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FASS ended its year of celebrations with a bang!

The Faculty's 85th Anniversary Dinner, centred on the theme of “Asian Nostalgia,” was held at the NUS Society Kent Ridge Guild House on 22 November 2014. It was graced by Guest-of-Honour, NUS Board of Trustees Chairman, Mr Wong Ngit Liong, NUS President Prof Tan Chorh Chuan, NUS Provost Prof Tan Eng Chye, former deans of the Faculty and 300 alumni, faculty members, students and friends of the Faculty.

In her opening address, Prof Brenda Yeoh, Dean of FASS, said, “This evening, we are in the mood for nostalgia, and I would like to take you along a short journey from the beginning to relive how it is that we have grown to become one of the largest Faculty on campus in terms of undergraduate numbers, with 17 Departments, 20 Major Subjects and 7,000 students…The Faculty certainly has cause for celebration, and indeed, all segments of the Faculty have celebrated our 85 years in their own way.”

Prof Yeoh brought the audience back to the founding of the Faculty as part of Raffles College in 1929 to the present day and our celebratory events for the year. She followed up her address with a quiz for all the guests to see if they had been paying attention during her address!

We also launched two awards that night – the FASS Student Leadership Award (FSLA) and the Ann Wee NUS Social Work Alumni Award. Mr Wong Ngit Liong and Prof Tan Chorh Chuan led the launch of the FSLA which was set up in commemoration of the Faculty's 85th anniversary to recognise the efforts of FASS student leaders beyond academic excellence by focusing on experiential learning and student life leadership within FASS and the wider community. We also held the Faculty's first ‘silent auction’ of artworks contributed by faculty, alumni, students and friends that raised over $42,000 in support of the FSLA.

The Ann Wee NUS Social Work Alumni Award was launched by Prof Tan Eng Chye, Provost, NUS. He said, “This award is a reminder that while we
strive for world class standards in research and innovation, ultimately the work we do impacts community and society. I hope that our alumni, not just those from Social Work, will be inspired by the selfless contributions from Mrs Wee and the social workers as symbolised in this award.” The idea of setting up the award and naming it after Mrs Ann Wee was mooted by several social work alumni and friends to reflect the memory and affection they have for her as the longest serving Head of the Department and to recognise the work of the many unsung heroes in the profession.

Starting with an energetic performance by the Jigri Yaar Bhangra, Singapore’s pioneer Bhangra company, guests were regaled throughout the evening with performances by the Faculty’s very own singers – Mithila, who is currently a postgraduate student in the Department of Economics, and Farisha, an undergraduate in the Faculty and winner of Singapore’s The Final One competition. Mithila sang a wonderful rendition of Adele’s Rolling in the Deep followed by the upbeat Mamma Mia. Farisha sang Soulman, and Hidup Ini Indah, a self-penned number from her album, “Aligned”.

Guests were also entertained by re:Percussions who performed the Chinese Drum Medley 2211, arranged specially for this performance. The medley was a collection of music played on Chinese percussion instruments that contained elements of traditional Chinese, Western, Indian and Malay percussion music at its core.

It certainly has been a busy year for our Faculty and we thank everyone for their support for the past 85 years. We are also looking forward to the excitement the years ahead will bring!
Faculty Updates

Faculty Teaching Excellence Awards (FTEA)
We are very pleased to extend our warmest congratulations to the following lecturers on their achievements in teaching. 42 FASS lecturers have been awarded the Faculty Teaching Excellence Award 2014 for their work in 2013/14.

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<td>Ms Sasiwimol Klayklueng</td>
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<td>A/P Chin Kwee Nyet</td>
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<td>Dr Ang Wan Ling Susan</td>
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<td>Prof Robbie Goh Boon Hua</td>
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<td>Dr Graham Wolfe</td>
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<td>A/P Michelle Lazar</td>
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<td>Dr Tania Roy</td>
<td>English Language and Literature</td>
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<td>Dr Yosuke Sato</td>
<td>English Language and Literature</td>
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<td>Dr Daniel Friess</td>
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<td>Dr Harvey Neo</td>
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<td>Dr Woon Chih Yuan</td>
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<td>Prof Brian Farrell</td>
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<td>A/P Maurizio Peleggi</td>
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<td>Dr John P. DiMoia</td>
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<td>Dr Donna Brunero</td>
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<td>A/P Timothy P. Barnard</td>
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<td>Dr Chris McMorran</td>
<td>Japanese Studies</td>
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<td>A/P Noor Aisha Abdul Rahman</td>
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<td>Mr Chin Chuon Fei</td>
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<td>Dr Terence Lee Chek Liang</td>
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<td>A/P Esther Goh Chor Leng</td>
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<td>A/P Irving Johnson</td>
<td>Southeast Asian Studies</td>
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<td>Dr Julius Bautista</td>
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Congratulations to all our winners for their excellent work!

Faculty Research Awards (FRA)
We are also pleased to extend our warmest congratulations to the following faculty members on winning the FRAs for this year.

Award for Excellent Researcher (AER)

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<th>Name</th>
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<td>A/P Davin Chor</td>
<td>Economics</td>
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Award for Promising Researcher (APR)

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<td>Dr Jessica Pan</td>
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<td>Dr Daniel Friess</td>
<td>Geography</td>
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<td>Dr Woon Chih Yuan</td>
<td>Geography</td>
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National Day Award Recipients from FASS
Every year, a good number of staff from FASS receive the National Day Awards to honour their commitment and services to the nation, and 2014 is no exception. We would like to extend our hearty congratulations to all of them!

The Public Administration Medal (Bronze)
Assoc Prof Pakir, Anne
Director, International Relations Office
Associate Professor, Department of English Language & Literature

The Commendation Medal
Miss Wong Swee Eng
Senior Associate Director, Dean’s Office, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences

The Efficiency Medal
Ms Hannah Lim Mong Yee
Management Assistant Officer, Dean’s Office, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences

The Long Service Medal
Mdm Jamunarani d/o Danakkody
Management Assistant Officer, Dean’s Office, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences

Congratulations to all our winners for their excellent work!
4 faculty members recognised as Provost’s Chair Professors

The Faculty is pleased to announce that the following faculty members have been appointed as Provost’s Chairs, in recognition of their outstanding and impactful scholarly accomplishments, which are internationally acknowledged. The Faculty looks forward to their continued leadership and successful contributions to the growing international profile and standing of the University:

- Prof Chew Soo Hong, Department of Economics
- Prof Mohan Dutta, Head, Department of Communications and New Media
- Prof Theodore (Ted) Hopf, Department of Political Science
- Prof David Taylor, Department of Geography

First ever prize devoted to Singapore history

The FASS Department of History introduced the NUS Singapore History Prize, the first ever prize devoted entirely to Singapore history. Created in support of the national SG50 programme to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Singapore’s independence, the NUS Singapore History Prize will be awarded to an outstanding publication that will make a lasting impact on our understanding of the history of Singapore.

Mooted by Prof Kishore Mahbubani, Dean of the NUS Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, who is also an alumnus of FASS, the Prize aims to invigorate research on the history of Singapore. It seeks also to inspire the highest scholarly standards in research and publications that address the history of Singapore and also to promote critical interest in Singapore’s history.

Prof Mahbubani said, “History, contrary to conventional wisdom, is not dead. It re-surfaces politically from time to time, influencing both international affairs (for example, China-Japan relations) and domestic debates (for example, the struggle against the communists). Even as Singapore celebrates 50 years of peace and prosperity in 2015, there will be debates about Singapore’s history. The goal of this prize is to inspire new historical studies of Singapore and generate an informed historical discussion which will help future generations understand what was truly unique and special about Singapore’s history.”

Prof Brenda Yeoh, Dean of FASS, hopes that the Prize will create a “multiplier” effect that will spawn more research in all aspects of Singapore history, especially in the “histories of the people and ordinary lives of people”.

The NUS Singapore History Prize will be awarded every three years and the author of the winning publication will receive a cash award of $50,000. This makes it the largest prize devoted to Singapore history. The winner of the Prize will also speak at a public lecture hosted by the Department of History, during which the Prize will be presented. Nominations for the Prize start from 1 January 2015, and the inaugural award will be presented in late 2017.

The Prize will be an open international competition and will accept nominations from any author or publisher of any work, published anywhere in English (written or translated). Nominations have to be a book-length work of non-fiction; be authored or co-authored, rather than edited. The work should address any time period, theme, or field of Singapore history, or include a substantial analysis of any aspect of Singapore history as part of a wider story. The work will also need to be published from the time nomination opens and by the final date for submission of nominations.

For the 2015-2017 competition, the Department of History has invited eminent Singaporeans and scholars to serve on the Jury Panel that will determine the winning publication. They are Ms Claire Chiang (Senior Vice President, Banyan Tree Holdings); Prof Peter Coclanis (Director, Global Research Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill); Prof Wang Gungwu (Chairman, East Asian Institute at NUS); and Prof Kishore Mahbubani. The Jury Panel will be chaired ex officio by Prof Brian Farrell, the Head of the Department of History.

