EDUCATION AT LARGE

STUDENT LIFE & ACTIVITIES IN SINGAPORE

1945 -1965

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1945 -1965

Editors

Teng Siao See
Chan Cheow Thia
Lee Huay Leng

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— dedicated to those who left behind
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FOREWORD

THOSE UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES OF YOUTH

Lee Huay Leng

Translated by Chan Cheow Thia

Ever since its founding, The Tangent has always welcomed different opinions within the group. Members are divided with regard to the issue of the society keeping to a small-scale operation, or expanding to take on different forms of public engagement. Some have thought that the group should demonstrate greater social commitment and do more to promote the use of Chinese language in discussing current affairs and other issues concerning long-term national development. There are also others who feel that it is reasonable to maintain small-scale activities given our resource constraints. Looking back, the decision to do something different and yet continuative of our spirit was made under amicable circumstances.

The approach can be perceived as continuative because it was not the first time history was selected as the theme of a project. In 2002, the Tangent had organised a forum entitled “(Un)learning the Past” and subsequently published “Voices of History,” a special bilingual issue of our journal in 2003. However, the new task we set for ourselves was no longer merely organising forums or closed door discussions, but sustaining a whole series of activities that would culminate in the exhibition “Education-at-Large: Student Life and Activities in Singapore 1945–1965.” These activities included a public forum, during which we invited Mr Han Tan Juan and Professor Koh Tai Ann, educated in Chinese and English school traditions respectively, to share personal memories of their school lives; a conscious and concerted collaboration with schools, with educator-researcher, Mr Lim Cheng Tju, invited to give a special talk to participating students on

research methodology and the historical background of the period 1945–1965; as well as an appeal to members of the public to donate artefacts and share their stories, during which members of the Tangent also acquired new knowledge in the process of gathering oral histories.

Most members of the Tangent belong to the generation born in the years between 1960 and 1980. Impressions of the 1950s and 1960s, or even the 1970s — a period not too distant — are almost zilch apart from the mainstream discourse of the state-led relentless pursuit of economic survival and growth. If we have retained some memories, they are faint. For several decades, the entire society has focused on solving problems of food and housing, and we grew up amidst a national mindset that has emphasised the nurture of culture and the arts only after fulfilling our visceral needs. Moreover, our island-state is one of the few places in the world where the founding fathers have occupied the political stage for an extensive period of time. An attempt to approach the 1950s and 1960s would thus involve interpreting the origins of current political power. For many years, the governing authorities abstained from accounting for a past still too close for comfort, whereas the people maintained their silence on the same shared historical experience. When we went to schools, the local textbooks on Singapore history usually offered expositions only up to the end of the Pacific War. What we can remember most vividly after the books have been set aside may probably be the gallant figure of Raffles, his arms wrapped in front of his chest.

Such impoverished memories led us to think and ask more questions about our past. They made us even more curious about the times closest to our childhood. A retrospective survey will tell us that this island-state has experienced tremendous changes over the past 15 years, but the monograph that has been profoundly influential and claims to offer a complete account of Singapore's past is perhaps an autobiography published in two parts in 1998 and 2000: *The Singapore Story: Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew* and *From Third World to First: The Singapore Story 1965–2000*. For the writing of the two books, massive resources were mobilised to conduct a systematic organisation and recording of issues ranging from individual and public participation to significant national matters. Narrating in an authoritative tone, the author presents what he cast as truths about the past. This gesture attracted considerable attention both within and beyond our island-state. Regardless of whether people agreed or disagreed with the contents of the memoirs, historical events and viewpoints became the foci of public discussion and contestation. Even though there have been more narrators, however when narrating remembrances, people still create for themselves categories of what can be said or otherwise. In general, more people started talking about how our island-state became sovereign; about the players in the process and the roles they played; and how the process has impacted on the subsequent development

of Singapore, and etc. The more new materials surfaced, the more it became apparent that we cared and knew too little before this.

