

15<sup>th</sup> Malaysia-Singapore Forum | 7-8 Dec 2015

FASS Research Division Seminar Room, AS7 06-42

The Shaw Foundation Building, 5 Arts Link, Singapore 117570

Hosted by the FASS, National University of Singapore | Co-organized with the FASS, University of Malaya

# POLITICS OF HERITAGE

The notion of heritage has become an increasingly prominent theme in the socio-economic, political and cultural landscapes of contemporary Singapore and Malaysia. Against a wider milieu of globalization and modernization, heritage provides a focal point where both these relatively young nations aim to retain as well as claim semblances of objectified and embodied histories. As a consequence, the term itself is increasingly interpreted as being synonymous with calls to conserve and preserve a myriad of local sites, languages, trades and traditions—material and non-material.

This raises important questions of what stakes are involved, who the stakeholders are, what kinds of implications there are for nationhood, national identity, social collectives and individuals. With ‘heritage’ becoming progressively politicized, the term is increasingly a loaded concept with the means to value-add, privilege, and/or justify existence.

As heritage movements and processes gain momentum, it becomes increasingly urgent to critically examine what is included and excluded from this growing frame. Likewise, we need to scrutinize the main drivers and agendas behind heritage ascription. The strategic positioning of institutions and individuals in relation to heritage discourses can acutely reflect socio-economic and political ideologies articulated by governments and businesses alike.

This forum seeks to query how heritage, heritage-making processes and the ways in which these are communicated can influence or alter power relations between governments on the international stage, governments and citizenry, civil groups and personal agencies in society.

Kindly email [fastxr@nus.edu.sg](mailto:fastxr@nus.edu.sg) by 30 Nov 2015 to register.



# PROGRAMME

Day 1: 7<sup>th</sup> December 2015 (Monday)

9:00 am – 9:15 am	REGISTRATION
9:15 am – 9:30 am	WELCOME REMARKS Vice-Dean of FASS (NUS) Deputy Dean of FASS (UM)
9:30 am – 11:00 am	SESSION I – REVIEWING HISTORIES & IDENTITIES  Identity, History, and Postcoloniality in Malaysia: Nation and the Artifice of Heritage Assoc Prof. Sharmani Patricia Gabriel, English Department, UM  The Connected Histories of Johor and Singapore Adjunct Assoc Prof. Kwa Chong Guan, Department of History, NUS  The Role of the National Museum in Representing Malaysian Identity Yasaman Alsadat Hosseini, Masters Candidate, UM
11:00 am – 11:30 am	TEA BREAK
11:30 am – 1:00 pm	SESSION II – HERITAGE AND THE COMMUNITY  Heritage Making and Value to the City: Challenges for Community and City Assoc Prof. Ho Kong Chong, Department of Sociology, NUS  Orang Asli and Protected Areas: Are Jahai Partners or Muted Heritage in the Royal Belum State Park? Kamal Solhaimi Fadzil, Department of Anthropology & Sociology, UM  Mapping Heritage in the Streets: Helping to Reconnect Youth with Disappearing Heritages Dr Susan Philip, English Department, UM
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	LUNCH BREAK
2:00 pm – 3:30 pm	SESSION III – RE-READING HERITAGE IN TEXTS AND LITERATURE  Texting and Booking Heritage: The Euphoria in Heritage Making and Its Limit Dr Azhar Ibrahim, Department of Malay Studies, NUS  Losing Historical Heritage to Politically Incubated Heritage: The Case of the Malaysian Indians Dr. Sivachandralingam Sundara Raja, History Department, UM  Reclaiming the Probable Amid Perpetuating Tenuity: Historicising Two Discursive Legacies in the Writings of Munsyi Abdullah Dr. Kelvin Lawrence, Postdoc Fellow, Department of History, NUS
3:30 pm – 4:00 pm	TEA BREAK
4:00 pm – 5:00 pm	SESSION IV – NEGOTIATING MODERNIZATION AND HERITAGE  A Tradition of Modernity: Reading the past of Malaysian Science and Technology through the case of Rubber Research Leow Wei Yi, PhD Candidate, Comparative Asian Studies, NUS  Demolition as an Act of Remembering - Old National Library Building Sim Yang Jun Bernard, Masters Candidate, Department of Political Science, NUS
6:45 pm	DINNER (for guests & presenters only)

# PROGRAMME

## Day 2: 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015 (Tuesday)

9:30 am – 11:00 am	<p>SESSION V – ART &amp; ARTISTRY</p> <p>Illegal Art on Legal Walls: Graffiti in Singapore Assoc Prof. T.C. Chang, Department of Geography, NUS</p> <p>Aging with Kumar's political semiotics Jyh Wee Sew, Lecturer, Centre for Language Studies, NUS</p> <p>Pua Kumbu and the Politics of Heritage Janet Rata Noel, PhD Candidate, Gender Studies Programme, UM</p>
11:00 am – 11:30 am	TEA BREAK
11:30 am – 1:00 pm	<p>SESSION VI – HERITAGE IN SITU</p> <p>The Past, Present and the Future: Chinese Cemeteries in Malaysia Prof. Danny Wong Tze Ken, Department of History, UM Dr. Ong Siew Kian, Department of Chinese Studies, UM (Presenter)</p> <p>Preservation of Colonial vs Precolonial Heritage on the Hills of Singapore and Melaka Prof. John N Miksic, Department of Southeast Asian Studies, NUS</p> <p>Conservation of Tangible heritage: Some lessons learnt from Singapore and Malaysia's agreement on Tanjong Pagar Rail Station Dr. Lili Yulyadi Arnakim, Department of Southeast Asian Studies, UM</p>
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	LUNCH BREAK
2:00 pm – 3:30 pm	<p>SESSION VII – POLITICIZING CULTURAL REPRESENTATION</p> <p>Singapore's (m)other Tongue Policy: the Case of the Indians in Singapore Ritu Jain, PhD Candidate, South Asian Studies Program, NUS</p> <p>Cultural Heritage Politics of Chinese Medicine in Singapore Pauline Luk, PhD Candidate, Department of Communication and New Media, NUS</p> <p>Understanding the Perceptions of the Host Country's Food Culture among Myanmar Domestic Workers in Singapore Cheong Kakit, Masters Candidate, Department of Communication and New Media, NUS</p>
3:30 pm	CLOSING REMARKS & TEA