Please visit www.fas.nus.edu.sg/hist/prize.htm for further details on the Prize, nomination criteria, forms and other information.
Research Developments and Highlights

FASSforward! The Ultimate Research Challenge

In celebration of the Faculty’s 85th Anniversary, the Graduate Studies Division organised “FASSforward! The Ultimate Research Challenge” for graduate students in FASS on 6 and 7 August 2014. With team members and the research theme of “Forgotten Peoples, Places and Issues in Singapore” revealed only on the morning of the competition, students were challenged to: identify a group, a site or a topic that has been neglected in Singapore; demonstrate why it is important to give the topic more focus in academic research; and propose an inter-disciplinary project, including specific points/lines of enquiry, to undertake research on the group/site/issue identified.

Working in multi-disciplinary teams of 4-5 members, the eleven teams came up with some excellent topics, interesting perspectives and excellent presentations in just 28 hours. Topics ranged from “overlooked” and marginalised minority groups in Singapore to spaces that have been buried in our social memories. The winning team, comprising students from Comparative Asian Studies, Communications and New Media, Geography and Malay Studies, won for their presentation on Merdeka Bridge, Singapore’s “Lost Bridge”, while the runners-up made their respective cases for “Remembering the Orang Laut” and not “burying history” by forgetting Singapore’s burial spaces.

Representation from all the departments and programmes across FASS took part in the challenge. Many of the students – a good mix of new and current, coursework and research, and Masters and PhD students – shared that they had benefitted greatly from participating in the competition through making new friends, learning different approaches in conducting research, and finding out many (new) things about Singapore. Professors David Taylor and Vineeta Sinha, two of the judges of “FASSforward!”, echoed the thoughts of the students when they voiced the hope that the competition will “become a part of the annual calendar of events in the Faculty”. The Graduate Studies Division would like to thank all colleagues and students who contributed to making the event a success.

Interview with Assoc Prof Davin Chor

Assoc Prof Davin Chor (Department of Economics) recently received the Award for Excellent Researcher (AER) which is presented to researchers based on the overall impact and strength of their research. The successful researcher would have “achieved consistent research excellence, produced a piece of research of great impact and be recognised by the research community as having achieved a significant breakthrough.”

Assoc Prof Chor is an exemplary awardee – one of the star researchers in the Department of Economics, his landmark 2013 article ‘Organizing the Global Value Chain’ was published as the lead article in the top-5 journal Econometra. The article introduces a new theory of firm organisation in a global setting and provides persuasive empirical support for it. At 77 pages, the article is also notable for being significantly longer than the average 30-40 page piece in a top tier economics journal, indicating its value in its un-cut form to the editors. The Head of Department, Prof Julian Wright, describes it as “one of the most significant articles in all of economics in 2013”.

We caught up with him to congratulate him on the award and find out more about his work...

Davin, congratulations on the Award for Excellent Researcher.
Your paper ‘Organizing the Global Value Chain’ has been lauded for its groundbreaking theory of global firm organisation and convincing empirical research. Could you tell us the crux of your idea and how your data supports it?

We set out in this paper to understand the organisational decisions that firms make over the sourcing of their inputs, when production stages are arranged in a unique sequence. This reflects the reality that in many manufacturing processes, it is often the case that a firm’s downstream stages of assembly cannot commence before upstream intermediate inputs have been delivered. A classic (and literal) example of this is Henry Ford’s Model T production line system. Such considerations related to sequentiality matter even more today, as intermediate inputs are now actively shipped across borders in global production lines.

We focus on a particular dimension of firm organisation, namely the “integration versus outsourcing” decision: Which stages should the firm integrate within its ownership boundaries, and which inputs should it instead source from an arm’s length supplier? The model that we developed to address this question builds on the “property rights” or Grossman-Hart-Moore approach to the theory of the firm. In this strand of work, integrating a supplier confers the firm headquarters with a better bargaining position, since the firm has “residual rights of control” over key knowledge and assets should the relationship with the supplier break down. Conversely, outsourcing confers a better bargaining position to the input supplier, and hence provides him/her with better incentives to deliver a high quality input to the firm.

Our model delivers a set of precise predictions showing how the organisational decision depends on an input’s position in the production chain. In a first case where stage inputs are sufficiently strong complements in the production process, the firm would choose to outsource upstream stages up to a point and integrate its remaining downstream stages. The underlying reason is that this allows the firm to provide upstream suppliers with better incentives to deliver high-quality inputs early on in the production chain, so that it can leverage on the complementarity of inputs to then incentivize downstream suppliers to deliver on quality too. Conversely, for production processes where stage inputs are relatively substitutable, we get the opposite prediction that integration would...
be chosen for upstream stages, with outsourcing observed further downstream. This would be the case for example for goods where consumers are willing to accept lower quality for some features in exchange for higher quality on other features. (This optimal organisational mode for the production line is illustrated schematically in the figure below.)

In the second half of our paper, we set out to provide evidence to corroborate the theory. Direct firm-level data on integration versus outsourcing decisions is difficult to obtain, so we turned to international trade data to offer an alternative angle on this phenomenon. The trade data reported by the U.S. Census Bureau contains a breakdown of the amount of trade conducted between related versus unrelated parties. We therefore use the share of related party trade – the extent to which the products of a given industry tend to be shipped within firm boundaries – as proxy for the propensity towards integration in an industry.

We further developed a measure to capture how up- or downstream each industry tends to be (on average) in production processes. This was constructed from information on inter-industry linkages that is contained in the U.S. Input-Output Tables. The broad message from our regression analysis can be summarised in the figure below. For industries classified under the complements case, we found that the share of related party trade indeed increases the more downstream is the industry in question, indicating a rising propensity towards integrating inputs that are nearer the end of production chains. Conversely, in the substitutes case, our proxy for the propensity to integrate had the opposite behavior, instead decreasing the further downstream the industry.

**What inspired you to conduct research in this particular area?**

First and foremost, the research question is clearly a very relevant and pertinent one. One of the identifying features of globalisation today is that production processes are no longer localised, but instead traverse national boundaries. We all know for example that the final assembly of the iPad takes place in China (and now also Brazil), but that is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of the many suppliers and locations that are involved for the individual parts and components. To me, it seems natural and important to ask what forces shape the emergence and formation of these global production arrangements.

More specifically, the research question for this project – its focus on sequential production processes – grew out of a specific reaction from my work as a research assistant for Pol Antràs when I was still a PhD student. Pol was working at that time with Daron Acemoglu (MIT) and Elhanan Helpman (Harvard) on a project that tackled the optimal organisational decision for a firm with many suppliers that it had to contract with simultaneously for inputs. I was fortunate enough to be hired by Pol to check the math for this earlier paper, so I became quite familiar with the setup and conceptual issues. It nevertheless made me wonder whether the framework could be enriched by making the production stages sequential, a feature that I thought resonated more with how one would view global production processes in practice. Pol and I began to have conversations on this, and it became clearer to us over time that the model we were devising was delivering some crisp predictions about organisational decisions when production stages were sequenced in a chain.

**What was the most challenging aspect (or aspects) of formulating your new model?**

There were a number of technical challenges we encountered. The issue of sequential production processes has been relatively under-studied by trade economists, so there were no ready off-the-shelf theoretical models that we could simply adapt. Even after setting up the model, we were prompted by one of our anonymous referees to pursue a more rigorous method to solve it, requiring the use of mathematical tools from the Calculus of Variations. The investment in this technical toolkit proved to be very worthwhile, as it confirmed our intuition and further sharpened the predictions that the model delivered with regard to how integration decisions would vary with an input’s production line position.

(Continue on next page)
There was also an interesting process of self-discovery in the empirical work. Midway through the project, we realised that there were strong similarities between our measure of an industry’s production line position and various measures of production staging that Thibault Fally (then at the University of Colorado-Boulder, now at UC Berkeley) was independently working on. This came across initially as a puzzle to us, but we soon realised – to our surprise – that our measures of industry “upstreamness” were actually equivalent, even though we had devised the measures from different conceptual starting points. This was reassuring from the point of view of providing the measure of upstreamness with better theoretical foundations. It also led us to join forces with Thibault Fally and Russell Hillberry (then at the University of Melbourne, now at the World Bank) to write a short paper to elucidate these links and illustrate several basic empirical applications of this measure of industry upstreamness. This article appeared in the May 2012 papers and proceedings issue of the American Economic Review.

What sort of reaction have you had since publication?

The reaction to the paper has been quite positive. I think there has been recognition that there are some nice and refreshing insights in the paper on an issue that deserves more attention from researchers, given the rising importance of global production lines. Looking forward, we hope we have been able to provide a useful building block for future work, to shed light on the drivers of richer, more complex global sourcing arrangements.

Can you comment on the inter-disciplinary applications of your model, particularly given its citation in a paper by FASS colleagues from the Department of Geography, ‘Toward a Dynamic Theory of Global Production Networks’?

This reflects the shared research goals that economists and economic geographers have in seeking to better understand the forces that have shaped the formation and evolution of global production processes. There are of course differences in methodology, as well as in the issues that would be emphasised in our respective fields, but this should not detract from the commonalities in our research agenda.

I should add: NUS actually has a nice corps of researchers across the various social science disciplines who have been thinking seriously about the phenomenon of globalisation and how this has affected firms and their production activities. This has led to the formation of a new inter-disciplinary research centre – the Centre for Global Production Networks at NUS, or GPN@NUS for short. The Centre brings together colleagues from the departments of Geography, Political Science, Sociology and Economics (including myself), to help develop and sharpen NUS’s expertise in academic research on this important topic. I am looking forward to the synergies that should emerge from this new initiative.