The island-state requires the gravity of a historical legacy as an anchor for our present circumstances in order to foster self-identity. For the same reason, the state and society have come to treasure history even more. However, the significance attached to history should not only be demonstrated through the interpretation of a particular figure or an exclusive group. Instead, people should be encouraged to see the value in recording the experiences and perspectives of actors and events beyond those thought to have directly contributed to transforming the course of history. Individuals, families, schools and organisations are all important pieces in the puzzle that capture snapshots of a society caught in a particular historical moment. At the same time, to re-consider the political history of a state, we have to confront some basic questions: What are our attitudes towards history? Do we have sufficient sources to consult? Why is it possible to discuss some figures and events publicly while it is impossible to do the same for others? Who gets to decide what can be or cannot be discussed? A society that truly treasures history should at least accord fundamental respect to a plurality of perspectives, and accept that controversies are bound to occur in the search for truth. The journey to understand history will nurture our society to become self-reflective and accustomed to self-critique.

Such were the considerations underpinning The Tangent's decision to embark on this explorative journey. The choice was to focus on the 1950s and 1960s, and the historical actors we wished to pursue were the secondary school students — from both Chinese and English schools — of the period. The collective image of students from Chinese-medium schools has always been prominent in state discourses and very closely associated with the political processes relating to the nation-building of Singapore. But what were their lives as individual students really like? How different were the afterschool activities for students from Chinese and English schools? Different responses to these questions remain at large and unincorporated into mainstream accounts, but apart from regurgitations by others and indulging in our own speculations, we hope to hear the students' own voices.

Since the theme was related to students, we hoped that present students could join us in some experiential learning. As the state realised the value of history, the older generation also became aware of the ignorance of younger citizens. However, beyond the rhetoric of blaming young Singaporeans, we need to look into the causes and endeavour to change the situation. In reality, reflections by young Singaporeans on their lack of knowledge are also expressions of their desire to learn more. And school histories ignite a natural interest, offering them the best point of entry into understanding a past more relevant to them. Limited resources

notwithstanding, the Tangent invited seven schools with distinctive traditions to join us on our journey. Nur Nasuha, a Malay student participant from Xinmin Secondary School recounted how she and her friends had initially faced great difficulties in finding research materials readily online. It was only after they conducted oral history interviews with members of the alumni and consulting old yearbooks that they managed to begin reconstructing their school's history. Her conclusion was "...we share the pride in being a part of Xinmin's glorious history, of playing a part to compile this history, and also, the pride of wearing this uniform."

There were also teachers who accompanied students on this journey. We were extremely moved when we saw Mdm Hsin Shu Han who taught at Chung Cheng High School (Main) guiding and mentoring the students with quiet passion. She offered this piece of reflection, "As I walk around the Chung Cheng campus now, I see the school through their eyes. I wonder why our lake has become so small, because the Chung Cheng lake was very big in the past. I also wonder what happened to a particular tree. In the campus, I can feel that I am in constant conversation with past students or events. So after this project, my feelings towards Chung Cheng have changed. I'm not merely a passerby, I feel that I have delved into the school deeply and have become a part of it."

When we encouraged schools to participate, we did not prescribe targeted outcomes or the types of desired responses from teachers and students. The only thing we were sure of was that the route of learning and understanding would lead them to different horizons at the end of their treks. The school is where classes are held, and where students and teachers interact every day, but the banality of habitual actions may cause us to lose our feel and imagination for the place. We thought we knew the definition of school activities, but we actually know very little about the schooling experiences of people who studied in the same campus, or of those who studied elsewhere but had sung the same songs wearing the same uniform. How different were their experiences from ours? Why did such differences occur? What gains and losses were incurred to create these differences?

This book includes a transcript of the public forum at which Mr Han Tan Juan and Professor Koh Tai Ann — who attended Chinese and English schools respectively — shared recollections of their student years. In addition, there are also transcripts of several interviews conducted with people who had received their education in the 1950s and 1960s. Do the two worlds represented by the language divide in their accounts evoke a vague sense of familiarity, or are they totally foreign? Despite the fact that some of these activities are impossible to re-enact due to the passage of time, is it still possible that some of those delineated by the older generation students from Chinese-medium schools remain familiar to students

from the Special Assistance Plan (SAP) Schools who may have inherited traditions from their predecessors? If students in the SAP schools cannot recognise the past activities in these accounts, what does their schools' tradition and historical development mean to them?

