



NANYANG  
TECHNOLOGICAL  
UNIVERSITY

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

# HORIZONS

*Sharing ideas, Bridging minds*

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**HSS ALUMNI  
GOING PLACES**

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# CHAIR'S MESSAGE



Dear colleagues, students, alumni and friends,

It is my pleasure to share some of the noteworthy developments in education, research and international collaboration that have occurred recently in the School. Before I elaborate on the progress of HSS, I would like to congratulate our Class of 2015 who graduated in August. Well done and we wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

It has been seven years since the first batch of HSS students graduated in 2008. Although it is still early in most of our alumni's careers, they have begun contributing to and impacting upon society. You will be able to find out more about the careers of some of our alumni in this issue.

I am delighted to announce that the School will be launching the Master of Arts in Translation and Interpretation (MTI) in January 2016. The programme, the first translation-related Masters' programme to be

launched in Singapore, is designed to meet the increasing demand for translation professionals. We look forward to welcoming the inaugural batch of candidates for the programme.

HSS is always on the lookout for opportunities to collaborate with international counterparts. For this semester, we have worked with Brown University to provide a new History course for students. This course is taught simultaneously on two campuses across the Pacific – Brown University and over here in HSS by Visiting Professor Evelyn Hu-DeHart, Professor of History, American Studies and Ethnic Studies at Brown University. More information on this course can be found on page 6.

The School was also privileged to have jointly organised, with Stanford University, the "Women and Creativity in Ancient and Imperial China" Symposium. The event explored the role and standing of women in Chinese history. Distinguished participants include Professor Ronald Egan, Chair of the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at Stanford University.

Professor Lydia Liu, Director for the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society and Wun Tsun Tam

Professor in the Humanities at Columbia University, delivered the Tan Lark Sye Professorship Public Lectures 2015. She gave two very well-received presentations on historical issues pertaining to knowledge and provided interesting perspectives and paradigms to analyse contemporary matters.

More than ever, the humanities and social sciences play an important part in society. In an increasingly complex globalising world characterised by rapid change and growing uncertainties the humanities and social sciences teach us to embrace changes, to become more flexible with skills and mindsets to adapt. As we move forward into the future, I believe that the humanities and social sciences will continue to play a significant role in the development of NTU and Singapore.

## **Professor Liu Hong**

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

# WELCOME TO HSS!

| Division/Centre                          | Designation         | Name                       | Commencement Date |
|--|---------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Division of Psychology                   | Assistant Professor | Cho Eun Ae                 | Jun 2015          |
| Philosophy Programme                     | Assistant Professor | Andrew T. Forcehimes       | Jul 2015          |
| Philosophy Programme                     | Associate Professor | Franklin Thomas Perkins Jr | Aug 2015          |
| Public Policy & Global Affairs Programme | Assistant Professor | Woo Jun Jie                | Aug 2015          |
| Centre for Modern Languages              | Lecturer            | Patricia Lorenz            | Aug 2015          |

## RECOGNISING EXCELLENCE

The School of Humanities and Social Sciences would like to congratulate the following faculty for contributions to the School and nation.

### NATIONAL DAY AWARDS – COMMENDATION MEDAL

| NAME                              | DIVISION/CENTRE   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Assistant Professor Yow Cheun Hoe | Centre for Chinese Language and Culture & Division of Chinese |
| Dr Sujata Surinder Kathpalia      | Language and Communication Centre                             |

## HSS CONVOCATION 2015 – SHAPING THE NATION'S FUTURE

Donning academic dress and convening as one whole cohort for the final time, some 900 postgraduate and undergraduate students from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) received their degrees at the 2015 Convocation Ceremony held on Saturday, 1 August 2015 at the Nanyang Auditorium.

Mrs Rosa Daniel, CEO, National Heritage Board graced the occasion as guest speaker and was welcomed by Professor Liu Hong, Chair, School of Humanities and Social Sciences. The scrolls were presented by Professor Alan Chan, Dean, College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences

In a well-received address, Mrs Daniel, who received a government scholarship to complete an honours degree in Politics,

Philosophy and Economics (PPE) from the University of Oxford, shared the importance of the humanities and social sciences in her work and moulding future generations.

"My own training in PPE has shaped my ability to think more strategically, grapple with complexity and apply holistic solutions to problems," said Mrs Daniel. "The humanities teach us to think creatively and critically, to construct good arguments anchored with reason, and to ask good questions. The social sciences help us make sense of our world. They broaden our experience and understanding."

Mrs Daniel also shared that some of Singapore's pioneer generation leaders, including Mr Goh Keng Swee and Mr Lim Kim San, were students of the humanities and social sciences. She further elaborated that the humanities shaped the values which played a critical role in Singapore's nation building and success over the past 50 years.

She said, "A racially diverse nation that had the odds stacked against us, it was an understanding borne out of the appreciation of the humanities that paved the way

and laid the foundations for Singapore. We invested in our people and built a multicultural society, regardless of race, language or religion. We have always shown compassion and generosity to one another, caring for our neighbours and putting family first. These values are the building blocks of our society. They continue to define us today."

In her valedictorian speech, Ms Jacqueline Hongadi, who graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, reminisced about the days spent at HSS with her classmates. She also echoed Mrs Daniel's message for her fellow graduates to "seek the betterment not of just of themselves but their fellowmen" and exhorted them to serve their fellow countrymen.

"I have had tremendous experiences in HSS, but I know that there is much more to be known, to be learned and to be felt," said Jacqueline. "My hope for you, Class of 2015, is to go forth in your future endeavours with humility. Learn from anyone and everyone you meet and never cease to work at bettering yourself. Most importantly, be empathetic to voices of the weak, of the different."



# HSS LAUNCHES NEW MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMME TO MEET DEMAND FOR TRANSLATION PROFESSIONALS

# **MASTER OF ARTS IN TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION (MTI)**

- English to Chinese and Chinese to English translation

The School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) at NTU is launching the Master of Arts in Translation and Interpretation (MTI) to meet the increasing demand for translation professionals.

Focusing on both English to Chinese and Chinese to English translation, the new programme is the first translation-related Masters programme to be launched in Singapore and distinguishes itself from general translation courses and programmes with several unique features.

The programme will have a strong interdisciplinary curriculum that offers translation-focused, industrially relevant, and academically stimulating professional training. Its specialised courses integrate translation and interpretation with various subject areas ranging from translation studies, linguistics, journalism, to science, technology, and medicine. This will provide students with a broad-based yet in-depth exposure to industry relevant translation skills essential for various professions and in different social and cultural contexts.

The coursework will also include a special six-week immersion programme in China

at the Beijing Foreign Studies University, a major training centre for foreign language personnel, especially senior interpreters and translators.

Benchmarked against the best translation programmes in the world, the MTI programme is structured with a strong academic emphasis capitalising on Singapore's acknowledged expertise in bilingual teaching and research. It seeks to build upon and further strengthen NTU's existing translation, bilingualism, and bicultural research capacity and teaching expertise, and at the same time to incorporate the latest cutting edge technology in the area of computational linguistics and machine translation.

Professor Liu Hong, Chair of HSS, said, "Translation is a skill that is useful in both the social and professional contexts in a multilingual Singapore. As Singapore increases her business and cultural ties overseas, our new programme will also help meet the critical demand for high-level English-Chinese translation."

In a survey on students of past translation classes at HSS, 85 per cent of respondents were interested in enrolling

in the new programme to advance their skills further. In addition, 96 per cent of respondents are also likely to encourage their colleagues to enrol in the programme.

The MTI programme coincides with the Singapore government's emphasis on building up translation skills. In 2014, the Ministry of Communications and Information set up the National Translation Committee to raise translation standards and nurture future translation talents.

With translation being offered as a new subject at selected junior colleges starting this year, the programme will also cater to the needs of the pool of teachers and students who may wish to advance their learning in translation.

The inaugural batch of MTI students will begin classes in January 2016.

More information on the programme  
can be found at [www.hss.ntu.edu.sg/programmes/mti](http://www.hss.ntu.edu.sg/programmes/mti).

# DISTANCE NO BARRIER TO COLLABORATION

Despite being separated by more than 15,000 kilometres and 12 time zones, this has not prevented NTU and Brown University (Brown) from being able to hold a class where students on both campuses are able to interact with one another in real time. The joint class is part of the new Global History Seminar under HSS's History Programme and explores the Pacific region, including the Americas and Asia.

Initiated by Visiting Professor Evelyn Hu-DeHart, who is Professor of History, American Studies and Ethnic Studies at Brown, the course is taught simultaneously at both Brown in the U.S and NTU in Singapore, allowing "students from distinct and diverse institutional, educational and cultural backgrounds to come together to explore and advance knowledge about the Transpacific".