How did you apply your theory to describe the position that countries occupy in global production lines in your invited piece for the Monetary Authority of Singapore’s Macroeconomic Review that came out April 2014?

The MAS Macroeconomic Review piece showcases an application of the measure of industry “upstreamness”. One can merge this industry measure with data on international trade flows, in order to compute the average “upstreamness” of a country’s export basket as well as its import basket. This is useful because it provides a descriptive metric for the global production line position that a country occupies. For example, it confirms that countries like China and Vietnam tend to import upstream inputs and export processed or finished goods that are considerably more downstream.

How do you foresee your findings being incorporated outside of academia, in the global manufacturing realm?

The underlying logic in our model – that upstream organisational decisions can spill over and affect downstream decisions – is one that I hope resonates with decision-makers in manufacturing firms. Perhaps there may be opportunities in future for in-depth case studies to explore if the mechanisms of our model do in fact square up with the organisational decisions that some large multinationals have made.

What are your future research plans?

I like to think that our paper opens up a lot of exciting research possibilities. Our model is inherently about firm decisions, so a natural next step would be to hunt for empirical evidence for the workings of our model using more detailed firm-level data. This is precisely what Pol and I have set out to do in ongoing work with Laura Alfaro (Harvard Business School) and Paola Conconi (ECARES). We hope in this project to also have something interesting to say about the location decisions of global firms, namely which countries they choose to source their inputs from.

Separately, in joint work with Kalina Manova (Stanford) and Yu Zhihong (Nottingham), we have started applying the measure of industry “upstreamness” to shed light on how the global production line position of Chinese firms has evolved over time. We hope this will provide more granular insights into the nature of global production networks.

Thank you, Davin. We wish you well in your future research.

“Measuring the Upstreamness of Production and Trade Flows.”

Semesters will end, but learning won’t

I enjoyed very much my first year of being a graduate teaching assistant at NUS. It was challenging but rewarding. In the first few tutorials, I was frustrated. It seemed no one was interested in the module. I saw from the students’ eyes that they were puzzled at how the research methods they learned could be applied in real life. I felt like a failure, but I thought I needed to come up with a new trick to encourage them to participate in the learning.

I decided to set as my primary goal for the semester to use my training in communication and my research experience in qualitative research to emphasise the integration of theories with practice. I realised it took a lot of time and experience to gather a complete bag of tricks and skills in teaching. I needed to make both teaching and learning interesting.

During tutorials, I associated theories with real situations I had encountered while doing research. On some days, students would stay behind after tutorial to ask questions about their projects and how they could practise what they learnt. And when this happened, I would think: “This is a great day”. I saw students smile when they could associate what they did in their research projects with what they learnt in the lectures. I imagined that they would have tried their best to associate what they learnt in their projects and apply those same lessons to their work in future.

Learning is never-ending. I was lucky to have had an opportunity to help carry out a project with a group of students after their module was over. This was a challenging invitation from Prof Jeffery Peterson, the lecturer of the module, who suggested that I help put up the students’ project in a public exhibition organised by the Department of Communications and New Media to be housed at the ArtScience Museum in March 2014. I was worried if this could happen because the semester was already over by the time we got the invitation. This meant the students had to continue working on the project without any academic rewards.

I hesitated at first because I knew most NUS students were very concerned about their academic results. They would prefer to study hard to get a higher CAP or participate in a CCA to get CCA points. The project we planned to do could bring no such benefit. It also required a lot of time and commitment.

When I sent an email to recruit volunteers to participate in the project, the response was good. We formed a team of seven students from several of my tutorial groups, including a few from tutorial groups taught by another tutor. We had meetings to apply what we learnt in class about preparing for an exhibition from data collected. The volunteer team coordinated the photo selection for the installation within a week using social media. The volunteer students showed increasing confidence and reflectivity when we defined the purpose of the exhibition. They came up with creative ideas to attract more people to support the project. In the latter stage of the preparation, we collected original files of photos from selected assignments from the module. Luckily, we received a 100% response rate within 24 hours. Most of the students were excited to present their coursework to the public and showed their eagerness to share.

The D-day came. The installation was showcased at the ArtScience Museum which attracted members of the public. I learned to call on students to present their ideas to the public. At the beginning, students were not confident with sharing their ideas proactively. I encouraged them to approach and engage visitors. Slowly, their confidence grew and by the end of the day, I could see a change in their levels of engagement. This reinforced the meaning this project held for me and the students.

From this experience, I learned to take up challenges for students. As a teacher, we ought to learn to trust students’ ability and offer them guidance so they can learn by themselves. Pushing the boundaries for both myself and the students is difficult but it is a way to learn. We can be a role model or we can just be a catalyst for learning. If there is a learning opportunity, give the students some hands-on practice. They would come to love and enjoy it. The outcome can be more than we expect.

Learning can go beyond the curriculum. If it is meaningful, there would always be a way to make things work. I hope that in the future I can create a more “Lively, Encouraging, Analytical, Responsible, Navigated, Interactive, Novel and Grateful” learning experience for my students. I hope my students can make a difference and can transform theory into practice in an enjoyable way.

Pauline Luk is a recipient of the Graduate Students’ Teaching Award (GSTA) for teaching undertaken in Semester 1, 2013-2014 from the Department of Communications and New Media.
Gifts To The Faculty

FASS has received more than $1.8 million in gifts between July to December 2014, bringing the total gifts receipts to over $3.5 million in calendar year 2014.

A list of notable gifts are as follows:

**George Y Soh Social Service Study Award**
As an avid volunteer for 27 years, Dr Soh recognises the increasing need for social service support and the need to groom talent as social work professionals for Singapore. The $200,000 endowed gift will be fulfilled in full by January 2015 and will be administered by the Department of Social Work. The gift fund will be used to provide scholarships to undergraduate students who major in Social Work.

**Social Service Innovation and Research Fund**
Quantedge Foundation made an expendable gift of S$125,000 in support of our new faculty-based research centre, headed by Assoc Prof Irene Ng from the Department of Social Work. The new Social Service Research Centre (SSRC), which seeks to promote and test social innovations to further the vision of becoming a focal point of rigorous applied research to facilitate large-scale, community-based service innovations, will be working closely with government and non-government social service agencies to design and roll out new programmes.

**Wan Boo Sow Prizes and Scholarship**
The family of the late Mr Wan Boo Sow has pledged another $1.02 million to establish two new Prizes in support of Outstanding Bilingual (Chinese-English) Undergraduates and Graduands in FASS, a Graduate Scholarship in Chinese Studies and a gift top-up to establish the Wan Boo Sow (Chinese Studies Minor) Prize.

**FASS Student Leadership Fund**
In commemoration of FASS’ 85th Anniversary, the Faculty established the FASS Student Leadership Award (FSLA) to recognise student leaders who demonstrate student life leadership, foster experiential learning, and enhance outreach activities within FASS and the wider community, beyond academic excellence. More than $150,000, including proceeds from a charity auction held at the FASS 85th Anniversary Dinner, was raised in support for the Award.

**Mr and Mrs Lee Wai Kin Bursary**
Mr Lee Kok Wah a FASS ’69 alumnus and a former Tan Chin Tuan bursary recipient made an endowed gift of S$150,000 to establish the Mr and Mrs Lee Wai Kin Bursary, in honour of his late parents. The Bursary will provide up to four awards to needy FASS undergraduate students.
Mr Joseph Daniels graduated from the Joint Degree Programme (JDP) in Geography hosted by NUS and University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) with First Class Honours in 2013. He has won several awards, including the Lee Kuan Yew Gold Medal and NUS Geographical Society Gold Medal.

Currently a Master of Arts candidate in Economic Geography at the University of British Columbia, he came back to Singapore recently to conduct fieldwork for his Master’s thesis. We had the wonderful opportunity to catch up with him to find out more about his experiences.

Hi Joe, can you tell us a bit about your research?

For my Honours thesis, I was looking at bank restructuring in the early 2000s here in Singapore after the Asian financial crisis. I was focused on the ways in which state-firm relations had been reshaped by the restructuring as part of a larger process of international financial centre development. For my Master’s thesis, I’m looking at the financialisation of urban space, or the relationships between real estate and finance, and specifically at the real estate investment trusts (REITs) and their role in shaping urban development and management in Singapore. This is work that tries to integrate what is called the ‘social studies of finance’ with the wider array of concerns found in Geography pertaining to places and spaces of economic, political, and social change.

That’s interesting. What got you interested in Geography?

At first I convinced my mom to let me enrol into UNC because I wanted to do public policy. To this day, I have never taken a formal course in public policy. However, I took a few geography courses in my first year and fell in love with it. It appeals more to me – I prefer to theorise and think about the world as opposed to perhaps the practicality of planning the world (though I do believe one leads to the other). Ultimately, Geography provided a means of addressing the questions I had about the world in a way other disciplines had not—perhaps best captured by what some have called its intellectual promiscuity. The undisciplined nature of the field’s theoretical tool box was most appealing. I mean, who knew I would be able to meaningfully study the finance industry as a geographer! The ability to be surprised by what I learn is what is most enjoyable about Geography. Geography at NUS is one of the best places to do that.

