compare social behaviors between people of different cultural backgrounds. This led to him specialize in Social/Cultural Psychology and Cultural Neuroscience during his doctoral studies at Northwestern University.

It was this interest in cross-cultural social psychology that brought him to Singapore, where he did his postdoctoral research fellowship at Nanyang Business School’s Culture Science Institute before joining NTU’s Division of Psychology. He was involved in multiple studies investigating how culture influences the way people think about and treat members of their own groups compared to members of a different group. “One set of studies focused on how people react to the mixing of cultures, as opposed to the mere co-existence of different cultures without mixing. Research during my post-doctorate at NBS found that compared to simply viewing images representing two cultures together, people are more likely to perceive examples of cultural mixing as a form of contamination, especially if they strongly identify with one of the cultures being mixed. Follow-up research I’ll be working on seeks to examine whether the brain responds to examples of cultural mixing in a manner similar to examples of physical contamination, and also identify situations in which people may have more favorable attitudes towards the mixing of cultures."

Continuing his interest in Cultural Influence, his current research involves studying threats from the environment as an origin for how cultural diversity in social values and behaviors arise. He explained that the environment poses many threats for individuals and as human beings, cooperative group-living is a way in which we protect ourselves from such challenges. “One hypothesis that emerges is that environments with more intense threats may produce groups that are more closely-knit, cooperative, and more biased in prioritizing the welfare of fellow group members relative to outsiders. I’m experimentally testing these ideas by simulating collective threats in the lab,” he said. “My goal for this research is to also provide insights for predicting how cultures may change in the future as they face threats or achieve security.”

When not working, Assistant Professor Cheon devotes most of his time to his family, including his one year-old daughter. He also enjoys running, hiking, reading and playing board-games, and is always on the lookout for new games to play.

“...This research is to also provide insights for predicting how cultures may change in the future as they face threats or achieve security.”

OF MICE AND MEN

BY SARAH ALMODIEL

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REBEL WITH A CAUSE: NTU-NAC WRITER IN RESIDENCE GITHA HARIHARAN SPEAKS OUT FOR THE MARGINALISED AND OPRESSED

BY STEPHANIE YE

“...but not all rebellions have to take place on a big stage. During her reading on March 17, Ms Hariharan shared The Remains of the Feast, a short story from her 1993 collection The Art of Dying. “I know there’s nothing more annoying than a writer who gives an introduction to their story but I want to be generous to those who have lived a life of happiness and innocence and don’t know what caste is,” she said in a preamble to her funny, moving story centred on a Brahmin widow who has lived an ascetic life in accordance with cultural tradition. However, as she is dying of cancer, the widow starts to demand simple pleasures long taboo to her, from egg pastries baked by non-Hindus to Coca-Cola to brandy-soaked fruitcake.

Likewise, bit by bit, story by story, Ms. Hariharan is breaking down societal prejudices and challenging restrictions, all while making sure to have some fun along the way.”
Anthony then worked for a time as a journalist. He worked at Future Publishing—a start-up that focused on videogames and new technologies—before moving on to The Guardian and The Times. “Being a journalist was good for me in the sense that it teaches you not to be precious about re-writing and editing, and because there is no time to prevaricate,” he added.

Hoping to encourage a similar curiosity for the world in others, he developed various events, exhibitions, and media campaigns for organizations such as the Science Museum, the British Film Institute and British Airways. “The ambition has always been (and remains) to bring the work of enthusiasts, researchers and practitioners together and apply it in creative, productive and unpredictable ways.”

After entering academia, Asst Prof Anthony worked at the universities of Manchester, Warwick, and Cambridge. He played an integral role in setting up the Public History Division at the latter, describing it as “a vehicle for introducing students to other ways of thinking about history—that could be forms, subjects or methods.” At HSS, the Public History course is still in the midst of being set up but his vision for the course is one that concentrates on applied history that goes beyond outreach or employability.

While reading academic literature produced on the development of Public Relations in the UK, Assistant Professor Anthony was unconvinced by many of the theories and assumptions he came across, particularly that of the founding myth of Public Relations that was traced back to Edward Bernays. This dissatisfaction led to his first book, which told another story of the development of Public Relations.

“It is related to the wider trend of liberal intervention that you get across the work of British historian Patrick Wright, who left a big impression on him. “He produces these incredibly learned sort of micro-histories that pull all kinds of imaginative strangeness and depth out of apparently unpromising topics.”