"At the invitation of Professor Liu Hong, Chair, School of Humanities and Social Sciences at NTU, I proposed this course and such a format as it fits into NTU's strategic plan to become a global university," shared Professor Hu-DeHart. "The use of technology has enabled us to overcome geographical barriers and time zone differences and ensure that students meet in real time."

The course utilises the concept of the "flipped classroom", in which core concepts are learnt prior to the lesson. Coming from the perspective of an educator, Professor Hu-DeHart said the "flipped classroom" is advantageous as it is able to deliver knowledge and information more efficiently to students.

"There is more time for in-class discussion when students and professors do not use class time for lectures," she said. "Having more time for discussion also allows us to study issues in greater depth."

Lectures are taped and uploaded online, allowing the students unlimited viewings at their own pace. In addition, students have to complete the set readings and post short response papers to the online discussion board. The two groups of students then meet for a one hour teleconference which is solely devoted to discussion between students themselves and with their professors, thus maximising the use of class time.

Besides the international nature of this collaboration, the inter-disciplinary nature of the course content will see students read across a number of fields and disciplines, notably Asian Studies, Asian American Studies, American Studies, as

well as History, Anthropology, Literature and Visual Arts. Students will study the historical dynamics and contours of the transpacific world and explore ways in which these historical circuits have shaped questions of identity and belonging.

Professor Robert Lee, Professor of American Studies and Asian-American Studies, is the course instructor at Brown while Professor Hu-DeHart teaches the NTU students, with PhD candidate in History, Ms Ang Chin Siew assisting her. A total of 19 undergraduates and one graduate student from NTU are enrolled in this course. They were registered as Brown students specifically for this course, courtesy of the American university. This afforded them access to the Brown's internal course website and online academic resources at no cost.



Visiting Professor Evelyn Hu-DeHart



# TAN LARK SYE PROFESSORSHIP IN CHINESE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES

LECTURES BY PROFESSOR LYDIA H. LIU

BY KWA KAI XIANG

As part of the Tan Lark Sye Professorship in Chinese Language and Culture Public Lecture Series, Professor Lydia H. Liu from Columbia University delivered two well-received lectures on 2 and 14 August 2015.

Professor Lydia Liu is the Director for the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society and Wun Tsun Tam Professor in Humanities at Columbia University. She is also a leading contemporary theorist on cross-cultural exchange. She was invited to visit NTU as the Tan Lark Sye Professor in Chinese Language and Culture from 30 July to 20 August 2015.

More than 350 people, comprising academics, professionals and the general public attended the first lecture "The Civilizational Ranking of the Chinese in the World: A View from 'The Age of Discovery' to World Fairs", which was held at the SPH News Auditorium. Jointly-organised by the Centre for Chinese Language and Culture (CCLC) at NTU, The Association of Nanyang University Graduates, and *Lianhe Zaobao*, SPH, this event was conducted in Mandarin and chaired by Professor Liu Hong, Chair, School of Humanities and Social Sciences and Tan Kah Kee Endowed Professor of History and Asian Studies at NTU.

Professor Lydia Liu opened her presentation with a proposal to study the "Civilisational Ranking of the Chinese in the World" from the "Age of Discovery to World Affairs" perspective and explored the civilisational standing of the Chinese in the modern world order. Afterwards, she listed the various global political developments that had transpired from late 15<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> century and analysed the geopolitics of the "World Fair" which was held in Great Britain during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. She argued that physical displays of "modernity, technology and innovation" at that event had shaped thinking on what constituted a civilised

nation and by extension, how to identify a civilised nation.

Arguing that when ideas of civility of a nation become interconnected with politics, particularly geopolitics, Professor Liu argued that this interconnection could be dangerous and people should be alert to and wary of such a link. She explained that this interconnection affected how the Chinese perceived themselves and the world for a long time.

In her concluding remarks, Professor Liu proposed that scholars of modern literature should make use of past historical records and knowledge bodies to craft new historical perspectives which study various contemporary issues.

The second lecture, "Who Owns Great Ideas? The Untold Story about Human Rights after World War II", was delivered to an audience of almost 100 at the NTU School of Physical and Mathematical Sciences.

Co-organised by the CCLC and The Association of Nanyang University Graduates, this event was conducted in English and chaired by Professor Luke Kwang Kwong, Associate Dean (Research) of College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, NTU.

The Lecture began with Professor Liu citing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and mentioning its contents in brief. She then provided a broad intellectual and political historical overview of the development of human rights throughout the centuries. She proceeded to cite historian Samuel Moyn, who argued in his book *The Last Utopia* that the origins of human rights actually date back to 1977 during the formation of new social movements in the United States. Since then, U.S foreign policy has utilised human rights as its political and moral intellectual

foundation. Professor Liu then asserted that new literary and historical-cultural perspectives on understanding human rights in general could be formed.

Concluding her speech, Professor Liu asked the question, "Who owns great ideas?" and gave her personal opinion, "No one owns great ideas, they belong to the collective".

The Tan Lark Sye Professorship in Chinese Language and Culture, established by The Association of Nanyang University Graduates in 1998, was named in honour of Mr. Tan Lark Sye, the founder of Nanyang University, to commemorate his enormous contribution to education, and celebrate the centenary of his birth in 1997. The funds raised through this professorship have enabled CCLC to invite many world renowned scholars to visit NTU and raised public interest in Chinese issues through their public lectures. For more information on this Professorship, please visit the CCLC website at <http://www.cclc.hss.ntu.edu.sg/Eng/Publications/TLSLectureSeries>.



# A FEAST FOR ECONOMISTS: SINGAPORE ECONOMIC REVIEW CONFERENCE 2015

BY MARGARET TOH AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR CHIA WAI MUN



Mr S. Iswaran

The Singapore Economic Review Conference (SERC) was held at the Mandarin Orchard from 5-7 August 2015. The event was organised by the Division of Economics at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, NTU.

Held biennially since its debut in 2005, each SERC attracts more than 200 attendees including world prominent professors and editors of major economic journals. This year, more than 300 participants and 32 invited speakers from 40 countries attended the Conference. The keynote speaker was Mr. Ravi Menon, Managing Director of Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS). Other distinguished speakers include Professor Edward Lazear, the chief economic advisor to former U.S President George W. Bush and Governor M r Guomundsson, the Governor of the Central Bank of Iceland.

The Conference covered a wide range of topics including, but not limited to, banking and finance, capital flows and exchange rates and the Chinese and ASEAN economies. Speakers shared their thoughts on monetary policy and policies of central banks, smart nation, smart data and financial innovation

as well as social security provision in an ageing society – subjects related to Singapore's future development. Besides speeches, there was also much discussion and debate on economic ideas and models.

Mr S. Iswaran, Minister for Trade and Industry (Industry), attended the Conference dinner as the Guest-of-Honour on the evening of 7 August and delivered a short speech focusing on the development and outlook of the Singapore economy.

## About the Singapore Economic Review (SER)

The Singapore Economic Review (SER) is a quarterly journal devoted to the publication of high quality theoretical and empirical papers on all aspects of economics, with a special emphasis on the Asian region.

## LMS HOSTS DELPH-IN SUMMIT, HPSG CONFERENCE AND AFFECTEDNESS WORKSHOP

BY ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR FRANCIS BOND



In August 2015, the Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, NTU, hosted three related events: The 11<sup>th</sup> Deep Linguistic Processing with HPSG (DELPH-IN) Summit, the 22<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Head-Driven Phrase Structure Grammar and the Affectedness Workshop 2015.

DELPH-IN is a collaborative effort aimed at deep linguistic processing of human language. A total of 17 sites from all over the world, including NTU, combine linguistic and statistical processing methods for getting at the meaning of

texts and utterances. Consequently open-source large-scale computational grammars for many languages were developed, with NTU working on Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), English, Indonesian and Japanese. Discussion was wide-ranging, covering issues from robust analysis of unseen phenomenon to the best way to handle reduplication.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Head-Driven Phrase Structure Grammar is a focused conference on linguistic analysis, which attempts to link syntax with semantics using a highly lexicalised, non-derivational generative grammar theory. This year, 19 papers

were submitted, including three by NTU students.

The Conference ended with the Affectedness Workshop, to discover how different languages encode and the degree in which an object changes as a result of the action described by the verb. Sensitivity to affectedness shows in many different ways including but not limited to lexical differentiation, case marking, verbal inflection, voice system as well as various grammatical constructions.

These events were supported by the NTU Centre for Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) and the Singapore MOE Tier 2 Grants "That's what you meant: A Rich Representation for Manipulating Meaning" and "Grammar Matrix Reloaded: Syntax and Semantics of Affectedness".