At the same time, Professor Koh Tai Ann who had graduated from Crescent Girls' School spoke about an English world, and time spent on activities such as the inter-house competition during Sports Meets and the services Girl Guides engaged in and etc. All these activities are considered common amongst all schools today, regardless of whether they are traditionally English-medium, neighbourhood schools or SAP schools. Students today participate in these activities and perhaps even harness the opportunities to incorporate creativity, but do they realise that there is a history that can be traced? Over several decades of changes to the national education system and a strengthening of citizen consciousness, the two worlds that had existed in the generation of Mr Han Tan Juan and Professor Koh Tai Ann have now merged to become one. Did one of them disappear in the reformatory process? Have we paid attention to it slipping away? What does it mean with the disappearance of one of these worlds?

The second section of the book comprised oral history interviews. Several interviewed subjects touched on how the colonial government's decision to enlist youths for military training brought about the May 13 Incident which saw a violent clash between petitioning students and the riot police. When we conducted our interviews and organised the exhibition, we did not have many references at hand, for works such as *The May 13 Generation: The Chinese Middle School Student Movement and Singapore Politics in the 1950s* edited by Tan Jing Quee, Tan Kok Chiang and Hong Lysa had not been published. On the other hand, because our focus was on students' after-school activities in general, we did not devote special attention to researching the May 13 Incident systematically. What we did include in our exhibition about the Incident was a set of photographs depicting the scenes of violence that circulated after the shocking event. Every photo had a caption at the bottom of the picture. Who produced these series of photographs and distributed them amongst the students? How many sets were printed and disseminated? These are still unanswered questions. However, among the transcripts of the interviews, we have first-hand accounts from Mr Chen Mong Tse and Mdm Chai Chu Chun who remembered how students lined up to join the demonstrations and how they escaped after that. Mr Lee Leong Seng did not participate in the petition directly, but was one of the students attending the Combined Chinese Schools' Sports Meet at Jalan Besar and narrated how students at the stadium received news about "students getting beaten up by the police." Mr Lim Chin Joo was also not a participant, but the Incident gave him a "tremendous jolt."

Mr Tan Kok Chiang was then still a student at the Raffles Institution, and he observed how differently students from English-medium schools reacted compared to those from Chinese-medium schools, "... I wanted to organise a school forum to discuss matters regarding middle school students in the Chinese schools. However, they were completely uninterested in these matters. Hence, there was no support." Tan Kok Chiang did not participate in the petition drive, but his younger brother who attended Catholic High School was expelled after the event and Tan subsequently joined the occupation movement at the Chinese High School. It was the same event, but individuals faced different realities, took up distinct positions, responded differently and bore varied consequences, some of which possibly changed their lives.

Although the theme of the exhibition was on after-school activities, it was the participants who are truly the focus of the exhibition and this book. When interpreting the exhibition endeavor, Associate Professor Huang Jianli from the National University of Singapore was more interested in the political dimension. Earlier on, *The Straits Times* demonstrated a similar orientation when "student activities" was cast as "student activism" in its reports. The truth is, The Tangent never set out to organise an exhibition featuring only student political activities. We are aware that student activism was an important aspect of the after-school activities in which students from Chinese schools were engaged. However, we wanted to know why those student activists participated, how they organised themselves and others, as well as hoped to understand how they made their choices. At the same time, we also sought to understand why other students did not fall into the same ranks, that is, for those who did not belong to the activist group at the heart of the movement, what were their school lives like? We had a yearning for the ordinary as much as for the extraordinary. We wanted to hear the voices of the student leaders, but were also curious about the thoughts of the "student masses."