Why choose Singapore?

I always knew I wanted to study abroad for a while. Unlike most of my peers who went to Europe or Latin America, I wanted to go somewhere different. This concern for difference and being different has probably impacted more than I would typically admit, and probably is one of the reasons the identification of
Geographer was so appealing. Yet I didn’t have the language skills, aside from a little bit of German, so I didn’t want to go to a place that was too daunting, particularly because I wanted my education to be worthwhile. I did not want my study abroad experience to be a glorified vacation. I stumbled upon the JDP which happened to be in Singapore and thought it seemed like a great opportunity. Little did I know that NUS Geography is one of the top programmes in the world and that it would impact my life so greatly!

How did you find your experience living and studying in Singapore?

Well, I keep coming back! (laughs) This is now my third extended trip to Singapore. I was really interested in what NUS had to offer for its strength in Economic Geography and I really took advantage of all of what the JDP had to offer. I also enjoyed the independence I had in planning my readings and assignments in NUS. The JDP, with its support at both UNC and NUS, has certainly opened new doors for me; to new intellectual horizons in new places. I would do it again in a heartbeat!

I was staying at the Prince George’s Park Residences here in NUS and also at my friends’ places at Ang Mo Kio and Kovan. The best part of my experience living and studying in Singapore has been creating what will be life-long friendships from an incredibly supportive group of students and mentors.
Student Activities & Achievements

OdySEA 2014: Political Science Class Revisits Extraordinary Cambodia

In June 2014, 24 students from the Human Trafficking in Southeast Asia module (PS3880E), which is taught as part of the NUS OdySEA/FASStrack Asia programme, embarked on a journey of self-discovery to various parts of Cambodia.

The class, which spanned five weeks, included a 10-day field trip component in which students travelled to Siem Reap, Poipet, Battambang, and Phnom Penh, to examine human trafficking as well as learn about different historical and cultural aspects of Cambodian life.

Dr Kevin McGahan, assisted by co-lecturers Ms Mindy Tadai and Ms Seow Siew Hwee, led the class. The students received an extraordinary opportunity to study an incredibly important social issue in both Singapore and Cambodia.

During class sessions at NUS, students were able to interact with local and regional activists who addressed various dimensions of human trafficking. Ms Shermaine Singh, a Singaporean who recently graduated from Rochester University in New York, for example, gave a passionate overview of her work with International Justice Mission in Chennai, India. In addition, Ms Ruici Tio, formerly of MTV Exit in Bangkok, and Mr Jeff Wu, a regional manager at Facebook, discussed the role of the media and technology in tackling seemingly intractable problems such as human trafficking and exploitation.

Students also held interactive meetings, throughout Cambodia, with numerous community leaders, including a village chief, and NGOs, such as Friends International, Damnok Toek, Sala Bai, and even government officials at the US Embassy.

Moreover, students were treated to local food, some of which was prepared by former street children now being trained in culinary skills. The menu included Cambodian delights such as fried red ants and lime-flavored tarantulas.

Unlike previous years, this cohort of students included eight international students from partner universities, including University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of British Columbia, and Australian National University. Both local and foreign students came from various disciplines, ranging from engineering and life sciences to global studies and political science. Students not only travelled to Cambodia to experience a different culture and history, but they also shared their own diverse experiences to learn more about each other.

During the trip, students also got an eye-opening experience touring the majestic Angkor Wat complex in Siem Reap, taking the bamboo train ride in Battambang, and visiting the Khmer Rouge Tribunal Court as well as the Killing Fields outside Phnom Penh.

Congratulations to FASS Geography’s Rachel Oh on her Oral Presentation Award!

Rachel Oh (FASS Geography, MA. student) competed against almost 100 other presenters and won the Best Oral Presentation Award for her talk during the recent 3rd International Symposium on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Antalya, Turkey.

Her presentation was based on her ongoing Master’s research project, “Restoring abandoned shrimp ponds to mangrove forests: a potential method for sustainable coastal management”. Her achievement also reflects very positively on the highly active mangrove research group (the Mangrove Lab) in the Department of Geography.
Congratulations to Professor Wang Gungwu!

Last year’s Economics and Social Science Prize (Asia Cosmopolitan Awards 2014) went to Prof Wang Gungwu. The biennial Asia Cosmopolitan Awards, launched by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) “aims to recognise on a biennial basis individuals or organisations that have made substantial and significant contributions to the development of a peaceful and stable East Asian Community, to narrow the developmental gaps in the region, as well as to establish the sustainable social growth towards economic and cultural integration within East Asia.” The award ceremony was held on 21 December 2014 in Nara, Japan, at Noh Theatre.

Our heartiest congratulations on your achievement Prof Wang!

LSE-NUS Lecture Series: Professor Brian Farrell speaks at LSE in October 2014

On 8 October 2014 in the Alumni Theatre of the New Academic Building at the London School of Economics (LSE), Prof Brian Farrell gave a talk titled “Cross-Border Cross Referencing: sorting out Indonesian confrontation in the field”. The lecture discussed the work of a military historian in the field and explore the role and perspectives of the local populations during this cross-border conflict.

Prof Brian Farrell is professor of military history and currently head of the NUS Department of History. His main areas of research interest are the military history of the British Empire, especially in the 20th century; the modern history of empires and imperialism, especially in Asia; the history of Western military power in Asia; and problems related to collective security and coalition warfare. He is currently acting as principal investigator on the major research project Empire in Asia: A New Global History, and serving as Asia-Pacific regional coordinator for the Society for Military History, the largest such professional organisation in the world.

Professor Tan Tai Yong

Appointed as NMP

The Faculty congratulates Prof Tan Tai Yong on his appointment as Nominated Member of Parliament (NMP). Prof Tan is a proud alumnus of the Faculty, having received his BA. (Hons) and MA. at the Department of History and finally coming back to lecture after obtaining his PhD from the University of Cambridge. He also served as Dean of FASS from 2004 to 2009 and is currently Executive Vice President (Academic Affairs) at Yale-NUS College.
Departmental News

Centre for Language Studies

CLS International Conference CLaSIC 2014
Keynote speakers Anna Uhl Chamot (George Washington University, USA), Rod Ellis (University of Auckland, NZ), Mike Levy (University of Queensland, Australia) and Naoko Taguchi (Carnegie Mellon University, USA) shared on topics central to the conference’s theme – “Knowledge, Skills and Competencies in Foreign Language Education.”

CLaSIC 2014 provides a platform for researchers, scholars, practitioners and developers in the area of foreign language education to share and discuss findings and insights pertaining to the role and development of communicative competence, as well as other critical forms of knowledge, skills and competencies for foreign language teaching and learning. The conference was held from 4 to 6 December 2014 at NUS University Town, with over 200 international and local presenters and participants present.

Department of Chinese Studies

Associate Professor Lee Cheuk Yin
The News and Advisory Board has appointed Assoc Prof Lee Cheuk Yin as the President of the Advisory Committee for Media Development Authority of Singapore (Chinese Programme). He is also a member of the Advisory Committee for Sun Yat Seng Memorial Hall. The President of Singapore has appointed Assoc Prof Lee as the Director of the Presidential Council for Religious Harmony. He will be serving in that capacity for the next three years. In addition, Assoc Prof Lee is also the Vice Chairman of the 5th International Confucian Association Council. He will be with the council for the next five years.

Associate Professor Lee Chee Hiang
Assoc Prof Lee Chee Hiang is now a member of the Advisory Committee for Sun Yat Seng Memorial Hall. He has been appointed, by the Singapore Management University, as a member of the Editorial Committee for the《华商华社研究》Book Series for the next three years.

Professor Xiang Mengbing
Prof Xiang Mengbing was with the Department from 14 to 27 December 2014 as an ISAAC Manasseh Meyer Fellow. Prof Xiang is a renowned Chinese dialectologist at Peking University. He has published widely on Chinese dialects, especially the Liancheng dialect, and has actively engaged in field research in Southern China. His current research interests are linguistic geography of Chinese dialects and semantic map methodology. He worked closely with faculty at the Department to offer a more comprehensive grammatical framework towards the investigation and description of Chinese dialects in field research.

Comparative Asian Studies Programme

Comparative Asian Studies PhD Programme Welcomes Inaugural Batch of Students in August 2014 and Launches New Website
The Comparative Asian Studies (CAS) PhD Programme welcomed its first batch of students in Semester 1 of Academic Year 2014/2015. The cohort consists of students from East, South, and Southeast Asia who come to FASS with an interest in pursuing research topics that are situated in at least two area-studies regions/ cultural zones. CAS students benefit from specially tailored modules (open to all FASS graduate students), language training, and the opportunity to work with members of FASS’s robust Asian Studies community. The programme also launched a new website (www.fas.nus.edu.sg/cas/) in December 2014. The revamped website features programme information and profiles of students and participating FASS faculty members.
**Department of Economics**

**Associate Professor Liu Haoming**

**Associate Professor Aditya Goenka**
Assoc Prof Aditya Goenka was appointed as a member of the Advisory Committee on Moneylending instituted by the Singapore Ministry of Law to review the regulatory regime under the Moneylenders Act (2009) and the Moneylenders Regime in view of developments in Singapore.