# WOMEN AND CREATIVITY IN ANCIENT AND IMPERIAL CHINA

BY GUAN TIANCHEN



The "Women and Creativity in Ancient and Imperial China" Symposium was held at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, NTU, from 11-12 August 2015.

Renowned sinologist, Professor Ronald Egan, alongside notable scholars from China, Hong Kong, Korea, the U.S, as well as Singapore, participated in the event. Professor Alan Chan, Dean, College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences at

NTU, gave the opening address. This was followed by a keynote speech by Professor Egan, who is Chair of the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at Stanford University.

The event explored five themes: Women across Borders, The Image of Women, Cultural Traditions of Women, Literary Exchange among Chinese and Korean Women, and the Supernatural Imagination of Women.

From the creative output of women in Chinese literary traditions, historiography and writing system, to the representation of exemplary women, *geishas* and

supernatural beings in Chinese literature and arts, the Symposium examined the role and standing of women in the literary and cultural history of ancient and imperial China. The findings suggested that the stereotypical representation of women as helpless victims, marginalised, silenced and excluded from the public domain, needed correction.

The Symposium also served as a platform for younger researchers to present their work and interact with senior scholars. Professor Chan, noting that this was the first such Sinology conference jointly organised by NTU and Stanford University, said that there could be "more opportunities for collaboration with Stanford University in the future."

## THE FOURTH WORLD HIGH LEVEL FORUM ON CHINESE ACADEMIC JOURNALS

BY KWA KAI XIANG

The Fourth World High Level Forum on Chinese Academic Journals was held at the M Hotel on 24 July 2015. A total of 29 attendees, comprising journal editors from various academic bodies around the world, explored the topic "Chinese Academic Journals and Construction of Academic Community in the Modern World". The event was organised by the Social Sciences in China Press (SCCP), Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) and the Centre for Chinese Language and Culture, NTU.

Professor Liu Hong, Chair of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, NTU, gave the welcome address while Mr. Yu Xinhua, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the SCCP delivered the opening address.

In the first segment of the forum, participants discussed the overall development of Chinese academic written discourse during the session. A key theme of these opinions was the past and current usage of Western academic research methodologies to construct academic discourses that reflected a less than accurate cultural-traditional landscape of China. Attendees

suggested a separate academic research methodology that they thought was more suitable.

Mr. Yu Boling, President of the Zhejiang Social Sciences Journal, chaired the second session of the forum, which explored ways to improve the academic peer and group reviewing of academic transcripts in Chinese. Participants agreed that the reviewing process should be made public and fairer, allowing these academic resources to be more accessible to the general public.

Chaired by Professor David Wu from the University of California, Los Angeles, the third and final session explored the standing of Chinese culture around the world. It was pointed out that the development of Information and Communication Technology, particularly the Internet, enabled the efficient and effective dissemination of Chinese academic discourses globally, enhancing their academic standing worldwide.



Attendees shared their thoughts after the event, with most in agreement that the discussions held during the forum reflected the deepening academic rigour and broadening scope of Chinese academic journals over the past several years. They also expressed that these developments have helped to improve the global academic standing of Chinese Academic Journals.

## HSS SOCIOLOGIST WINS CANADIAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION'S EARLY INVESTIGATOR AWARD 2015

Assistant Professor Muhammad Saidul Islam from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) at NTU, received the prestigious Early Investigator Award from the Canadian Sociological Association (CSA) for 2015. The award was presented at the CSA's annual banquet in the University of Ottawa

on 3 July 2015. The award honours sociologists who have made significant research contributions within the first ten years since the completion of the PhD. It recognises research demonstrating high quality, theoretical rigour and/or methodological innovation, and significance to the field.



## PRESTIGIOUS HUMBOLDT RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP AWARDED TO HSS LINGUIST

Associate Professor Alexander Coupe from the Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, NTU, has been awarded the prestigious Humboldt Research Fellowship by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. He will be spending 12 months at the University of Cologne in Germany collaborating with his colleagues to study how different languages influence

each other; and the preservation and decline of multilingualism in communities around the world.

Through the Fellowship, besides analysing language from a theoretical perspective, Associate Professor Coupe hopes that his work will influence minority communities to maintain their rich linguistic diversity for posterity.

## HSS SOCIOLOGIST AWARDED PRESTIGIOUS FUNG FELLOWSHIP

Assistant Professor Laavanya Kathiravelu from the Division of Sociology at HSS has been selected by Princeton University as a Fung Fellow in the 2015-2016 Fung Global Fellows Programme. She will spend 10 months at the Ivy League institution working on a series of publications related to this year's Programme theme of "Ethnic Identities and Politics".

Her project draws from previously collected interview, ethnographic and archival data from field sites of Singapore and Dubai to understand

and interrogate affective and non-formal modes of performative citizenship in the two city-states. The project suggests that ethnographic examinations of Asian migrations offer alternatives in conceptualising the politics of urban integration in more processual and transnational terms.

As only six Fellowships are awarded annually, Assistant Professor Laavanya welcomes the "the opportunity to interact with top scholars from around the world working on similar themes and issues."



# THE HSS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION - A BRIDGE BETWEEN COHORTS

To establish rapport and strengthen ties between former and current students, and NTU, the HSS Alumni Association (HSSAA) was established in August 2013 for graduates of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences.

The HSSAA aims to promote the academic and professional pursuits of alumni and, in particular, their interests in the humanities and social sciences. The Association also organises educational, social and cultural events for alumni and the NTU community at large in collaboration with NTU and HSS.

To fulfill its mission since its inception, the HSSAA has organised 10 activities and events which has seen the fruitful participation of more than 500 people. These events have been well-received with strong attendance and positive feedback.



Mr Gabriel Heng (L), President of HSSAA with Associate Professor Kwok Kian Woon, Associate Provost (Student Life), NTU

The Association seeks to not only provide leisure activities for alumni; it also strives to provide opportunities for alumni to mentor and offer their counsel to current students.

Mr Gabriel Heng, President of HSSAA said, "Thus far, HSSAA has organised activities ranging from a movie screening to a pottery painting workshop in order to cater to the diverse interests of our alumni. Moving ahead, we also intend to involve our alumni in various 'back to school' initiatives where we invite them back to NTU to share their career tips and advice with the graduating HSS students over refreshments. We are currently working with

HSS and the Career and Attachment Office on this".

With strong institutional support from the School and University, and a growing HSS alumni population, the HSSAA will not only serve as a link between alumni and NTU, but also as a bridge between the different cohorts as it moves into the future.



Ms Stefany Loo, who attended her first alumni event, a pottery painting workshop in April 2015, expressed her enthusiasm for participating in future events. The English major from the Class of 2014 said, "It was fun and affordable. I would definitely participate in other activities."



# HSS ALUMNI GOING PLACES



Although young with a short history, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) at NTU has made its mark by building an excellent reputation in tertiary education and producing graduates who have made significant contributions to Singapore. Well-known alumni of the school include Ms Sim Ann, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth and Ministry of Finance, who completed the Graduate Diploma in Translation and Interpretation in 2005.

Launched in 2004 with an enrollment of only 53 students in one discipline, the School has since seen exponential growth with over 3,200 undergraduates, each majoring in one of the following disciplines: Chinese, Economics, English, History, Linguistics and Multilingual Studies (LMS), Philosophy, Psychology, Public Policy & Global Affairs (PPGA), and Sociology.

However, this increase in student numbers is not the whole story. HSS has also been fulfilling its mission to meet the highest ideals of teaching and scholarship in the humanities and social sciences, and enable graduates and researchers to confront the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Professor Liu Hong, Chair of HSS said, "HSS provides a student-centric education through which our

students would not only obtain specific knowledge about the disciplines they major in, but also develop critical thinking capacities that can be applied in the classrooms and beyond. Furthermore, through the Student Exchange Programmes and HSS Professional Attachment Programmes, our students have gained invaluable experiences and insights at other higher learning institutions in Singapore and overseas."

"HSS enabled me to broaden my horizons," said Ms Rosxalynd Liu, a fresh graduate who majored in Linguistics and Multilingual Studies. "The GEM Discoverer, a Student Exchange Programme, allowed me to spend a summer in France, giving me the opportunity to practise my French and understand more about the country's culture and people."

An education in the humanities and social sciences education has equipped more than 3,600 HSS graduates to forge interesting paths for themselves and contribute to the nation. Their careers cut across a diverse range of fields in both the public and private sectors. Some of the organisations which HSS alumni are working at include the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Monetary Authority of Singapore, Ministry of Education, Ogilvy & Mather, Citibank, and Proctor & Gamble.