In the current official discourse, the generalised term "*huaxiaosheng*" (i.e. Chinese-medium school students) effaces all the aforementioned types of students who attended Chinese schools. It even became a label that carries a historical burden of negative connotations. Through the oral history interviews, we present the thoughts, experiences and perspectives of each historical subject. Mr Lim Chin Joo, Mr Tan Kok Chiang, Mr Chen Mong Tse and Mdm Chai Chu Chun were all direct participants of the student movement, but they each had their own unique stories. Mdm Tan Teck Keng and Mr Lee Leong Seng were both members of the public who responded to our appeal for artefacts in *Lianhe Zaobao* and later shared their past experiences in great details. Mdm Tan did not receive formal education, but she shed light on a particular form of social engagement middle school students were then involved in — her late husband taught literacy classes ran by the Singapore Itinerant Hawkers and Stall Holders Association while he was still

studying at Chung Cheng High School. Mr Lee chose to be an onlooker in those turbulent times as his family was poor, and it is likely that he was not part of the minority. Though born slightly later than the previous interviewees, Mr Chua Hiang Yong provided us with an interesting account of how he and his friends shared a love for painting and initiated an art exhibition in school. They all made different choices, or were compelled to choose their paths, but from the vicissitudes of these disadvantaged *huaxiaosheng*, we witness how they were swept away by strong currents of the times which left a common imprint in their psyches.

Amongst the student endeavours in the 1950s and 1960s, the Singapore Chinese Middle School Students' Union (SCMSSU) established in 1955 had a short shelf life. Historians have yet to assess its influence on nation-building efforts of our island-state. Mr Lim Chin Joo has penned a detailed account containing significant insights on the genesis, organisation, development and eventual dissolution of the Union. With his permission, we have included it in this book. Mr Tan Kok Chiang's interview was originally conducted for the oral history project on Nanyang University (Nantah) convened by the Centre for Chinese Language and Culture, Nanyang Technological University. Associate Professor Lee Guan Kin, the Centre Director, has kindly loaned us the section in which Mr Tan spoke about his middle school life. It has certainly allowed *Education-at-Large* to feature the rare experience and standpoint of a student who transferred from an English-medium to a Chinese-medium school.

As our manpower was really stretched, we could only conduct limited interviews. We also realised that our interviews included only students from Chinese schools. Is it a stereotypical construction that students studying in English schools were apathetic about current affairs and politics? What did they do after school? These were some of our guiding questions for our exhibition and we started by inviting Professor Koh Tai Ann to give a talk at the first forum we organised. Apart from that, we also went through some yearbooks and alumni magazines of English-medium schools, as well as tried to contact some former students. Dr. Lim Hock Siew spoke lightly of his times in secondary school, he said the focus then was on academic studies and he became politically active only after he went to university. Nonetheless, one of the weaknesses of our exhibition was indeed the inadequate treatment of the English-educated students.

The wait must be a long one for readers who have been looking forward to reading our collated materials and it is indeed regrettable that *The Tangent* could only publish this book half a decade after the exhibition. However, the local scene of rejuvenating historical awareness has been diverse and vibrant over the past five years. For instance, at the end of 2008, more than 20 Chinese school alumni organisations collaborated to put up the "Joint Exhibition on the History of Chinese Schools." There was also "SCENES: The Exhibition" which reviewed the

developmental history of Singapore Chinese language theatre at the *Huayi 2010* Festival. The schools' drama societies were at that time the mainstay of theatrical activities in our island-state. *The May 13 Generation*, mentioned earlier, attracted such a huge turnout at its launch that there was not a single empty seat. Towards the end of last year, when we started proofreading for *Education at Large: Student Life and Activities in Singapore 1945–1965*, the Kangle Music Society, started in 1954 by several high school students who attended Chinese middle schools, published *The Footsteps of History* and contributed to the accretion of historical materials for posterity. All these efforts to explore the history of our island-state have not only enriched us, but also have the effect of urging us to get our act together and share the materials related to the 2007 exhibition.