**The 7th Singapore Economic Policy Forum 2014**

The 7th Singapore Economic Policy Forum is an annual event that focuses on economic policy issues relevant to Singapore. This year, the Forum was jointly organised by the Singapore Centre for Applied and Policy Economics (SCAPE) at the NUS Department of Economics and the Economic Society of Singapore on 31 October 2014 at Orchard Hotel.

The Forum featured prominent economists and thought-leaders to explore policy options for Singapore in a number of areas, which included the global economic environment, sustainable healthcare, retirement savings, labour market structure and income inequality.

The Opening Remarks was delivered by Prof David Lee (Vice President, Economic Society of Singapore) followed by six plenary presentations.

Mr. Heenan from IMF presented a comprehensive overview of chapters 1 and 2 of the October 2014 IMF World Economic Outlook October and chapter 1 of the October 2014 Global Financial Stability Report. He pointed out that an uneven global recovery is continuing, despite some recent setbacks. While Singapore’s economy remains highly resilient, the continued uncertainty regarding global economic and financial prospects underscores the need for meaningful structural reforms to improve productivity and maintain competitiveness, macroeconomic policies that buffer the real economy from global shocks, and financial regulation that heads off vulnerabilities that could arise from excessive risk taking and asset price misalignment.

Prof Naoki Ikegami from Keio School of Medicine is a renowned researcher and a high profile policy advocate in Japan. He presented a paper on “Containing Healthcare Costs: How Japan does it”, which analysed cost issues in Japanese healthcare system. To contain the cost, the Japanese government applies the fee schedule to all health insurance plans and virtually all providers. Besides, charging extra is prohibited and delivering services not listed is strictly restricted. Although payment is basically fee-for-service, a de facto global budget is imposed, and the price of items is individually revised so as to reflect costs, to pursue policy goals and to maintain appropriate margins for providers.

Prof Joseph Cherian addressed one of the hot topics in Singapore, retirement savings with a title “Seeking Higher Returns When Saving For Tomorrow – Be Careful What You Wish For!”. He attempted to separate the facts, myths and urban legends surrounding retirement systems today, and explained why a goal-oriented approach to retirement funding yields the type of riskless saving and payout schemes seen in Singapore’s current retirement system. He discussed his academic research on the risk and loss profile of equity and hedge fund investing for retirement. He pointed out, while it is definitely
prudent to pursue such an investment policy in a highly diversified, low-cost risk-taking portfolio, the attendant loss profile informs the investor as to why a “safety net” portfolio in riskless (preferably inflation-indexed) assets is more important to attain in a retirement account first.

Dr Slesh Shrestha’s presentation was on “Worker Mobility in a Foreign Labor Market: Evidence from a Randomized Control Trial in Singapore.” He talked on the impact of incomplete information available to foreign workers on labour regulations and job vacancies. He tested the impact of sharing factual information on Singapore labour laws and lowering job-search costs on foreign domestic workers’ job-search intentions and labour-market outcomes through a randomised control field experiment. The result shows that access to information increased foreign workers’ knowledge on legal rights and their expectations of fair wages, but more importantly, it improved their actual work-hours and other work-conditions.

Prof Randolph Tan presented on “Aggregate Matches and Profile Changes in Labour Markets”, in which he pointed out that depending on the size of the population, evolving labour force profiles may present different types of challenges to policymakers. Such differences could influence the effectiveness of alternative labour market policies. He first examined the approaches to characterising labour force profile changes, and then compared the workforce development strategies and labour market policies adopted in Singapore and selected economies.

The last presentation was delivered by Prof Tilak Abeysinghe on the topic of “Housing Prices, Graduates and Income Inequality in Singapore”. He pointed out that housing price escalations involve a substantial income re-distribution away from home buyers for owner occupation to property developers, rental property owners and financiers. Even with labour income data, he reported a significant effect of rising housing prices on labour income inequality. Interestingly, he found that rising share of graduates in the workforce as a key contributor to rising labour income inequality.

Department of English Language and Literature

Associate Professor Michelle M Lazar

Assoc Prof Lazar has been elected as the President of the International Gender and Language Association. Her two-year term will end on 30 June 2016.

Chalk Circle

Students from the Theatre Studies module TS2233: Making Contemporary Performance presented Chalk Circle on 13 November 2014. Directed by Natalie Hennedige, the play was an adaptation of Bertolt Brecht’s Caucasian Chalk Circle.
Department of Geography

Professor Neil Brenner

Prof Brenner is with the Department of Geography as a Lim Chong Yah Visiting Professor. He will be involved in research and teaching from January to May 2015. He is Professor of Urban Theory and Director of the Urban Theory Lab at the Harvard Graduate School of Design (GSD). He previously served as Professor of Sociology and Metropolitan Studies, and as an affiliated faculty member of the American Studies Program, at New York University. His writing and teaching focus on the theoretical, conceptual and methodological dimensions of urban questions. His work builds upon, and seeks to extend, the fields of critical urban and regional studies, comparative geopolitical economy and radical sociospatial theory.

GPN@NUS

Prof Henry Yeung, together with Prof Neil Coe as co-Principal Investigator (both Department of Geography) has recently been awarded a S$4.95 million research grant by the NUS Office of Deputy President (Research and Technology) to establish a Faculty-based research centre for the study of global production networks (GPN) and economic development, with a particular focus on East Asia. Founded by a team of nine top researchers from Geography, Economics, Sociology, and Political Science, this Centre is named GPN@NUS and the initial grant is for a 3-year period (though future funding will be sought over time). Starting on 1 October 2014, the Centre will directly hire up to 15 full time assistant/associate professors/senior research fellows, post-doctoral fellows, and research assistants. It will also fund and support research programmes and projects worth up to S$2 million.

GPN@NUS focuses on global production and economic development, particularly in East Asia. Its mission is to understand and explain how the complex production of goods and services is globally organised and what this means for economic development in different regions and national economies, particularly those in Northeast and Southeast Asia. Officially launched in late January 2015, it is currently in the recruitment and planning phase and will conduct novel empirical studies illuminating the changing nature and organisation of global production in East Asia. Research will explore the impact of global production on, among other factors: economic development, technological innovation, economic and social upgrading, national competitiveness, industrial and corporate change, entrepreneurship and business strategy, investment patterns, global governance, shifting consumption patterns, and global environmental change.

This research is extremely relevant for economic development in the East Asian region, particularly Singapore. As a major intermediary in global trade, producer services, and manufacturing, Singapore has been a key player in coordinating and managing evolving global production networks. In trade and services, Singapore has served as a leading international hub for sea and air transport, logistics, legal and accounting services, and financial services, enabling value-added activity in these production networks. Commodities traders such as Olam and Wilmar are also lead firms in key agro-food global production networks. In manufacturing, Singapore’s strength in semiconductors (e.g. microprocessors), pharmaceuticals (e.g. active ingredients), petrochemicals (e.g. feedstocks), and aerospace (e.g. engines) provides critical and high value intermediate inputs for lead firms producing industrial or final goods in other East Asian locations. In so doing, Singapore has created and captured significant value from these cross-border production networks. GPN@NUS’ research will benefit Singapore’s growing capacity in industrial and trade policy-making, business decisions, risk management, and regulatory regimes. Furthermore, it will provide crucial knowledge to decision makers in Singapore as they seek to increase their value capture from global production networks.

Department of History

Dr John DiMoia

Dr John DiMoia is a member of the working group at Max Planck Institute for the History of Science (MPIWG). Members of this group will meet regularly to analyse decision making and organisational strategies’ role in scientific and technological change. He will be attending the second meeting as of January 2015.

Professor Robert Bickers

The Department held a joint seminar with the Empire in Asia Project at the Faculty Lounge. The speaker, Prof Bickers, Professor of History at the University of Bristol, discussed ‘Lights and Shadows on a Chinese Shore: The Kidnapping at Breaker Point Lighthouse, 1932’ on 29 September 2014.

Professor Tomoyuki Ishizu

Prof Ishizu is a Professor of Military and Strategic Studies in the Center for Military History, National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS), Defense Ministry of Japan. He is also a Visiting Professor and a Collaborator of the Empire in Asia research project. In connection with his appointment at History, he presented a paper at the second workshop in September 2014 and presented a department seminar, entitled “Japan and the First World War: A Political and Military History”, on 15 October 2014.

Professor Malcolm Murfett

Prof Malcolm Murfett who is now with the Department of War Studies at King’s College, London and an Associate Editor of the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, came back to present the final Benjamin Batson Lecture on 20 November 2014 on “ASEAN: Much Ado About Nothing” in front of an enthusiastic audience in LT14. Before proceedings began he received a present for his 34 years of service from the Dean of FASS, Prof Brenda Yeoh. Prof Murfett then discussed ASEAN’s undistinguished role in dealing with both natural and man-made tragedies that have afflicted our region in the past few years. A lively Q&A followed before the audience was invited outside for light refreshments. It was a lovely way for Malcolm to bid farewell to the department and he relished the opportunity of doing so.
Development and Utilisation of Japanese Performing Arts Metadata

On 21 and 22 July 2014, Assoc Prof Lim Beng Choo from the Department organised a workshop entitled “Development and Utilization of Japanese Performing Arts Data.” Assoc Prof Lim and participants from universities in Japan, USA and Russia presented short reports on the structure of the different online database that they have been working on as well as discussed issues of engaging users and inviting collaborators. The second day of the workshop was a closed-door event devoted to the technical aspects of the building of the database. Most of the workshop participants are members of the Global Performing Arts Database consortium - an online database archive. The workshop which was supported by the Japan Foundation was a successful event.