However, some graduates have chosen

to eschew a conventional career path and instead, have decided to further their education in their respective disciplines at prestigious overseas universities. These alumni have been flying the HSS flag high at institutions such as Harvard University, University of Cambridge, and University of Edinburgh.

Ms Er Yanbing, who graduated in 2011 as an English major, is pursuing a PhD in English Literature at the University of Edinburgh. She thinks of HSS as a "training ground" that laid the foundation for her path into research. She elaborated, "Beyond more practical instances of professional development, my time at HSS helped to guide me in finding specific interests or passions to follow. But more importantly, it is also where I found my feet, and where I developed my confidence to enter the academic world."

For Dr Lin Hong Hui who graduated from Psychology in 2009, she fondly remembers her professors as helpful and supportive. She said, "I enjoyed my time at the School. I found the professors willing to nurture students and they provided useful advice for my career."

In HSS, students receive an education that is contextualised within Singapore and a rapidly rising Asia. Besides providing students with knowledge in the discipline of their choice, HSS programmes also enriches students with a global outlook

while ensuring that they remain rooted, thus enabling HSS graduates to emerge relevant to Singapore and able to keep Singapore relevant in the future.

Ms Christabelle Soh, an alumna from the Class of 2010 said that the knowledge gleaned as an economics major enabled her to educate and broaden the minds of young Singaporeans when she was a teacher.

"Economics helps people understand the world around them, especially in Singapore, where most government policies are driven by economic considerations," said Christabelle, who taught economics for two years at a school. "The subject trains us to think in a structured manner and I feel that it is important for Singaporean students to understand policies and issues from an economic perspective."

Graduating in 2012, Mr Ng Di Hui believed that the modes of assessment helped him grow as a person and equipped him with the skills to excel in his current career as a director overseeing four businesses belonging to a conglomerate.

"I learnt a lot from doing the group projects which were part of the assessment. Working with others allowed me to not only build up my interpersonal and communication skills, but also taught me a lot about project management and managing deadlines," said Di Hui, who did a double major in Chinese and Economics.

For Mr Mohamed Feroz Taherbhai, a Sociology major who graduated in 2010, the combination of "passionate professors and a rigorous curriculum" played a key role in his career. He explained, "The lecturers made sure that students understood what was read, by requiring us to distil the key concepts and arguments from readings. This was useful in my work because whenever I had to go through a lengthy report, I was able to extract the salient points with ease, compared to non-humanities

and social science graduates who were unaccustomed to reading long texts."

As HSS and its graduates have shown, being young is no obstacle to success. HSS alumni have demonstrated discernable qualities including: learning to address issues rationally with a measured and objective perspective; possessing multi-faceted soft skills that allow them to adapt to diverse situations; and the willingness to step out of their comfort zones for learning and self-improvement. HSS alumni continue to chart paths and forge futures, and as revealed in the next few pages, they will show that not only do the humanities and social sciences remain relevant today, but will be for tomorrow and beyond as well.

## A SUCCESS IN BUSINESS



Mr Ng Di Hui is an extremely busy man. The HSS alumnus, who majored in Chinese and Economics, is currently a director at the Reacher Group, a conglomerate with interests in a diverse range of businesses. He finishes work late during weekdays and puts in shifts during weekends, overseeing four of these businesses – an employment firm, a training company, an external facade cleaning business and a maid agency.

"The work is very challenging and keeps me running around," shared Di Hui. "But you learn to cope with all the stress and handle deadlines and projects."

Di Hui started off as a Management Trainee when he joined the company. Within two years, he was promoted to his present position and was charged with growing the businesses he has been overseeing. He explains that most of his work comprises projects, hence strong project management skills are essential, in addition to excellent interpersonal skills to manage workers.

Asked what advice he has for students, he said, "For those who just graduated and are starting out in their careers, I urge them to spend more time and put in extra effort in their work. Love your work. And you will excel."

## A PASSION FOR EDUCATION

Since graduating from HSS five years ago, Ms Christabelle Soh has embarked on a career with the Ministry of Education (MOE) and is currently working in the Education Services Division (ESD). Her work involves assessing the design, implementation and effectiveness of MOE programmes and initiatives through conducting evaluative studies.

As most of these studies employ both quantitative and qualitative research methods, the Economics major initially found her current posting challenging as she only had experience in quantitative research methods. However, the challenge also provided many learning opportunities and she picked up a whole new research paradigm during her two year stint in the division. She shared that "it is only through challenging work that you learn".

Before joining ESD, a different set of challenges confronted Christabelle in her teaching career. After completing her training as a teacher at the National Institute of Education in 2011, she was posted to a school to teach Economics. It was then she realised that the role of



a teacher had changed since she was a student and she had to adapt.

"Students can easily find information on the Internet now," she explained. "Our role has changed to someone who guides students' thinking, not just teach them content."

Christabelle shared that her two year stint as a teacher was a happy and fulfilling one and she is looking forward to going back to teaching in 2016 when her stint at ESD ends.

## A SCHOLAR OF FEMINISM

Ms Er Yanbing found feminist literary theory so fascinating that she decided to further her studies in the topic after graduating with a degree in English from HSS in 2011. She is currently in her final year of her PhD programme in English Literature at the University of Edinburgh, having completed her Masters degree at the same institution.

For Yanbing, life as an overseas postgraduate student is very different from that of a local undergraduate.

"There is a lot more independent work to

be done and you will need to learn how to manage your time properly. Working on a PhD therefore requires a lot of motivation and a lot of self-discipline," she said. "It is a huge project, bigger than anything I have ever worked on before, and it can really be quite daunting when faced with



so much new information at once, and the prospect of having to accomplish so much."

To help her cope with the challenges, Yanbing found support from her supervisor's guidance and the insights of her colleagues.

"I have always found it really helpful to depend on the 'support system' that is in place; your supervisor is there to guide you, to help you break down to project into manageable parts," she shared. "The other department members will hopefully be willing to chat with you about what you are working on and offer tips on how you might proceed. Your seniors are also there to share their experiences with you, and your peers are around to make your time far less isolated, and more enjoyable."

Yanbing will be pursuing a career in academia when she completes her PhD.

## A LOVE FOR BOOKS

"I like to read. I am a typical bookworm," said Ms Rosxalynd Liu.

Rosxalynd, a fresh HSS graduate who majored in Linguistics and Multilingual Studies (LMS), is an Associate Librarian with the National Library Board (NLB). Her primary role involves: planning and running the day-to-day programmes at a Regional Library; liaising with community partners on these programmes; and providing advisory services, in particular, to children.



Programmes which she has been working on include story-telling sessions for children, and workshops for parents that assist them to develop their children's reading abilities.

"The story-telling environment can be very dynamic and fulfilling since you are working with children," she elaborated. "For instance, I get to draw and tell stories to spark the love of reading in children."

"However, not all is smooth sailing," she said, smiling. "You get the odd case now and then when a child is unable to voice out that he/she needs to go to the toilet and you can guess what happens."

However, she takes it all in her stride as she is following her passion. "Working in a library, you get to be surrounded by books," she stated. "That is heaven for a bookworm."

## A HEALER OF THE SOUL

"A clinical psychologist helps people with mental health conditions through holistic solutions and scientifically-researched methods," explained Dr Lin Hong Hui. "A psychiatrist is a medically trained doctor who treats mental patients with medication."

Graduating in 2009 as part of the pioneer batch of Psychology students at HSS, Hong Hui has been practicing as a clinical psychologist after obtaining a PhD in



Clinical Psychology from the Australia National University. She clarified that at least a Masters degree is needed to practise in Singapore.

For her, the starting point of any treatment is to relate to the patient as a human being.

"Once you make the connection at the human level and relate to the person, hearing that person out and understanding him or her, the work becomes easier to deal with the issues the person faces," she shared, while adding that there is no one-size-fits-all treatment. "You may get two people that have the same diagnosis of depression. But if you look at each one individually, you will always see that there are always different factors involved that is unique to each case," she elaborated. "It is not about dishing out advice; it is a collaborative work with the patient to achieve certain goals specific to his or her circumstances."

She is also firm believer in extending the concept of fitness to not just body, but to the mind as well.

"You can build up resistance and immunity to mental illness through learning to accept and manage your emotions and actively nurturing your valued life domains that give you meaning in life, for example, your relationships, hobbies, and spirituality," she said. "Educating the public about mental health is not just about informing people to look out for symptoms of mental illness, but also about helping them to thrive in life domains that are important to them."

## A FLAIR FOR NEGOTIATION

Mr Mohamed Feroz Taherbhai is a seasoned negotiator. The Sociology major from the Class of 2010 earns his bread and butter through persuasion.

"I was young and didn't know what to do with my life," described Feroz on graduating. "I decided to take up a policy and negotiating role at Singapore Customs, as the portfolio was dynamic and it allowed me to see the world."