As I would think, to juxtapose these fragments of the 1950s and 1960s is not a mere process of approaching the original contours of history. Looking at these middle school students who had then pledged their youth to their motherland, I see the lush-est, most magnificent and yet irrecoverable journey of our island-state. In spite of the dire material conditions, the deficient systems and the chaos in the society, the idealism and toil of an entire generation shine through collective labour. Associate Professor Kwok Kian Woon from the Division of Sociology at Nanyang Technological University made a poignant point when he attended the forum organised for the opening of the "Education at Large" exhibition in November 2007, "What are we missing if there is no idealism in our society? What is the cost to a society if there is no idealism? Idealism is an important topic to us, and can actually be a very practical issue, because if we cannot imagine a different future, how can we move towards a better future? To be able to imagine a different future, a different reality, that is the essence of being idealistic. And you don't just imagine — you try to work towards that reality. ...1945 to 1965 is a very special period in the history of Singapore. Many young people then had no choice but to imagine a different future." In the course of designing the different sections of the exhibition, the Tangent discovered that regardless of whether it was during the Anti-Yellow Culture Campaign, Chinese students learning Malay voluntarily, or what has been depicted in those photographs of the May 13 Incident, there was a palpable sense of imagination and anticipation about the future underpinning those energies. And for this sense of imagination and anticipation, these students contributed the most glorious years of their youth.

The Tangent hopes to record such idealism in the island-state, for we need to understand it, come to terms with it and always remember it.

A note on names, titles and terms:

We have tried our best to identify a suitable English version of names, titles and terms. Those that have eluded our efforts are rendered in hanyu pinyin in the book.

Exhibition board on student activities, featuring “formal” school extra-curricular activities.

← Memories for the future — thoughts on the exhibition.

↑ Listening to stories from students of yesteryear.

↑ Loan of trophy from a member of the public.

→ Blackboard, white chalk, wooden tables and chairs, all presented as historical objects.

← Textbooks and exercise books that aided the learning of Malay language still kept intact today by former Chinese school students.

← In anticipation of the new nation in the 1950s, students took the initiative to organise classes hoping to acquaint themselves with Malay language and culture.

↑ In an era when it was materially so much less endowed than the present, the hunger to learn was strong and learning went beyond the classroom.

↓ The greatest commonality between students of Chinese and English-medium schools was the active participation in sports. Their strengths, however, laid in different fields.

↑ For some people, the exhibition enabled them to revisit the past.

← Former President of the SCMSSU, Soon Loh Boon, came to visit the exhibition.

Current students examining the past. →

Exhibition Area Showcasing the Re-creation of the Past
by Participating Schools

Teachers and students from seven schools with long historical traditions participated in the exhibition. The Tangent organised a talk on data collection and research, encouraging students to dig into the history of their schools and gain a better understanding of the past. Students used films and other media to present their interpretations.

↓ A short film produced by local film director, Tan Pin Pin, was screened at the exhibition venue.

Media Coverage and Responses of Some Exhibition Visitors

The Straits Times - Home

Group to hold exhibition on student activism next year

Sep 22, 2006 (Friday)

By KEITH LIN

A GROUP of young Singaporeans is planning to hold an exhibition next year focusing on student activism of the 1950s and 1960s.

The members of bilingual civil society group The Tangent, which holds regular academic forums, wants to showcase artefacts and texts from a diverse range of student activities during that period.

The six-week exhibition next November will explore alternative voices of history by examining school sports, political and cultural activities, said the group's president, Ms Lee Huey Leng, at a press conference yesterday.

"What we're looking to do through this exhibition is to present different facets of history during that period, instead of what textbooks and other mainstream sources tell us," said Ms Lee, who is local news editor of Chinese daily Lianhe Zaobao.

To facilitate the research, the group is appealing to institutions and the public to contribute relevant objects from the era.

These can include print artefacts, such as school periodicals, photographs, cartoons and diaries, as well as non-print elements like badges, medals and uniforms.

Rare print artefacts will be donated to the National Library at the end of the exhibition, which is

estimated to cost \$10,000. Research findings from the project will also be published in the group's biannual bilingual journal, Tangent.

