

## Editor's Note

In February 2018, a group of scholars, educators, librarians, heritage practitioners, and graduate students gathered for a one-and-a-half-day workshop to discuss the history and historiography of Singapore. Jointly sponsored by the Department of History (National University of Singapore) and the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* (JSEAS), the participants were asked to think about the epistemological construction of Singapore's history, its modes and forms of expression, and the way other fields/disciplines contributed to the fashioning of Singapore as a subject of study.

Led by Dr Ho Chi Tim, then a Lecturer in the Department of History (NUS), the group was encouraged to think about the range of contexts, perspectives, and experiences that could extend the study of Singapore history beyond the epistemological binaries that continue to structure contemporary discussions and analyses of Singapore's past. Mindful of the forthcoming Singapore Bicentennial in 2019 and fully cognizant of current debates within Singapore historiography, the group was asked to not only define what we mean by "Singapore History" but to situate that past within the context of Southeast Asian history, with the hope that case studies from Singapore might contribute to how we think about the region's history as well.

The project also included the inaugural "Histories" seminar series which was launched in partnership with the Asia Research Institute and the National Library, featuring several speakers from the workshop. Beginning in late 2018 and running through to mid-2019, the seminars enabled the public to engage in many of the conversations that were raised in the workshop, fulfilling one of the organizers' goals of creating a more public dialogue between academic historians and history enthusiasts about Singapore history. Hosted by the National Library, the presentations attracted over one hundred attendees per talk and affirmed the conviction by the organizers that interest in Singapore/Southeast Asian history is alive and well within the region.

On behalf of the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, I would like to thank the NUS Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences (FASS), the Department of History, our colleagues at the National Library (Singapore), and the Asia Research Institute for making the series of events possible. In particular, we would like to express our gratitude to Professors Robbie Goh (Dean-FASS) and Ian Gordon (Head-History) for their support of the project, Professor Wang Gung Wu for his closing keynote at the 2018 workshop and Mr. Kwa Chong Guan for his forward to this issue. Finally, it is important to note that the workshop and speaker series was conceptualized and organized by Dr. Ho Chi Tim, whose vision and commitment to Singapore history was the driving force behind the two events and the research that is featured in this special issue.

Special mention goes to Ms Eileen Shen, managing editor of JSEAS, the team of graduate students (You Chenxue, Ma Ling, Muhammad Suhail B Mohamed Yazid, Syafiqah Jaafa, and Wang Shuqin Sandy) who worked tirelessly behind the scenes, and to Ms Tan Tee Huang of the NUS Student History Society for designing this issue's cover.

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