After two years with Singapore Customs, Feroz joined the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) at the urging of several contacts there. He was promptly

made the lead officer on several issues: such as market access, export controls to international sanctions, and was given the opportunity, as he described, to "sink or swim".

Despite the pressure, Feroz was able to successfully negotiate several free trade deals, including the European Union-Singapore Free Trade Agreement and a global trade facilitation agreement – pivotal deals in ensuring Singapore's economic longevity. Part of his work entailed travelling to attend meetings at the World Trade Organisation in Geneva.

Working at a Ministry also allowed Feroz to expand his skill set as he learnt to write convincing proposals that would be accepted by the decision makers.

Feroz has since left the civil service and is now working at Hewlett Packard as a Global Trade Advisor, a role that requires him to advocate the company's trade and business interests.

Asked what advice he has for his juniors, he said, "When you start working, you really need to spend time cultivating resources and contacts. If you can solve someone's problem, then do that. People will take note, and when you need help, they will help you. Ultimately, how far you go in life depends on how many people you help."



# A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

BY LAVISHA S. PUNJABI



He is the first in his family to attend college. He has authored books on both Chinese and European Philosophy. Despite having formal training only with the latter subject, he also recently published papers in Chinese Studies journals, *Early China* and *T'oung Pao*. And, as the cultural consultant of the 2010 remake of *The Karate Kid*, he had breakfast with Will Smith, the film's producer, at Smith's residence.

Meet Associate Professor Franklin Thomas Perkins Jr, from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS), NTU.

From the young age of fourteen years, Associate Professor Perkins has enjoyed debating about issues such as religion and politics. His realisation that philosophy is a discipline involving a rigorous study of such topics guided his decision to pursue the subject in college. In 1992, he received his Bachelor's degree in Philosophy and English Literature from Vanderbilt University. Eight years later, he received his Ph.D. from Pennsylvania State University. The turning point in his career came after reflecting on a conversation with his teacher in graduate school.

"My teacher told me that he thought it was good that I was reading Asian philosophy, but didn't think it would address any of his philosophical interests. That made me think about why I was reading it and I realised I was reading Chinese Philosophy because it addressed issues that were of more concern to me in my personal life, while my official work on European philosophy was interesting but not as meaningful to me," mused Associate Professor Perkins.

Presently, he is working on the study of philosophical texts which were buried at around 300 BCE and excavated, in recent decades, by archaeologists. His

research is centred on how these texts should influence our understanding of early Chinese Philosophy. He is also working on developing a curriculum for teaching philosophy from a global perspective.

"At this point, I am most interested in creating dialogue between philosophical traditions, working towards a philosophical approach that is more globally-oriented. I moved to NTU largely because it seems like a better place to develop that kind of approach," explained Associate Professor Perkins, who was a professor at DePaul University, Chicago for fifteen years, prior to joining NTU.

His commitment to cross-cultural dialogue and foreign study programmes is fuelled by his first experience living in a foreign land. He shared, "When I finished my undergraduate studies, I went to Beijing and taught English for a year at a university. That was the fall of 1992, so China was less-developed then now. It was my first trip outside the U.S. and no one else in my family (my parents or grandparents) had ever been to a foreign country, so it had a deep impact on me."

Associate Professor Perkins has since travelled to over forty countries and resided in five - United States, Germany, China, Taiwan, and now Singapore. In particular, he loves the green corridor and walking through the jungle in Singapore. It certainly seems that he is making himself at home in NTU!

# RETURNING TO HIS ROOTS

BY GOH HUA ZHEN

When Assistant Professor Woo Jun Jie was young, his ambition was to be a novelist. Like many childhood dreams, that changed as he grew older when he realised that economics was his true calling instead. His passion led him to major in the subject as an undergraduate.

Yet, he realised that to solve the economic issues he had read and researched about, the solutions had to come from policy changes. This spurred him to pursue postgraduate studies in political economy, which then inspired him to become an academic involved in policy work.

"I had managed to get a scholarship and as part of the scholarship's obligations, I had to be a research assistant for 16 hours a week; I worked for a professor then and I realised that I really liked the research process," he explained.

While he had offers to pursue his Master's and Doctorate degrees overseas, Assistant Professor Woo chose to study at local institutions as he wanted to effect change on Singapore's intellectual landscape. He said that he

did not want to study the city-state at a distance from abroad, but wanted to analyse Singapore's problems from within a local setting.

With knowledge from his research, he set out to pursue his goal of reshaping intellectual discourse. He wrote policy critiques, explanations and suggestions in columns for local newspapers such as *Today*. Describing these as some of his most meaningful work, he enjoyed the discussions that were raised.

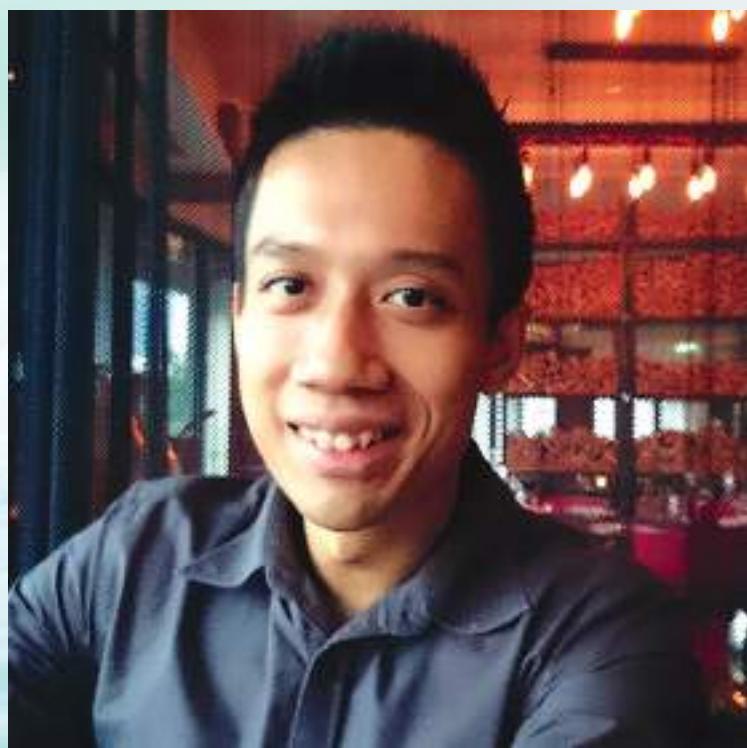
"We just need to get people talking - it doesn't matter who is right and who is wrong; people responded on forum pages and I have friends who disagreed with what I wrote, which is good," he said.

Focusing on Singapore and its politics, Assistant Professor Woo joined the Public Policy and Global Affairs (PPGA) Programme of HSS in August 2015. He says that as a Singaporean, "Singapore is close to (his) heart". For his first

semester of teaching, he will be lecturing about Singapore's foreign policy and Singapore as a global city. At the same time, he will be working on a book about the country, exploring its history, politics and culture.

He also has two books slated for publication by the end of 2015. Both books are also about Singapore, with a focus on financial centres and small state survival. The latter is a co-authored book, involving input from ambassadors and other academics as well.

With so many books in the pipeline, Assistant Professor Woo seems to have fulfilled his childhood dream of being a writer, albeit not of the kind of books he imagined he would write. Taking more turns in his career than he had expected, his books may be more impactful and meaningful than he ever imagined them to be.



“

**WE JUST NEED TO GET PEOPLE TALKING - IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO IS RIGHT AND WHO IS WRONG; PEOPLE RESPONDED ON FORUM PAGES AND I HAVE FRIENDS WHO DISAGREED WITH WHAT I WROTE, WHICH IS GOOD**

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## MOE ACADEMIC RESEARCH GRANT AWARDS

The Ministry of Education (MOE) Academic Research Fund (AcRF) Tier 2 and Tier 1 funds research projects on a competitive basis across Singapore-based universities. The AcRF provides funding for research that has academic significance and will drive future research, potentially leading to innovations and discoveries. One research proposal from HSS was awarded the MOE AcRF Tier 2 research grants with 8 others clinching MOE AcRF Tier 1 research grants. Congratulations to all our researchers!