The group also hopes to get secondary schools involved and has approached Hwa Chong Institution and Nanyang Girls' High School to engage their students as project researchers.

A forum to discuss the period's history will be held concurrently with the exhibition.

klm@sph.com.sg

Those keen to donate artefacts can do so until December. They can e-mail the group at tangent.the@gmail.com or call 9246-6400.

Lianhe Zaobao article title: The Tangent seeks artefacts reflecting student life in the 1950s and 1960s.

“圆切线” 征求五六十年代中学生活文物

洪艺菁◎报道

《联合早报·新加坡新闻》
2006年9月22日(五)

公民社会团体圆切线将在明年11月，在新加坡管理大学举行一个名为《逍遥游：1945年至1965年的中学生活与课余活动》的展览，希望通过这个活动了解五六十年代学生对文化、体育、社会政治活动的参与情况，对比当时的华校生与英校生的生活面貌，分析当代学生和现代学生的异同。

展览筹委会主席柯思仁博士(41岁)昨天在记者会上指出，二战后至独立前是公认的学运活跃年代，但除了政治参与，当时的学生生活还有哪些形态，却很少人去探索。

他说：“一些人对那个年代有既定概念，认为当时华校生在政治上非常活跃，而英校生则是政治冷漠的，但我们去做深入一点的研究，可能会发现有一些不一样的面貌。我们并不希望过于笼统化或过于简单化，而是希望可以看到更多学生的样子。”

负责这次展览研究工作的圆切线社员丁昉博士(30岁)说：“那个年代的学校生活、学校风貌是我们比较少看到的，我们熟悉的可能是那时候的政治历史、新加坡如何独立，其他的社会面貌就很少。那时候的学生生活可能也是多姿多彩的。”

通过展览，圆切线希望鼓励不同年龄层的参观者和参与者对教育

圆切线呼吁人们捐出学校刊物、相片、徽章、歌纸、奖章奖状、演出特刊、道具、运动装、制服、画作、日记簿等学生时代文物。左起为林克宜博士、柯思仁博士和丁昉博士。

和历史进行反思，用更宽广的角度去看待过去，认识不同层面，体味新加坡历史与现实当中的微妙，建立更繁复多面的观念，以面对愈加复杂的未来。

柯博士说：“我们希望人们对于那个年代的情况，有一些不太一样的、官方以外的看法，这是很重要的一个目的。历史应该不是属于每一个人的，而不是属于官方而已。而实际上，现在新加坡也有很

多的团体和个人，用自我的方式来重新地诠释历史。”

“逍遥游”展览
明年11月举行

被问及该双语展览为什么命名为“逍遥游”和“Education at Large”(即课堂以外的教育)时，柯思仁博士指出，它传达了“教育不局限于某个空间内，不受限于课堂的局限，可以创造出新天地”。

基于资源有限，圆切线决定把研究范围锁定在中学与高中生，因为相对大学活动，有关中学与高中生生活的研究并不多。

圆切线呼吁人们捐出五六十年代中学时代的物件，比如校刊、相片、徽章、歌纸、奖章奖状、演出特刊、道具、运动装、制服、画作、日记簿等。

展出后，圆切线会根据捐献者的意愿将文物归还，或协助捐献者

请图书馆或民间机构长期保管这些文物。

展览将为期6个星期，圆切线也将配合展览主办论坛，深入探讨有关课题。

圆切线研究员林克宜博士(33岁)透露，他们也有意和学校合作，指导学生如何有系统地收集和整理自己校史的资料。有兴趣捐赠的公众可致电92466400或电邮到tangent.the@gmail.com询问详情。

“逍遥游”展是历史的补白

■ 区如柏 2007年12月12日《联合早报·安永站》

赶在“逍遥游：1945年至1965年中学生生活与课外活动”展览的最后一天，到新加坡管理大学参观这项由公民社会团体“圆切线”筹办的展览。

这项展览虽然不算很完整，但是，在一定程度上很客观地反映了那个年代的中学生的生活，最难得的是筹办这项展览的成员都不是“过来人”，而是在社会安定，学习环境完善的年轻人。