7th Oxford Asia Retail Conference

The Department co-organised the 7th Oxford Asia Retail Conference from 24 to 26 September 2014 with the Oxford Institute of Retail Management at the Said Business School, University of Oxford. The theme of the conference was the impact of retailing in emerging and mature markets and the conference brought together 40 academics working on retailing in Asia. The conference also included a symposium that allowed the sharing of ideas between academia and the industry.

Meiji-NUS Fashion Marketing Study Programme Tokyo

In collaboration with the School of Commerce of Meiji-University, Department of Japanese Studies organised a student programme on Fashion Marketing in Tokyo in December 2014 for 10 NUS students. The eight day programme consisted of company visits, expert lectures and joint fieldwork and workshops together with students from Meiji University and allowed a backstage view of the bustling Japanese fashion market. The trip was led by Assoc Prof Hendrik Meyer-Ohle and NUS students were supported by a grant from the Japan Student Services Organisation.

Japanese Foreign Policy: From Yoshida to Abe

Prof Kiichi Fujiwara from the University of Tokyo gave a lecture entitled “Japanese Foreign Policy: From Yoshida to Abe” to an audience of 74. Attendees comprise members of the public, in addition to academics and government officials from ministries and embassies. The lecture was held last 3 September 2014, at the NUSG Guild House.

Japanese Foreign Policy under Abe

On 30 October 2014, Prof Tomohiko Taniguchi from Keio University delivered a public lecture to about 130 attendees on Japanese Foreign Policy under Abe. Prof Taniguchi is also the Special Advisor to the Cabinet of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. The event was held at the Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium, Education Resource Centre, University Town.

Competition and Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific: Recognising Challenges, Seizing Opportunities

This public symposium was held on 19 November 2014 at The Gallery, Grand Hyatt Hotel. The keynote speaker was Ian Buruma and the panelists were Prof C Raja Mohan, Mr Rodolfo C Severino, Prof Etel Solingen, Prof Yoshioide Soeya and Prof Zhu Feng. Coming from various geographical and political perspectives, the speakers discussed many issues regarding the difficulties and possibilities surrounding Asia-Pacific regional cooperation. Besides academics and government officials, many members of the public also attended the symposium, and asked interesting questions that provided for a lively and inclusive discussion. The organisers were glad to have such a turnout for the symposium, and hope that future events will be able to provide a venue for such important debates.

Japanese Government (Monbukagakusho: MEXT) Scholarship for 2014

This scholarship is offered by the Japanese Government’s Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Year 2 Japanese Studies major, Kaysea Koh Qianlin received the full scholarship to Keio University. Her cohort mate Lam Wei Chuan also received the full scholarship, and has opted to go to Waseda University. Year 4 student Tan Jing Ting, also on the full scholarship, is currently at the Kumamoto University.
Dr Stephen Lim has clinched the competitive 2014 Fulbright Researcher Award. Dr Lim will be fully supported to conduct cognitive-educational psychology research at Purdue University in collaboration with Assoc Prof Jeffrey Karpicke, whose scientific work has been featured thrice in the prestigious journal Science. During his 10-day visit at NUS, Prof Rosenbloom gave a public seminar and host a dialogue with students and staffs on teaching and research on public administration. For those who are interested in more in-depth communication, he also welcomes private meetings upon appointments.

Dr Chong, Dr Nakano and Assoc Prof Soo were awarded S$283,000 worth of Japanese Government Grant from the Japanese Cabinet Office.

Emeritus Professor Horowitz is the James B. Duke Professor of Law and Political Science Emeritus at Duke University and Senior Fellow at the International Forum for Democratic Studies of the National Endowment for Democracy. He is the author of seven books: The Courts and Social Policy (1977), which won the Louis Brownlow Award of the National Academy of Public Administration; The Jurocracy (1977), a book about government lawyers; Coup Theories and Officers’ Motives: Sri Lanka in Comparative Perspective (1980); Ethnic Groups in Conflict (1985, 2000); A Democratic South Africa? Constitutional Engineering in a Divided Society (1991), which won the Ralph Bunche Prize of the American Political Science Association; The Deadly Ethnic Riot (2001); and Constitutional Change and Democracy in Indonesia, published in 2013 by Cambridge University Press. His interests include: arbitration; constitution-making; law and politics in Asia; snorkeling around the world; hot Malaysian curries; African masks; port and sake. Emeritus Prof Horowitz visited NUS under the FASS Visiting Fellowship for Distinguished Scholars. He was here from 11 January to 9 February 2015.

Dr Chong received the 2013 Best Book Award for the International Security Studies Section during the 2014 International Studies Association Annual Meeting 2014 on 27 March.

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Official Launch of Bringing Love to Every Single Soul (BLESS) and CSDA-BLESS collaboration

More than 100 people, including students, alumni, NUS staff, social service practitioners and elderly volunteers from the community attended the launch of Bringing Love To Every Single Soul (BLESS), a community-focused non-profit organisation managed by NUS students and alumni. The event also celebrated the start of a three-year collaboration between Centre for Social Development Asia (CSDA) and BLESS, which will set forth further initiatives on social development programmes and research initiatives. The event was graced by Singapore Parliamentary Secretary Ms Low Yen Ling, Ministry of Social and Family Development and Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth, who was the Guest-of-Honour. The event was held on 16 August 2014.

Launch of North West POSB SavingStars Programme

300 guests attended the launch of the North West POSB SavingStars Programme held at Republic Polytechnic on 15 November 2014. This programme is jointly organised by North West Community Development Council (CDC), POSB Bank Singapore, Care Corner Family Service Centres (FSC) within the North West District and Centre for Social Development (Asia). The 18-month programme, which has components of matched savings, experiential group work and financial literacy workshops, will enable 240 children to cultivate good saving habits and build knowledge on financial literacy. They will be supported to reach their savings goals by mentors from Care Corner FSC and also from their parents. CSDA will be working with Care Corner FSC on a research study involving the capturing and analysis of data on the impact that the programme has on the children’s knowledge and attitude towards savings and aspirations for the future.
The Neighbourhood Health Services

The Neighbourhood Health Services (NHS) is the combined efforts of medical student volunteers from the Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine and social work student volunteers from FASS. The student volunteers are trained by volunteer managers on the operation procedures and protocols to ensure that they are well-equipped for the screenings; and to familiarise them with the questionnaires. Through establishing partnerships and collaborations with agencies to garner and utilise community services for various needs of the residents, they work closely with agencies in the follow-up and management of cases.

ACORNS ENABLERS

The ACORNS ENABLERS are Social Work undergraduate volunteers supervised by Social Workers who are volunteer mentors. The ACORNS ENABLERS aim to meet the developmental needs of children by empowering families through case management. The project hopes to facilitate and improve relationships within the families, and between them and formal help systems, with a main focus on the child’s developmental needs.
Department of Sociology

Sociology Pioneer Class of 1969 Reunion

2014 marked the 45th anniversary for the pioneer class of NUS Sociology. The class celebrated this special occasion with a reunion dinner at the NUS Bukit Timah campus, and by establishing the FASS Class of ’69 Sociology Alumni Bursary Fund. Mr Lee Soo Jin took the lead to organise the Dinner. The classmates and guests including Prof Chua Beng Huat (Head of the NUS Department of Sociology), faculty staff, newly instated President and Vice-President of the NUS Sociology Society and the two inaugural Bursary recipients enjoyed the evening in earnest conversation and testing each other’s scholarship in Sociology through a fun and some very academic quiz questions.

The former classmates reminisced the good old days and Mr Ilangovan, the first President of the NUS Sociology Society, showed with joy and pride the original copy of the first issue of the South-East Asian Journal of Sociology. The pioneer batch of Sociology students in NUS were the driving force behind the publication of this journal (now known as Asian Journal of Social Science), a scholarly journal for both local and refereed international contributors. They also put their knowledge and skills to good use by conducting a university-wide sociological survey on student attitude in the campus. These activities are nothing less than symbolic translations of the enthusiasm that the pioneer class had for the Department and its student body. The passion and desire to connect and contribute did not diminish over time. After 45 years, the Class has once again come together as one to give back to their alma mater and engage with their home Department and juniors in Sociology.

Mr Yap Boh Tiong represented his class in presenting the bursary award to the two recipients. Ms Coreen Lee is a fourth-year Sociology student reading a Minor in Health and Social Sciences. Coming from a family of six, Ms Lee holds a part-time job while studying and has been financially self-sufficient since she was 18. She said that the bursary came in at the right time as she wanted to cut down her working days as she needed to commit more time to her schoolwork and Honours thesis. The other recipient of the award is Mr Teng Horm Earm, a third-year Sociology student. Also coming from a large household, Mr Teng’s family’s financial situation is not ideal. His parents are currently supporting the whole household expenditure, including the school fees of two university students and the medical fees of his grandmother who suffers from dementia and other chronic illnesses. Hence, he was extremely grateful for the financial assistance provided through the bursary. The Class of ’69 was happy to know that these students benefited from their contributions and they look forward to improving the lives of other Sociology students in the future.