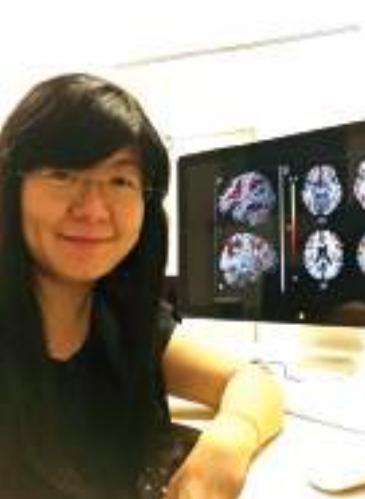
### MOE TIER 2 GRANT

#### LINGUISTICS & MULTILINGUAL STUDIES ( LMS )

**Title:** New Sounds to Better Brain Health: The Effects of Language Learning on Aging

**Principle Investigator:** Assistant Professor Chan Hiu Dan Alice

**Description:**



Normal aging is often accompanied by a decline in cognitive ability, which may deteriorate into more serious dementia or Alzheimer's Disease if left unchecked. Fortunately,

present research does point to positive intervention in the form of cognitive training, physical exercise, and social

interaction. The Tier 2 project, headed by Assistant Professor Alice Chan (LMS) with Associate Professors Tan Ying Ying (LMS) and Annabel Chen (Psychology) as co-investigators, proposes a second-language training programme as therapy to delay and reverse age-related cognitive decline. Language learning is an attractive choice of intervention as it works through two aspects - firstly by providing mental stimulation through training of memory and cognitive control, and secondly by equipping the learner with new communication skills which will aid and maintain their personal and workplace relationships. Most importantly, these language programmes will be designed with older learners in mind in order to

produce the best success rate. This study will also shed light on older adult learning in general and this knowledge can be applied to other languages and areas of learning.

The project proposes to identify the effects of language learning on the structure and function of the aging brain, as well as examine the design and feasibility of a community-based language training programme for older adults. It is hoped that these interventions will ultimately aid the older population in maintaining healthy and active lifestyles. Besides benefiting the older adults who are involved, this project also impacts on other facets of society as well.

### MOE TIER 1 GRANTS

| Division                             | Principle Investigator                      | Project Title  |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Economics                            | Assistant Professor Chang Youngho           | Energy Consumption, Human Capital and Economic Growth in Asia: Theory and Evidence   |
| Economics                            | Dr. Hong Fuhai                              | Multi-dimensional Group Identity and Other Regarding Preferences: An Experimental Investigation  |
| Economics                            | Assistant Professor Margaret Maggie Triyana | School-Based Smoking Prevention Program: a Field Experiment  |
| History                              | Assistant Professor Lisa Onaga              | Biomaterial Matters: Historicising the Preservation of Silkcraft and the Production of Purified Silk Protein in the Long Twentieth Century                 |
| Linguistics and Multilingual Studies | Assistant Professor Stefanie Alexa Stadler  | Conflict Management in International Business Communication: Comparing Japanese and Singaporean Conflict Orientations, Attitudes and Management Strategies |
| Psychology                           | Assistant Professor Setoh Pei Pei           | Infant Sleeping Arrangements and Mother-infant Well-being in Singapore   |
| Sociology                            | Assistant Professor Han Sam                 | Understanding Social Ethics in a Post-secular age: The New Morality of Lifestyle and Identity  |
| Sociology                            | Associate Professor Sulfikar Amir           | Technological Innovation in a Time of Crisis: Nuclear Power After Fukushima  |

For information on other research grants, please visit <http://www.hss.ntu.edu.sg/Research/grants/Pages/results.aspx>.

## BOOKS



### **Transnational Chinese Cinema: Corporeality, Desire, and the Ethics of Failure**

By Assistant Professor Brian Bergen-Aurand

(English Division), Dr Mary Mazzilli (Literary and Cultural Studies Cluster) and Assistant Professor Hee Wai-Siam (Chinese Division)

2015, Bridge21 Publications

This collection of original essays on transnational Chinese cinema examines the corporal, psychological, and affective aspects of experiencing bodies on screen. In effect, this book contributes to the intersection of two growing scholarly fields: modern China studies and cinema studies. It is however the growing interdisciplinary study of how bodies get represented, interpreted, and queried that gives this volume its unique and timely focus. Taking Chinese cinematic moments as its exemplary objects, this book engages fruitfully with the material and discursive elements of embodiment. And it interrogates the dynamics between the mind and body involved in bio-cultural practices of cinematic production, distribution, exhibition, and reception.

### **Language Structure and Environment: Social, cultural, and natural factors**

By Rik De Busser and Professor Randy John LaPolla (Linguistics and Multilingual Studies Division)  
2015, John Benjamins Publishing Company



Language Structure and Environment is a broad introduction to how languages are shaped by their environment. It makes the argument that the social,

cultural, and natural environment of speakers influences the structures and development of the languages they speak. After a general overview, the contributors explain in a number of detailed case studies how specific cultural, societal, geographical, evolutionary and meta-linguistic pressures determine the development of specific grammatical features and the global structure of a varied selection of languages. This is a work of meticulous scholarship at the forefront of a burgeoning field of linguistics.

### **The Wheel-Turner and His House: Kingship in a Buddhist Ecumene**

By Assistant Professor Goh Geok Yian (History Programme)  
2015, Northern Illinois University Press

A symbol of Buddhist kingship, the cakravartin (universal monarch) personified by King Anawrahta of Bagan (r.1044-1077) united the populations of



Myanmar, Northern Thailand and Sri Lankan. Anawrahta inspired historians in all three countries who portrayed him as an ideal Buddhist monarch. This book utilises

Burmese, Sri Lankan, Thai, and Chinese sources to explore this attempt to reify this Buddhist ideal as Aniruddha and investigates the persistence of Anawrahta's popularity in Myanmar from the 11<sup>th</sup> century to the present, and the resurgence of King Anawrahta as a prominent figure today. Goh weaves a unique narrative which explores why a dream of unity transcending national borders arose a thousand year ago, the role of Buddhism in fostering this ideal, the evolution of this dream through ten centuries, and its expression in literary and artistic media.

《賦尊嚴及慈愛的臨終關顧—照顧者自助手冊》

**Dignified and Compassionate End-of-Life Care: A Self-Help Journey**  
By Assistant Professor Andy H.Y. Ho (Psychology Division) and Yee-Wa

Hong, Michelle Y.J. Tam and Cecilia

L.W. Chan

2015, Centre of Behaviourial Health, University of Hong Kong

Under the rubric of population ageing characterised by rising longevity and growing prevalence of chronic life-limiting diseases with extended dying trajectories, one of the most confronting challenges of healthcare providers today is to enhance quality of life and promote death with dignity for older terminally-ill patients. Based on an award-winning body of research that



critically examines the meaning of dignity in the Asian Chinese Context, this book consolidates and elaborates on the conceptual and practical foundation of dignified care,

illuminating its intricate connection with compassion, as well as the vital role that self-compassion plays to promote quality of life at end-of-life. Established upon a self-help paradigm, this book aims to empower patients, family carers and professional caregivers to develop greater capacities in facing the challenges of mortality, and to cultivate inner resources for growth and transformation through death and loss.

### **《学术金针度与人》Passing on the Golden Needle of Discernment**

By Professor I Lo-fen (Chinese Division)  
2015, Global Publishing



This compendium, published by the Division of Chinese at HSS, charts the new frontiers in Sinology. Entitled *Xueshu Jinzhen Du Yu Ren*, the book features articles written by

postgraduates of the Chinese Division on new methods and new perspectives in research explained by 15 international Sinologists. These were based on interviews conducted during the Learning and Reflection: International Conference on Sinology, organised

by NTU and Academia Sinica in July 2014. Editor of the volume, Professor I Lo-fen of NTU maintains that a global and inclusive outlook is crucial. Some other views include: Professor Tseng Yong-yih, Academician of Academia Sinica, on why Chinese literature would require theoretical perspectives beyond Western models, and Stanford University's Professor Ronald Egan observing how a full integration of Sinology departments in American universities remains a challenge. The idiom of the golden needle here underscores the transfer or exchange of knowledge as part of an ongoing legacy in Sinology.

### **Taming the Wild: Aborigines and Racial Knowledge in Colonial Malaya**

By Assistant Professor Sandra Khor Manickam (*History Programme*)  
2015, NUS Press



Taming the Wild examines the complex history of indigeneity and racial thought in the Malay Peninsula and the role played by the politics of knowledge in determining racial affinities, by charting the progression of thought concerning "indigenous" or "aboriginal" people. The author shows that the classifications of "indigenous" and "Malay" depend on a mixture of cultural, social, and religious knowledge that is compressed under the heading "race" but differs according to the circumstances under which it is produced and the uses to which it is put. By historicising the categorisation of aborigines and British engagement with "aboriginal" groups in Malaya, *Taming the Wild* situates racial knowledge within larger frames of anthropological and racial thought, and highlights the persistence of nineteenth-century understandings of indigeneity and Malayness in racial contestations in modern Malaysia.