据在场的负责人说，参观者多数是年长者，是那个年代的“过来人”，以中正中学的校友最多。

我曾参观过许多由某些官方机构举办的“历史展览”，它们都把过去的学生活动描写成负面性的，是受人利用而制造社会动乱，而没有客观地分析当时的时代背景与社会状况。而“逍遥游”展的筹办者并没有自设自己的立场，

抱着还原历史真面目的态度，让现在的学生了解40年前的学生生活。

在展览会，我们不但看到、听到学校的，也能了解英校的情况，这种情况，让不同教育源流的课外活动的出来。

其实，过去的课外活动也不乏自己的教育源流，记得从前有一个（泛马学生联合会）的组织，不仅华英教育源流的学生，马来半岛（这个组织，还联合举办过文娛晚会）

1955年在印尼万隆举行的亚南洋大学与各中联合组织学生

过去，学校要发展都自力更生，参与筹款建校的活动，筹款活动除了举办文娛晚会演出、音乐外，女校学生在繁忙的功课、

余，还得赶制手工品参加展览筹款。前任中华女中校长盛碧珠（已故）常对我说，从1951年至1976年，中华前后举行10次手工品展览、校长、教师和学生都投入工作，她们一针一线地“绣出”中华的新校舍。南华女校在扩建校舍时也以手工品展览筹款，学生都很积极地赶制手工品参展，以为筹建礼堂，从1947年中正中学学生为了筹建礼堂，从1947年起，合唱团举办音乐会，戏剧会举办戏剧演出，重教校友友联合举办游园会，前后奋斗了出，重教校友友联合举办游园会，前后奋斗了

“Education-at-Large” exhibition fills gaps in history.

记得当年的课外活动

新民中学老校友回忆往昔

农历正月十四（3月3日）是新民中学校友年度大团拜的日子。今年，一群中二生及本地“圆切线”公民社会团体，为完成一个名为“研究1945-1965年新加坡中学生生活与课外活动”的专题作业而举办了一场茶话会，与新民中学的老校友们促膝长谈。

与会的新民中学的两位副校长、六名校友、“圆切线”代表曾昭程、三名辅导老师及八名学生。

聊起往日多姿多彩的校园生活，便犹如打开了年长校友们尘封已久的话匣子，大家热情地与小伙伴们分享自己在中学的生活与参与课外活动的情形。

与会的中二生可是有备而来。他们在茶话会前做了功课，通过网络、图书馆等各种渠道

对新加坡在二战后直到独立时的学生课余生活作了详细的调查。因此他们的问题接连不断，茶话会就在这一问一答中进入高潮。

“圆切线”团体计划在年底举办一个名为“逍遥游”的专题展览，展出新加坡1945-1965中学生生活与课余生活，因此派代表出席这个茶话会收集资料。

老校友蔡向宗出示1965年的毕业证书。

Remembering the extra-curricular activities — Xinmin Secondary School alumni members recall the past.

当年办画展，今日成画家

参与茶话的学生觉得，老学长们虽然生活艰苦，但是他们却不畏艰难，精神世界十分充实。学生也发现，今昔课外活动的最大区别在于自主性：现今学生的课外活动大

六七十年的学生课余参加什么活动？今昔学生生活有什么大不同？新民中学举办了一场茶话会，让年轻学子与老茶点边走进历史的

让更多学生了解40年前学生生活 中正总校接手“逍遥游”展

王琪琳 报道

为了让更多学生认识上个世纪40年代的学生生活，中正中学（总校）将接手“逍遥游：1945年至1965年中学生生活与课外活动”展览。由公民社会团体“圆切线”筹办的展览，上月在新加坡管理大学举行，吸引超过500名公众参观。展览主题包括学生生活、课外活动、马来亚、政治运动、流行文化、反殖民运动等，并以口述历史、文物、影像和图文并重的照片说明形式呈现。