Department of Southeast Asian Studies

Topeng Calonarang – A Story of Magic and Power

On the evening of 12 November 2014, NUS Lecture Theatre 13 was transformed into a Balinese stage as vibrant gamelan music, exuberant dancing and incense smoke filled the hall. The audience was treated to a performance of Topeng Calonarang – a genre of Balinese classical theatre choreographed by Assoc Prof Irving Chan Johnson for his new module in the Department of Southeast Asian Studies, SE3230: Seen and Unseen: Explorations in Balinese Theatre. Called Topeng Calonarang, the performance combines the...
well-loved masked drama of Topeng with the ritual performance of Calonarang. The elaborate performance was put up by students enrolled in the module as well as dancers from Singapore’s only Balinese dance group, Eka Suwara Santi. The group comprises both NUS students and members of the public interested in traditional Balinese dance and is under the artistic directorship of Assoc Prof Johnson. As with most forms of classical Balinese theatre, music was an integral element in the performance. A live gamelan orchestra from the village of Pinda in Bali under the directorship of maestro I Nyoman Kariasa accompanied the thirty dancers as they moved, sang, narrated, and acted out an 11th century Balinese tale.

Southeast Asian studies majors Keith Ong and Lim Tze How performing the barong.

Dancers from Eka Suwara Santi performing the Dance of the Sisya (students of black magic).
The NUS community was also involved in the performance with Prof John Miksic performing the role of the Hindu priest Empu Beradah and Mr Tan Shao Han taking on the role of a Balinese villager. Students from other faculties performed various other minor roles as well. The dancers were led by Assoc Prof Johnson and famed Balinese theatrical performer I Made Cat Suteja. Students of SE3230 performed most of the roles and crafted the English language dialogue themselves all the while adhering to Balinese theatrical aesthetics. They also memorised lines in old Balinese and old Javanese which were necessary in creating the mood through which the various scenes moved. The students had spent their mid-semester recess in Bali studying their various roles daily under the tutorship of some of Bali’s best actors/dancers. Ni Kadek Dewi Aryani a well-known Balinese dancer taught the girls their complex moves of the sisya (students of magic) and I Nyoman Suka Brata (Takur) taught the boys how to maneuver the heavy Barong – a lion-like creature, incarnation of the Hindu god Siwa, and main protagonist in every Calonarang performance. I Made Cat Suteja taught the other students their roles as clown servants, villagers, mythical birds and so forth. As Balinese theatre is both social and ritual, students watched a number of different performances in Bali as well as visited places of historical and artistic importance which would assist them in learning about Balinese acting and dancing. Putting on a Topeng Calonarang performance is no easy feat and the students spent many hours in rehearsals that went late into the night.

The two-hour performance was a success and the lecture theatre was packed to full capacity. The performance was made possible through the kind assistance of the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia and the NUS Office of Student Affairs.

Myanmar-Singapore Archaeology Training and Research Project (MSATP)

The MSATPS objective is to gather data on life in the ancient royal palace of Bagan, Myanmar. A major subsidiary goal was to train Myanmar archaeologists. This project was carried out from 27 December 2013 to 12 January 2014. The outcomes included: (1) confirmation that the museum collection in Bagan has great potential for shedding light on early Southeast Asian history; (2) collection of preliminary data on ceramic typology; (3) creation of a team of research assistants who can be used in future projects; (4) introduction of new analytical techniques relevant to the archaeology and early history of Myanmar to Myanmarese scholars and students. This project involved collaboration between the Department of Southeast Asian Studies at NUS, the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, the History Programme from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Nanyang Technological University, the Directorates of Historical Research and Archaeology of the Ministry of Culture of the Union of Myanmar, and the Department of Archaeology, University of Yangon.
Prof John Miksic led the team which assembled in Yangon on December 28, 2013. They proceeded to the Pyay Field School of Archaeology for two days of lectures, then to Bagan, by bus. The team consisted of 14 students from the three government institutions mentioned above. The basement of the Bagan Museum contains more than 250 large baskets and bags full of artefacts recovered from excavations at the 11th century Bagan Palace site, which have never been catalogued or studied. With this team, in two weeks they were able to analyse the contents of four baskets. With experience, the pace of work sped up. The artefacts comprise a wide range of historic items from ceramics (earthenware, stoneware, and Chinese porcelain) to Buddhist votive tablets, stucco, stoneware pipes, beads (glass and stone), glass shards, lacquered objects, and wooden items. There were also prehistoric artefacts from places further north, such as Letpanchibaw, and these include Stegodon teeth and other fossilised items.

Based on these results, Prof Miksic and his colleague from NTU, Dr Goh Geok Yian, have received a grant for further research and training in Myanmar.

**South Asian Studies Programme (SASP)**

**Dr Sidharthan Maunaguru**
Dr Sidharthan Maunaguru was awarded the Newton Alumni Funding from the British Academy and Royal Society on 1 November 2014.

**Professor Meenakshi Thapan**
Prof Meenakshi Thapan, Professor of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi, was a Distinguished Visitor at SASP from 27 September to 4 October 2014, where he delivered seminars and interacted with SASP staff and students.
DEPARTMENT OF CHINESE STUDIES

The Territory of Modern Chinese Literature
Jin Jin
Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 2014

One Hundred Years’ History of the Nanyang Confucian Association
Ong Chang Woei & Koh Khee Heong
Nanyang Confucian Association, 2014, Singapore

Confucianism and Religion
Ong Chang Woei & Tan Eng Chaw (Eds.)
Confucianism Society (Singapore), 2014

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Buddhism and American Cinema
John Whalen Bridge and Gary Storhoff (Eds.)
New York: SUNY Press, 2014

In 1989, the same year the Dalai Lama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, a decade-long boom of films dedicated to Buddhist people, history, and culture began. Offering the first scholarly treatment of Buddhism and cinema, the editors advise that there are two kinds of Buddhist film: those that are about Buddhists and those that are not. Focusing on contemporary American offerings, the contributors extend a two-pronged approach, discussing how Buddhism has been captured by directors and presenting Buddhist-oriented critiques of the worlds represented in films that would seem to have no connection with Buddhism. Films discussed range from those set in Tibet, such as Kundun and Lost Horizon, to those set well outside of any Buddhist milieu, such as Groundhog Day and The Matrix. The contributors explain the Buddhist theoretical concepts that emerge in these works, including karma, the bardo, and reincarnation, and consider them in relation to interpretive strategies that include feminism, postcolonialism, and contemplative psychological approaches.
**DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY**

**Arts, Culture and the Making of Global Cities: Creating New Urban Landscapes in Asia**

Lily Kong, Ching Chia-Ho and Chou Tsu-Lung

While global cities have mostly been characterised as sites of intensive and extensive economic activity, the quest for global city status also increasingly rests on the creative production and consumption of culture and the arts. *Arts, Culture and the Making of Global Cities* examines such ambitions and projects undertaken in five major cities in Asia: Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Taipei and Singapore. Providing a thorough comparison of their urban imaging strategies and attempts to harness arts and culture, as well as more organically evolved arts activities and spaces, this book analyses the relative successes and failures of these cities. Offering rich ethnographic detail drawn from extensive fieldwork, the authors challenge city strategies and existing urban theories and reveal the many complexities in the art of city-making.

**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**Indonesia’s Changing Political Economy: Governing the Roads**

Jamie S. Davidson
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015

Indonesia is Southeast Asia’s largest economy and freest democracy yet vested interests and local politics serve as formidable obstacles to infrastructure reform. In this critical analysis of the politics inhibiting infrastructure investment, Jamie S. Davidson utilises evidence from his research, press reports and rarely used consultancy studies to challenge mainstream explanations for low investment rates and the sluggish adoption of liberalising reforms. He argues that obstacles have less to do with weak formal institutions and low fiscal capacities of the state than with entrenched, rent-seeking interests, misaligned central-local government relations, and state-society struggles over land. Using a political-sociological approach, Davidson demonstrates that ‘getting the politics right’ matters as much as getting the prices right or putting the proper institutional safeguards in place for infrastructure development. This innovative account and its conclusions will be of interest to students and scholars of Southeast Asia and policymakers of infrastructure investment and economic growth.

**Michael Oakeshott: Notebooks 1922-86**

Luke O’Sullivan (ed.)
Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2014

From the 1920s to the 1980s Oakeshott filled dozens of notebooks with his private reflections, both personal and intellectual. Their contents range from aphorisms to miniature essays, forming a unique record of his intellectual trajectory over his entire career. This volume makes them accessible in print for the first time, drawing together a host of his previously inaccessible observations on politics, philosophy, art, education, and much else besides. Religion in particular emerges as an ongoing concern for him in a way that is not visible from his published works. The notebooks also provide a unique source of insight into Oakeshott’s musings on life, thanks to the hitherto unsuspected existence of the series of ‘Belle Dame’ notebooks that were written in the late 1920s and early 1930s but which only came to light two decades after his death. At the same period in which he was developing the concepts that would form *Experience and its Modes*, Oakeshott’s personal life lead him to reflect extensively on love and death, themes that highlight his enduring romantic affinities. Accompanied by an original editorial introduction, the volume allows readers to see for themselves exactly which works Oakeshott used in compiling each of his notebooks, providing a much clearer record of his intellectual influences than has previously been available. It will be an essential addition to the library of his works for all those interested in his ideas.
**How India Became Territorial: Foreign Policy, Diaspora, Geopolitics**

Itty Abraham  
California: Stanford University Press, 2014

Why do countries go to war over disputed lands? Why do they fight even when the territories in question are economically and strategically worthless? Drawing on critical approaches to international relations, political geography, international law, and social history, and based on close examination of the Indian experience during the 20th century, Itty Abraham addresses these important questions and offers a new – non-US and non-European focused – and productive way of thinking about foreign policy and inter-state conflicts over territory in Asia.