### **Social Justice in the Globalization of Production: Labor, Gender, and the Environment Nexus**

By Assistant Professor Md Saidul Islam (Sociology Division) and  
Md Ismail Hossain

2015, Palgrave Macmillan

One of the long-lasting impacts of neoliberal globalisation is to subjugate our entire society to serve the market economy, resulting in a "critical nexus" comprising flexible and exploitative labour conditions, the reincarnation and reinforcement of gendered ideologies in the workplace, and a treadmill of environmental destruction. Fundamental obstacles to the global and local responses to this nexus include objective inequality between and within nations, subjective consequences of uneven development, and "economism", in which solutions are framed in economic language and rules that ignore or marginalise social justice. Drawing on the social justice framework propounded by, among others, Amartya Sen, Md Saidul Islam and Md Ismail Hossain, the book unpacks this critical nexus, investigating how neoliberal flexible accumulation generates unique conditions, contradictions, and confrontations in labor, gender and environmental relations. They also examine whether and how a broader global social justice can mitigate tensions and improve conditions.

### **Singapore 2065: Leading Insights on Economy and Environment from 50 Singapore Icons and Beyond**

By Professor Euston Quah  
(Economics Division)  
2015, World Scientific

*Singapore 2065: Leading Insights on Economy and Environment from 50*

*Singapore Icons and Beyond* is one such key contribution to the endeavour of thinking about what lies ahead for Singapore. This book adopts a forward-



looking perspective, contemplating Singapore's distant future and is a collection of key insights about the future of the city-state from 50 iconic

individuals of Singapore and beyond. In essence, what would Singapore's economy and environment be like in 2065? The book explores a range of possible answers to these questions and more. The book has been selected by the Singapore Government for burial in a time capsule to be opened in 2065 and is recommended as a top read by the Straits Times.

### **The Asian American Achievement Paradox**

By Professor Zhou Min (Sociology Division) and Jennifer Lee  
2015, Russell Sage Foundation



This book offers a deft and nuanced understanding of how and why certain immigrant groups succeed in the United States as an insightful counter to notions of

culture based on stereotypes. Drawing on survey and in-depth interview data on the adult children of Chinese immigrants and Vietnamese refugees, the book explains how immigration laws, institutions, and culture interact to foster high achievement. Yet the expectations of high achievement come with a cost: the notion of Asian American success creates an "achievement paradox" in which Asian Americans who do not fit the success frame feel like failures or racial outliers.

While pundits ascribe Asian American success to the assumed superior traits intrinsic to Asian culture, the authors show how historical, cultural, and institutional elements work together to confer advantages to specific populations.

## BOOK CHAPTERS

### Dignity and quality of life in community palliative care

By Assistant Professor Andy H.Y. Ho (*Psychology Division*), Cecilia L.W. Chan and Pamela P.Y. Leung, Kar-wai Tong and Kenneth N.K. Fong (eds.)  
2015, Community Care in Hong Kong: Current Practices, Practice-research Studies and Future Directions, pp. 833-839

As palliative care emerges as a public health priority in the twenty-first century, this paper provides a concise review of its recent developments in both theories and practices from a global perspective, and highlights the contemporary issues and concerns of end-of-life in the Asian Chinese context. Acknowledging the imperative of active social participation for sustainable development, this paper further accentuates the vital need for community engagement with health promotion strategies for ensuring dignity and quality of life for individuals and families facing death, dying and bereavement. Practical examples and experiences of community palliative care are shared and elaborated.

### Childbearing in Singapore—Do we have real choices?

By Associate Professor Teo Youyenn (*Sociology Division*) Kanwaljit Soin and Margaret Thomas (eds.)  
2015, Our Lives to Live: Putting a Woman's Face to Change, pp. 217-226, World Scientific

In the public discourse on childbearing and childrearing, the notion of "choice" is often invoked. Yet, these questions are not often asked: when we say having children is the personal choice of individual women and men, what do we imply? What choices are possible and what are impossible in a given context? Who has/gets to make choices and who does not? What are the conditions under which people make choices? In this chapter, I argue that the "choices" we have in contemporary Singapore, which are heavily structured by the state, have been heavily constraining for women as well as men. The state has placed issues of fertility and childrearing primarily in the realm of women's "choices." In doing so, they have produced a familial form wherein gendered differentials and inequalities are upheld and perpetuated by the strong structures of state policy and national norms.

### Traversing Ancestral and New Homelands: Chinese Immigrant Transnational Organizations in the United States

By Professor Zhou Min (*Sociology Division*), Rennie Lee, Alejandro Portes and Patricia Fernandez-Kelly (eds.)  
2015, The State and the Grassroots: Immigrant Transnational Organizations in Four Continents, pp. 27-50, Berghahn Books

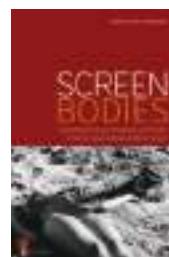
This book chapter explores three main questions: What are the types, scope, and nature of Chinese immigrant organisations in the United States? How does the Chinese state influence its expatriates' organisational transnationalism? And how does organisational transnationalism matter for the individual, the ethnic community, and the ancestral homeland? The authors show that, while immigrant transnationalism is enthusiastically endorsed and

supported by the Chinese state, immigrant transnational organisations tend to operate independently of the nation-state with the dual purposes of immigrant incorporation into the new homeland and development in the ancestral homeland. Traversing the two homelands entails constant interaction and negotiation between migrants and the sending state via transnational organisations.

## JOURNALS

### SCREEN Bodies

By Assistant Professor Brian Bergen-Aurand (*English Division*)  
Volume 1, Issue 1 Summer 2015



Screen Bodies is a peer-reviewed journal focusing on the intersection of Screen Studies and Body Studies across disciplines, institutions, and

media. It is a forum promoting research on various aspects of embodiment on and in front of screens through articles, reviews, and interviews. The journal considers moving and still images, whether from the entertainment industry, information technologies, or news and media outlets, including cinema, television, the internet, and gallery spaces. It investigates the private experiences of portable and personal devices and the institutional ones of medical and surveillance imaging. Screen Bodies addresses the portrayal, function, and reception of bodies on and in front of screens from the perspectives of gender and sexuality, feminism and masculinity, trans\* studies, queer theory, critical race theory, cyborg studies, and dis/ability studies.

## JOURNALS ARTICLES

### **State, Religion, and Environmentalism: Fostering Social Cohesion and Environmental Protection in Singapore.**

By Andrew Chan (*Environment and Sustainability Research Cluster*) and Assistant Professor Md Saidul Islam (*Sociology Division*)  
2015, Environmental Sociology, (ahead-of-print), pp. 1-13

There is a lack of research done in Singapore to determine the extent to which religious environmental concerns affect state-religion relations. This study addresses this gap in two ways: firstly, to outline the environmental viewpoints and behaviors of six key religions in Singapore; and secondly, to identify possible areas of tension between these religious groups and the state with reference to religious environmental concerns. Findings reveal an apparent gap between environmental beliefs and actual environmental action persists, as well as a desire by religious members for more societal activism and support to protect the environment. The study proposes that religious environmental concerns can act as a framework in guiding the state/religious environmental policy to create both multicultural social cohesion and environmental protection, as well as facilitating participatory citizenship.

### **Against Time Bias**

By Assistant Professor Preston Greene (*Philosophy Programme*) and Meghan Sullivan  
2015 Ethics Volume 125(4), pp. 947-970.

Most of us display a bias toward the near: we prefer pleasurable experiences to be in our near future and painful experiences to be in our distant future. We also display a bias toward the future: we prefer pleasurable experiences to be in our future and painful experiences to be in our past. While philosophers have tended to think that near bias is a rational defect, almost no one finds future bias objectionable. In this essay, we argue that this hybrid position is untenable. We conclude that those who reject near bias should instead endorse complete temporal neutrality.

### **Development and Pilot Evaluation of a Novel Dignity-Conserving End-of-Life (EoL) Care Model for Nursing Homes in Chinese Societies**

By Assistant Professor Andy H. Y. Ho (*Psychology Division*), Annie A. N. Dai, Shu-hang Lam, Sandy W. P. Wong, Amy L. M. Tsui, Jervis C. S. Tang and Vivian W. Q. Lou  
2015, The Gerontologist, gnv037, pp. 1-12

This paper systematically describes the development and implementation mechanisms of a novel Dignity-Conserving End-of-Life Care model that has been successfully adopted by three nursing homes in Hong Kong, and presents preliminary evidence of its effectiveness on enhancing dignity and quality of life of terminally-ill residents. Findings show that a holistic and compassionate care environment, together with the core principles of family-centred care, interagency and interdisciplinary teamwork, as well as cultural-specific psycho-socio-spiritual support, are all

essential elements to ensure success and sustainability. A framework to facilitate future development of end-of-life care in long-term-care settings is presented.