展览期间将安排学生活动、课外活动、马来亚、政治运动、流行文化、反殖民运动等，并以口述历史、文物、影像和图文并重的照片说明形式呈现。

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中正中学校长罗志凌希望学生通过展览进一步了解当时的学生生活，并同现在的学生生活比较，从中得到启发。例如，他通过展览发现当时学生对戏剧有浓厚兴趣，而中正目前就设有中一上中英戏剧训练班，并在年底举行戏剧演出。

展览期间（6月、7月）将安排学生活动、课外活动、马来亚、政治运动、流行文化、反殖民运动等，并以口述历史、文物、影像和图文并重的照片说明形式呈现。

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（影：刘培乾 李逸讯）

席茶话会的包括新民中学两位副校长、校友、“圆切线”代表、辅导老师及学生。

与会的学生有备而来，茶会上不断发问，态度积极。

Chung Cheng High School (Main) takes over the “Education-at-Large” exhibition.

Historical Photographs

↑ Classroom scenario in Chung Cheng High School (Courtesy of Chua Chu Chun).

↑ Choir of literacy class (Courtesy of Tan Teck Keng).

← Lesson in the Laboratory (Courtesy of Tan Teck Keng).

↓ Students in the literacy class photographed in front of the Itinerant Hawkers and Stall Holders Association. (Courtesy of Tan Teck Keng).

Extra-curricular Activities

→ On the road — *Xiao Xiansheng* organised an outing for students of their literacy classes. (Courtesy of Tan Teck Keng).

← Students then like to go on tours together and often go to different parts of Malaya. This photograph was taken in June 1955 on a coach trip made by Chung Cheng High School students graduating from senior middle school. (Courtesy of Chai Chu Chun).

→ Chung Cheng High School was one of the most active schools putting up theatrical performances in the 1950s. In 1953, the school enacted "Our Beautiful Motherland" for its graduation performance and also raised funds through it for the building of Nanyang University. (Courtesy of Chai Chu Chun).

← Male and female students having fun on the waters. (Courtesy of Wu Zhen).

↑ An exchange with a school in Malaya. Students of Senior Middle Class 3B from Chung Cheng High School, posing before the Chinese Hall in Ipoh, Perak in June 1955. (Courtesy of Chai Chu Chun).

↓ Nanyang University was an institution middle school students eagerly looked forward to entering. (Courtesy of Tan Teck Keng).

The May 13 Incident*

After the May 13 Incident, a series of photographs with emotional captions was circulated. Adopting the mode of first person narration, they revealed strong sentiments against the violence of the police. It is believed that quite a number of students came to have this collection of photographs.

↑ At Fort Canning Hill during the May 13 event, the police said we were demonstrating, protesting!

→ Unarmed, we were helplessly beaten like this between the metal fences and the drain!

← The police officer said, “Children, get ready for it!”

→ There's no need to fear! We are not the ones who committed a crime!

* The photographs on pages xxxii to xxxiii came with original captions in Chinese.

← Police officers awaiting the brutal orders of their superiors.

→ Fellow students! Run to Nan Chiau Girls' High and we will reassemble there!

← Such was how violence was inflicted on us!

→ Look! This was only the beginning of the violence!

The Singapore Chinese Middle School Student Union

→ The White Paper on dissolving the Singapore Chinese Middle Schools Students' Union

← The SCMSSU was established on 30 May 1955 at the Happy World Stadium, the attendees included more than 10 000 members, teachers, parents, members of public and representatives from other student organisations. (Courtesy of Lim Chin Joo).

↑ After the government declared the dissolution of the SCMSSU in 1956, students formed a "Anti-Persecution Delegation". On 20 October, the group went to the Chief Minister's office to negotiate with the government. The photograph shows Lim Yew Hock with a pipe, his back facing the camera. Seated from right: Education Minister Chew Swee Kee, student representatives Cai Shijun, Wu Youfa, Wang Hequn, Lim Chin Joo, Chen Zaicong and Li Weizhen (Courtesy of Lim Chin Joo).