Intrigued about the idea of being paid to be curious about the world and inspired by his grandmother who worked at a newspaper, Assistant Professor Anthony is now working a book focused on the ways knowledge has been visualised since the turn of the twentieth century.

Through his lessons in school in the United Kingdom, Assistant Professor Scott Michael Anthony used to think history was “a little bit of a trudge”. This impression changed when he came across the work of British historian Patrick Wright, who left a big impression on him. “He produces these incredibly learned sort of micro-histories that pull all kinds of imaginative strangeness and depth out of apparently unpromising topics.”

BEING A JOURNALIST WAS GOOD FOR ME IN THE SENSE THAT IT TEACHES YOU NOT TO BE Precious about re-Writing and Editing…
The article aims to examine the role of Chinese immigrants and the effect of transnational entrepreneurship on migrants’ integration into their host societies. It is based on a multi-sited ethnographic study conducted between 2008 and 2013 in Singapore, the United States, and China. The study finds that transnational entrepreneurship promotes deeper localization rather than deterritorialization and contributed to strengthening the economic base of the existing ethnic enclave, which in turn offers an effective alternative path for migrants’ integration in their host societies. The author suggests that, when transnational entrepreneurship is linked to the existing ethnic social structure in which a particular identity is formed, the effect on the group becomes highly significant.

**BOOK CHAPTER**

Transnational Entrepreneurship and Immigrant Integration: New Chinese Immigrants in Singapore and the United States 2015

By Professor Zhou Min (Division of Sociology) and Professor Liu Hong (History Programme)

Special issue on Reconsidering Sustainability: Interdisciplinary Perspectives from Asia. The main themes in the articles of this special issue revolve around the three pillars of sustainability (economic, social, and ecological) and include urbanization, disaster vulnerability, resources, and environment. The articles are approached from different levels of agency and structure, including intellectual debates, government responses, social and political structures, economic models, and community practices. The approach is highly interdisciplinary; contributors are from the fields of architecture and urban planning, environmental studies, history, economics, sociology, area studies, and sustainability science. The articles engage with the relation between nature and society in the form of both specific national-state and cities dealing with sustainability challenges, but also in the region as a whole. The question of sustainability as a relation, thereby including both developing and developed countries. The articles include the following:

- **Introduction: Sustainability and China** by Els van Dongen and Hong Liu
- **Territorial Prospective Visioning and Japan’s High Growth: The Role of Local Urban Development by Andrea Flores Ushuraina
- **When “Nature” Strikes: A Sociology of Climate Change and Disaster Vulnerabilities in Asia by Md Sulaiman and Si Hui Lim
- **Sustainability in Asian Countries: Perspectives from Economics by Youngho Chang, Jietchen Tan, and Shinya Takeda
- **Legal Pluralism, Forest Conservation, and Indigenous Capitalists: The Case of the Kalingguy in Trop, the Philippines by Adrian Allen, Els van Dongen, and Shinya Takeda
- **New from Moving Worlds: A Journal of Transcultural Writings** Volume 15, Issue 1 2015

By Visiting Professor Shirley Chew (Division of English)

With Moving Worlds acquiring a second home in Singapore in 2011, “region” which had meant Yorkshire when the journal was based solely in Leeds, now includes Southeast Asia, an uneasy outcrop of islands and peninsulas which are places of historical and cultural antiquity and modern nations as at risk with the often aggressive business of progress and development. Against the turmoil of public events, this issue explores some intriguing examples of crosscultural creativity in the region. Taking “translation” to denote, in the broad sense of the word, “carrying across”, as well as an aesthetic concept, this issue presents a selection of works that are telling representatives of our time, being innovative and experimental, questioning in nature, and wide-ranging in its inquiries. The issue is especially proud to include among its contents an interview with award-winning Master Potter Iskandar Jalil, and creative work by five students from the Division of English’s Creative Writing Programme.

**JOURNAL ARTICLES**


China was in the firm grip of the communist ideology from the founding of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) on October 1, 1949 to the eve of the Cultural Revolution in 1965. With the communist ideology looming large in the background, literary translation during this period was greatly influenced by political factors such as China’s alliance with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Soviet Union), its friendship with communist countries in Eastern European, its antagonism against the Western capitalist camp, and its literary policy stipulating that literary translation should reflect the revolutionary spirit. How did the unique translation phenomenon in China occur? Why did the Communist Party of China (CPC) hurry to systematize translation activities and set a unified translation standard as soon as the PRC was founded? The paper seeks to answer these questions through analysing the 1951 First National Conference of Translation, an influential event in the modern history of translation in China in the 1950s and 1960s.

