Annex


Set in the late 19th century, this novel brings readers into the lives of a punkhawala (operator of a hand-swung fan) from South Asia and a prostitute from Japan in Singapore. It is a story of the island’s exploited and underclass – a historical topic seldom studied in classrooms or popularly highlighted. It is a story, however, that needs to be better known. This elegantly crafted and accessible novel offers unique insight into Singapore’s past. More information about the book can be found here: https://epigrambookshop.sg/products/the-punkhawala-and-the-prostitute.


This edited volume is a history of animal-human interactions in Singapore and the outcomes they produced. Eight authors contributed essays to this book. They address topics ranging from the cultural history of crocodiles to the impact that mosquitoes have had on life in Singapore. The stories told in this book are refreshingly captivating and informative. They help us view Singaporean history in a new light and make us more cognisant of the animals that inhabited this city. More information about the book can be found here: https://nuspress.nus.edu.sg/products/singaporean-creatures.

Kevin Blackburn, The Comfort Women of Singapore in History and Memory (Singapore: NUS Press, 2022)

This book is a moving account of the almost forgotten comfort women of Singapore. It details their experiences during the Japanese occupation of Singapore. It then identifies and investigates the stories told about these women at heritage sites, and in newspapers, novels, plays, and television. This study offers profound lessons in empathy, resilience, and the broader impacts that military conflicts had on civilians and women in particular. It also ensures that the experiences of the victims are recognised and remembered. More information about the book can be found here: https://nuspress.nus.edu.sg/products/the-comfort-women-of-singapore-in-history-and-memory.


This book examines the history and culture of Malay food in Singapore. It offers insight into the evolution of Malay cuisine over the centuries, and the impact of the environment on human or more specifically Malay nutrition. Food also becomes a text through which people can better understand Malay cultural ideas and practices. As the blurb to the book describes it: “This book explores their food, not just as a means of sustenance but as a cultural activity. Inheriting the Nusantara’s rich flavours, Singapore Malays have a grand culinary heritage reflecting their worldviews, social values and historical interactions with other cultures. Through close examination of their daily objects, customs, art and literature, these pages reveal how the food Malays enjoy is deeply embedded in different aspects of their identity.” More information about the book can be found here: https://www.marshallcavendish.com/our-books/categories/books/9789814841924.

Loh Kah Seng, Alex Tan Tiong Hee, Koh Keng We, Tan Teng Phee, and Juria Toramae, Theatres of Memory: Industrial Heritage of 20th Century Singapore (Singapore: Pagesetters Services, 2021).
This book is a history of industrialisation in Singapore. Informed by a broad range of sources, including oral histories, this study examines Singapore’s development from multiple perspectives. Besides foreign advisers and government officials, the work also brings into sharp focus the role that the working class played in the economic development of Singapore. It speaks powerfully to the broad spectrum of society who lived through this period of Singaporean history. More information about the book can be found here: https://pagesetters.sg/theatres-of-memory-industrial-heritage-of-20th-century-singapore/.

Lynn Wong Yuqing and Lee Kok Leong, Reviving Qixi: Singapore’s Forgotten Seven Sisters Festival (Singapore: Renforest Publishing, 2022).

Aptly dedicated to the early women migrants who brought the Qixi festival to Singapore, this book tells the forgotten story of an event celebrated on this island between the mid-1800s and the 1970s. Beyond the festival, this study is also a laudable work of women’s history – a story of the female migrants who left China and traveled to Singapore and Southeast Asia to seek a new life. They brought to this island their beliefs, shaping sociocultural developments in Singapore. Some also reintroduced the festival to post-1949 China. The festival declined in significance in Singapore from the 1970s. This book, however, has brought it into the public consciousness again. In 2023 the Qixi festivities revived in Singapore. Elegantly crafted and underpinned by solid research, this work offers important insights into the sociocultural history of Singapore. More information about the book can be found here: https://www.revivingqixi.com/book.