### **Dignified Palliative Long-Term Care an Interpretive Systemic Framework of End-of-Life Integrated Care Pathway for Terminally Ill Chinese Older Adults**

By Assistant Professor Andy H. Y. Ho (*Psychology Division*), James K. H. Luk, Felix H. W. Chan, Wing Chun Ng, Catherine K. K. Kwok, Joseph H. L. Yuen, Michelle Y. J. Tam, Wing W. S. Kan and Cecilia L. W. Chan  
2015, American Journal of Hospice & Palliative Medicine, pp. 1-9

This paper examines the system dynamics for implementing an End-of-Life Integrated Care Pathway (EoL-ICP) programme for promoting dignity and wellbeing among terminally-ill Chinese nursing home residents. Thirty stakeholders were recruited to participate in four interpretive-systemic focus groups. Framework analysis revealed 10 themes, organised into Three categories: (1) Regulatory Empowerment (interdisciplinary teamwork, resource allocation, culture building, collaborative policy-making); (2) Family-Centred Care (continuity of care, family care conference, partnership in care); and (3) Collective Compassion (devotion in care, empathic understanding, compassionate actions). These findings highlight the importance of organisational structure, social discourse, and shared meaning in

EoL-ICP provisions among Chinese societies.

### **What Does Your Selfie Say about You?**

By Assistant Professor Lin Qiu (Psychology Division), Lu Jiahui (Psychology Division), Yang Shanshan (Psychology Division), Qu Weina and Zhu Tingshao  
2015, Computers in Human Behavior, Volume 52, pp. 443–449

In this study, we found specific cues in selfies related to personality traits including agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness. We also found that observers had moderate to strong agreement in their ratings of Big Five personality based on selfies. However, they could only accurately predict selfie owners' degree of openness. This study is the first to reveal personality-related cues in selfies and provide a picture-coding scheme that can be used to analyse selfies.

### **Traversing Between Transnationalism and Integration: Dual Embeddedness of New Chinese Immigrant Entrepreneurs in Singapore**

By Professor Liu Hong (History Programme) and Ren Na  
2015, Asian and Pacific Migration Journal, Volume 24(3), pp. 298-326

Transnationalism was initially proposed as an alternative perspective to the assimilation and integration frameworks, which tend to prioritise the nation-state over transnational mobility. Policy-makers in host societies usually regard transnational migrants' close

linkages with the homeland as a sign of social and political detachment, thus reducing their contributions to the host land. Findings from our research on new Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs in Singapore suggest the simultaneous embeddedness of immigrants into two or more nation-states and geopolitical spheres. However, integration in Singapore and transnational ties with China are not necessarily a zero-sum game. Our evidence suggests that transnationalism and integration have been construed as a mutually reinforcing strategy in new immigrants' efforts to accumulate economic and social resources in both the host land and the homeland. The formations, characteristics and mechanisms of the dual embeddedness process of new Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs in Singapore are detailed in the article.

### **When “Nature” Strikes: A Sociology of Climate Change and Disaster Vulnerabilities in Asia**

By Assistant Professor Md Saidul Islam (Sociology Division) and Lin Si Hui (Sociology Division)  
2015, Nature and Culture, Volume 10(1), pp. 57-80.

This article offers a sociological understanding of disaster development and recovery in Asia, with a focus on seven countries. Rather than treating disasters entirely as “natural” events caused by “violent forces of nature”, we emphasise various ways in which social systems create disaster vulnerability. We argue that existing disaster mitigation and adaptation strategies in Asia that focus almost entirely on the natural and technological aspects of hazards have serious limitations, as they

ignore the root causes of disaster vulnerabilities. This article therefore recommends a holistic approach to disaster management and mitigation that takes into consideration the various larger social, political, and economic conditions and contexts.

### **Human-animal relationship: Understanding animal rights in the Islamic Ecological Paradigm**

By Md Nazrul Islam (Sociology Division) and Assistant Professor Md Saidul Islam (Sociology Division)  
2015, Journal for the Study of Religion and Ideologies, Volume 14, Issue 41, pp. 131-149

Since the second half of the twentieth century, there has been growing concerns for animal welfare and the protection of animal rights within the discourse of environmentalism, developed mainly in the West. Nevertheless, a recently developed Islamic Ecological Paradigm (IEP) rooted in the classical Islamic traditions contests the “Western” monopoly of modern environmentalism, suggesting that there is much in Islamic traditions dealing with environmental issues including non-human animal species. IEP asserts that several centuries ago, Islamic traditions significantly focused on and strongly advocated for animal welfare and animal rights. This paper explores and examines animal rights within the broader spectrum of Islamic environmentalism or Islamic eco-ethic.

### **Music as a Necessary Means of Moral Education: A Case Study from Reconstruction of Confucian Culture in Joseon Korea**

By Dr Park So Jeong (Chinese Division)

2015, International Communication of Chinese Culture, Volume 2, Issue 2, pp.123-136

This paper explicates why music is indispensable in Confucian moral education and illustrates a musical reconstruction of Joseon Korea as a successful case of Confucian ideals. Stimulated by the advent of emerging music in the pre-Qin period, wide and various debates resulted in exceptional emphasis on music. Since then, music has been regarded as an indispensable part of Confucian education. The reconstruction of Confucian ritual music in Joseon Korea successfully retrieved the Confucian musical ideal from the problematic phenomenon of theory overriding musical reality and kept the Confucian ideal alive through raising a question of the qualification for Joseon Korean court music between Sino-Korean and indigenous tunes.

### **Constructing Failure: Leonard Hayflick, Biomedicine, and the Problems with Tissue Culture**

By Assistant Professor Park Hyung Wook (*History Programme*)  
2015, Annals of Science, pp. 1-25

This paper investigates how scientists experience and manage failure through the case of tissue culture. I study how Leonard Hayflick forged his new definition of failure and ways of managing it by refuting Alexis Carrel's definition of failure alongside his theory of cellular immortality. Unlike Carrel, Hayflick claimed that every vertebrate somatic cell should eventually die, unless it transformed into a tumour cell. This claim defined cell death, which had been a problem leading to failure, as normal, while permanent

life became a major factor causing failure. Hayflick asserted that his cells and methods would partly enable scientists to manage this factor and other problems in routine tasks. I argue that the growing biomedical enterprise fostered this work, which had repercussions in both his career and the uses of cells in diverse investigations. His redefinition of failure resulted in the broad dissemination of his cells as well as his temporarily failed career.

### **External Government Performance Evaluation in China: A Case Study of the Lien Service-Oriented Government Project**

By Assistant Professor Yu Wenxuan (*Public Policy and Global Affairs Programme*) and Ma Liang  
2015, Public Money and Management, Volume 35, pp. 431-437

External government evaluation projects are playing an increasingly important role in holding government in China accountable to the public. This paper looks at a large-scale project funded by a philanthropic institution - the Lien Service Oriented Government Project has been monitoring government performance in mainland China since 2010. The case study highlights the challenges faced by performance evaluation projects in China, as well as their potential.

### **Place, Diaspora, And Identity Politics: A Critical Inquiry Into Looi Yook Tho's Modern Poetry**

By Assistant Professor Zhang Songjian (*Chinese Division*)  
2015, Journal of Oriental Studies, 48.1, pp. 125-152

As one of the leading Chinese writers

in Malaysian literary arena, Looi Yook Tho's modern poetry invites more thoroughly critical inquiry. By applying the scholarship from humanistic/cultural geography, this paper is an attempt to examine how "the sense of place" is represented in Looi's poetic world from two perspectives. First, through writing the imaginary of homeland, the making of personal identity and the diasporic experience of Chinese Malaysians, Looi reflects the consequence of globalisation, modernity and the ideology of developmentalism. Second, Looi also depicts the historical memory and the identity politics of Chinese Malaysians, ultimately aiming to criticise the institutionalised Malay racialism and to voice his unyielding longing for equality, dignity and human right.

### **Intra-Diaspora Dynamics in Generational Formation: The Case of Chinese America**

By Professor Zhou Min (*Sociology Division*)  
2015, Diaspora, 18(1-2), pp. 89-116

This article examines the causes and consequences of generational formation in the Chinese diaspora in America. Based on a review of the existing literature and a reanalysis of data collected from my prior research on China-born immigrants in the United States, I document the formation of immigrant cohorts in four historical periods of Chinese immigration and illustrate how contexts of emigration and host-society reception intertwine to influence the evolution of immigrant cohorts across time and, in turn, produce variations on patterns of immigrant adaptation, leading to differences in the outcomes of host-society integration and levels of homeland engagement.