Homeland-Seeking and Cultural Identity: Exploring Chia Joo Ming’s Writing on Diaspora Homelands and Cultural Identity: Homelands and Cultural Identity: Chia Joo Ming, one of leading Chinese Singaporean writers, depicts diaspora as a common cultural phenomenon in human society. This article explores how Chia represents diaspora in his (non-)fictional writings of the past several decades, focusing on his critical presentation of diaspora and cultural identity. In addition, the article also highlights Chia’s personal views on the issues of diaspora and cultural identity, as well as how such views conform to those expressed by Western thinkers such as Stuart Hall and James Clifford. In the conclusion, the author asserts that in the brilliant meta-fictional work, Ambon Holiday, Chia unexpectedly pushes his position on diaspora politics to the deconstructionist extreme.

Emotional Disclosure on Social Networking Sites: The Role of Network Structure and Psychological Needs 2014 By Assistant Professor Qiu Lin (Division of Psychology)

We conducted three studies to understand how online emotional disclosure can be predicted by the network structure on Facebook. Results showed that emotional disclosure was associated with both disclosing personal feelings and using denser personal networks. Facebook users with denser networks disclosed more positive and negative emotions, and Facebook users with denser networks disclosed more positive emotions and less negative emotions.
the relation between network size and emotional disclosure was mediated by a stronger need for impression management. Our study extends past research by revealing the psychological mechanisms through which personal social network structure influences emotional disclosure. It suggests that social network size and density are associated with different psychological needs, which in turn lead to different patterns of emotional disclosure.

### Stability of the Positive Mood Effect on Creativity When Task Switching, Practice Effect, and Test Item Differences are Taken Into Consideration.

2014
By Assistant Professor Qu Li (Division of Psychology)
The Journal of Creative Behavior, 49(2), 94-110

Experimentally induced positive moods can last for 20 minutes and is conducive to creative performance. But is the facilitation effect stable? Two studies were conducted, controlling for impacts of task switching, practice effect, and test item differences. In Study 1, participants (N = 42), randomly assigned to positive, negative, and neutral mood conditions, answered four items of the Alternate Uses Test (AUT), each question lasting five minutes. Creative performance during each 5 minute period was scored in terms of fluency and flexibility. Separate analyses of variances on these scores showed that positive mood consistently enhanced performance beyond 20 minutes. Study 2 eliminated the effects of test item differences. Participants (N = 131) underwent identical procedures, except that these items were presented in four different sequences according to Latin square design. It showed a positive mood lasting for 20 minutes following minimized interference from task switching, practice effect, and test item differences. This finding adds to the debate regarding the stability of experimentally induced positive mood effect and contributes to existing empirical evidence that future studies may use.


2015
By Dr Cui Feng (Division of Chinese)
Dongfang Fanyi东方翻译East Journal of Translation, Vol.2, 46-54

As the only and one official journal publishing translated foreign literature in mainland China in the 1950s and 1960s, Yi Wen serves as one of the main channels through which mainlanders get in touch with foreign literature and literary trends. An in-depth understanding of how political and social factors affect the translation and introduction of foreign literature could be achieved through close examination of the translated Les Fleurs du mal, the only Occidental modernist work in Yi Wen during Double Hundred Campaign.

### Differentiated Deservedness: Governance through Familialist Social Policies in Singapore.

2015
By Associate Professor Teo Youyenn (Division of Sociology)
Development and Change 46(1): 95-120

The Singapore state has in recent years stepped up its efforts to deal with issues of healthcare, education, support for care, retirement and even unemployment. This article evaluates the possibilities and limits of recent reforms. It looks at some promising aspects of reform, such as increases in spending in certain areas, before examining the limitations of the reforms. These include the fact that most resources have been directed toward supporting businesses, while increases in direct spending on citizens have been limited and conditional rather than universal; furthermore, little or no attention has been paid to the issue of women’s underemployment. This article, I draw on examples from housing, healthcare, and childcare support, to understand how specific social identities and practices are marked as deserving public support. I argue that the logic and practices embedded in policies—what I call ‘differentiated deservedness’—can be read as a productive and profound form of governance in which specific performances of the familial are generated, and through which norms about state-society relations and citizenship are forged.

### Interrogating the Limits of Welfare Reforms in Singapore.

2015
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