**Ancient Harbours in Southeast Asia: The Archaeology of Early Harbours and Evidence of Inter-Regional Trade**

John N Miksic & Goh Geok Yian (Eds.)  
Thailand: SEAMEO SPAFA, 2013

The archaeology of harbours is critical to understanding patterns of ancient trade and inter-regional interaction. Systematic excavations of sites of harbours, ports and docks are, however, extremely rare in Southeast Asia. Even though ancient trade has always been a favourite topic of scholars working on ancient Southeast Asia, the working areas of ports/harbours have attracted very little attention. This is the first publication to focus on the archaeology of Southeast Asian harbours.

This book compiles some of the first research by Southeast Asian archaeologists on this significant but neglected subject. It contains much new information on the roles of Southeast Asians in ancient commerce and industry, and on the nature of cultural interaction which has taken place in these sites for over 2,000 years.

The bulk of contributions in this volume concern Indonesia, as befits the immense geographical expanse of a nation comprising thousands of islands. The book brings together studies on Sumatra, Java, Bali, Sulawesi, and the eastern part of the Indonesian archipelago. Another chapter deals with protohistoric Malaysia. Chapters on the Philippines range from the thousand-year-old trading port of Butuan to Spanish colonial-era shipyards. A study of late prehistoric sites of inter-regional seaborne trade in peninsular Thailand indicates that these may be the oldest harbours in the region to link the Indian Ocean to the South China Sea. The publication should shed more light and encourage further research on this neglected field.
He was one of nine children and his parents could not afford to pay for his school books, nor could they provide him with tiffin money. So, Mr Lee Kok Wah ('69) would borrow his classmates’ books and his father would laboriously copy them out by candlelight on a type writer. If he was lucky, his grandmother would give him a potato to take to school for his lunch and his friends would share their food with him.

His life changed dramatically 50 years ago when a teacher put him forward for a scholarship to pay for his ‘A’ level studies. The scholarship was provided by banker and philanthropist Tan Sri Dr Tan Chin Tuan, who gave both his money and his time generously to young people in financial need. “I was touched and inspired by his generosity. He taught me the value of hard work. His philosophy was if I give one dollar to someone who does not need it, it is not as impactful as giving to someone who is in desperate need. I told myself that one day I would reciprocate and help low income families whose children qualify for university,” shares Mr Lee, who met Tan Sri Dr Tan on a number of occasions.

The scholarship was followed by a bursary, also provided by Tan Sri Dr Tan, to pay for his studies in social sciences at the University of Singapore, the predecessor institution of the National University of Singapore (NUS).

Today, Mr Lee is a businessman with over 40 years’ experience in the corporate, finance and capital markets and is renowned for his ability to turn around flagging companies, particularly in the marine and shipping sectors. He is one of Singapore’s pioneer generation who helped lay the foundations for modern day Singapore’s success. “Those were fantastic days, the 60s, 70s and 80s. We were part of the pioneers. We were building up Singapore. We were tiny in Asia and no one knew where Singapore was,” he recalls fondly.

Mr Lee has made a gift to NUS to set up the Mr and Mrs Lee Wai Kin Bursary at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in memory of his parents. “My father truly believed that education was the key to our future. He was very enterprising and showed me that from failure you get success. This bursary also serves to remind future generations of the tremendous sacrifices of our parents for a better future,” he says.

What is his hope for the recipients of his bursary? “They should use the money wisely and hopefully one day they will help the poorer sections of society. Money should be used wisely. Instead of accumulating money, they should put their dollars where they can do more in terms of being of real benefit to society,” shares Mr Lee.
MEMORIAL GIFT PROVIDES LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCES

“I know that in some intricate ways, the lives of the children of the refugee camps in the West Bank have been moved and inspired by the care given to them from a part of the world they had previously never heard of.”

Sharifah Nabilah Syed Omar, Year 3 student, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Sharifah received the Tan Mingwei Global Community Service Grant, which was set up to allow students to carry out meaningful community work in developing countries and be transformed by the experience. Sharifah volunteered in the West Bank where she taught children in refugee camps how to read and write.

To find out more about making a gift to NUS, call 1-800-DEVELOP (1-800-338-3567), email askdvo@nus.edu.sg or visit www.giving.nus.edu.sg
Celebrating Words

It was a gathering of an all-star cast of Singapore poets and writers under one roof. From Emeritus Prof Edwin Thumboo to author and poet Felix Cheong, the event was a celebration of our literary scene and proved that with their vibrancy and creativity, Singapore’s literary minds have much to share with us all. The event, Celebrating Words: A Symposium of Poetry Readings by ELL Alumni and Friends, was held on 23 August 2014 in FASS. 13 prominent writers were invited to share their experiences and answer questions from eager students and members of the public. The 14 prominent poets, all alumni and friends closely associated with the Department of English Language and Literature (ELL), were Felix Cheong, Elangovan, Gwee Li Sui, Heng Siok Tian, Aaron Lee, Lee Tzu Pheng, Oliver Seet, Kirpal Singh, Paul Tan, Edwin Thumboo, Eric Valles, Cyril Wong, Wong Phui Nam, and Yong Shu Hoong. Celebrating Words was co-sponsored by the Tan Chin Tuan Foundation.

In his opening address, Emeritus Prof Edwin Thumboo reminisced about the “old days” decades ago with a whole gang of young poets who loved and honed their craft through the years. Some, as he noted, are not known for their poetry, but for other aspects of their public life, yet he remembers their creative output fondly. In the panel sessions, the thought on not being known for their poetry continues to be echoed. Lee Tzu Pheng spoke of no one in her parish knowing that she wrote poetry, almost for a decade. Paul Tan added that he wears the hat of a poet “awkwardly” especially as our day jobs may be most “unpoetic”.

In the next panel session, a student raised the very pertinent question about what the hardest part of writing poetry is. To Kirpal Singh, the greatest challenge to poetry was being honest, echoing Hemingway’s insistence on writing words that are honest and true. For Cyril Wong, it was to continue writing despite the social rejection of his poetry and even being turned away from events and sessions. On the other hand, Elangovan found poetry writing not a challenge at all, because to him it was “zen” — something to bring peace and calm in routinely crafting a work to represent the communities he was looking at. Yong Shu Hoong agreed that if a poem took a great amount of effort, it might not be meant to be. These insights were very illuminating in showing the students in the audience what it takes to be a poet and how these local literary greats honed and perfected their craft.

The final panel launched into a spirited discussion on gender. A member of the audience enthusiastically brought up the male gaze, used in poetry and prose when the female is objectified as the target of the male character. In response, Felix Cheong discussed one of his works where he took on the point of view of a woman and turned the male gaze on himself in that sense. The discussion also delved fruitfully into the purpose of poetry, when Oliver Seet very aptly pointed out that the purpose of poetry is to project oneself into different points of view and cultures and take on varied voices.

In sum, the stellar cast of local literary greats provided the audience with a session of poetry and enlightening discussion. Ultimately, they prove more than ever, that the local literary culture is not just existent, but flourishing. As Prof Thumboo noted, poetry is about passion. With passion in the human psyche, there will be words to translate that passion into poetry.

Celebrating Words (from left): Organising Committee member Vincent Ooi, Cyril Wong, Kirpal Singh, Yong Shu Hoong, Elangovan, Wong Phui Nam, Kirsten Law from the Tan Chin Tuan Foundation, Edwin Thumboo, Oliver Seet, Lee Tzu Pheng, Heng Siok Tian, Eric Valles, Paul Tan and Aaron Lee. Absent from photo were Felix Cheong and Gwee Li Sui.

The event was attended by almost 200 students from schools, universities and members of the public.

Panellists for the 1st of 3 sessions: (from left) Edwin Thumboo, Gwee Li Sui, Lee Tzu Pheng and Paul Tan.

Panellists for the 2nd session (from left): Aaron Lee, Yong Shu Hoong, Elangovan, Cyril Wong and Kirpal Singh.

Panellists for the 3rd session (from left): Heng Siok Tian, Felix Cheong, Oliver Seet, Eric Valles and Wong Phui Nam.

Paul Tan: “It was very meaningful to come back to NUS and see all the familiar and friendly faces.”

Felix Cheong: “It was great to be back in NUS to do a reading”.

Celebrating Words (from left): (organised committee member Vincent Ooi, Cyril Wong, Kirpal Singh, Yong Shu Hoong, Elangovan, Wong Phui Nam, Kirsten Law of the Tan Chin Tuan Foundation, Edwin Thumboo, Oliver Seet, Lee Tzu Pheng, Heng Siok Tian, Eric Valles, Paul Tan and Aaron Lee. Absent from the photo were Felix Cheong and Gwee Li Sui.