

Book Launch: Constitutionalism in Asia Book Series



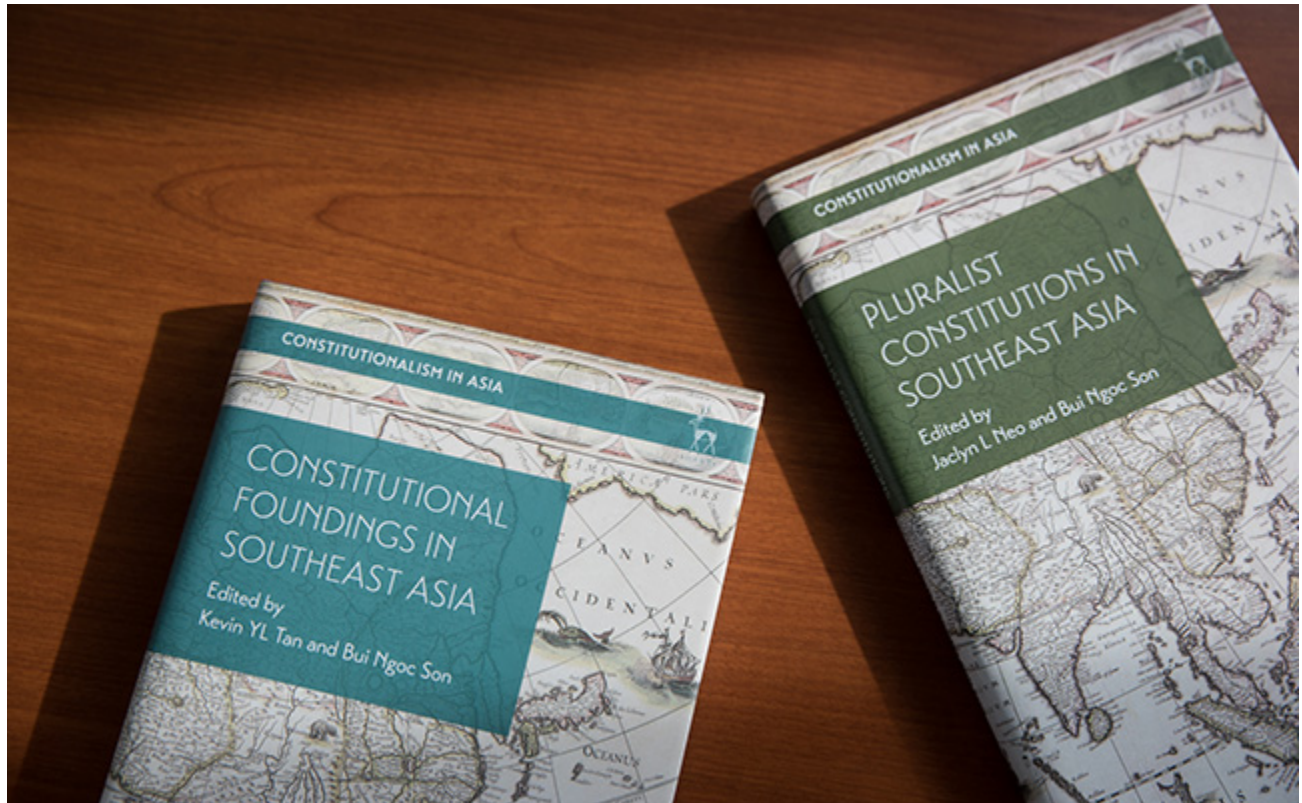
L-R: Dr Bryan Dennis Gabito Tiojanco (NUS Law), Dr Dian A H Shah (NUS Law), Professor Chang Chen-Wen (National Taiwan University), Associate Professor Jaclyn Neo '03 (NUS Law), Professor Yeh Jiunn-rong (National Taiwan University), Professor Thio Li-ann (NUS Law), Adjunct Professor Kevin Tan '86 (NUS Law), Judge Raul Pangalangan (International Criminal Court), Associate Professor Mairii Aung-Thwin (NUS, FASS) and Associate Professor Dan Puchniak (NUS Law) On 29 August 2019, NUS Law launched a new book series *Constitutionalism in Asia* under Hart Publishing and two new books published in the series. The book series' general editors are Adjunct Professor Kevin Tan '86 and Professor Thio Li-ann from NUS Law.

The first book in the series *Pluralist Constitutions in Southeast Asia* is an edited volume examining the presence of ethnic, religious, political, and ideational pluralities in Southeast Asian societies and how their respective constitutions respond to these pluralities. Edited by Associate Professor Jaclyn Neo '03 (NUS Law) and Assistant Professor Bui Ngoc Son (Chinese University of Hong Kong), it asks the question – how would our approach to constitutional law be different if we take pluralism seriously? The “pluralist constitution” is proposed as a constitutional model that recognises internal pluralities within society and makes arrangements to accommodate, rather than eliminate, these pluralities.

The other book, *Constitutional Foundings in Southeast Asia* edited by Adjunct Professor Kevin Tan '86 (NUS Law) and Assistant Professor Bui Ngoc Son (Chinese University of Hong Kong) focuses on the making, nature, and role of the first modern constitutions at the founding of the modern nation-states in Southeast Asia. These historical essays add richly to our understanding and appreciation of these founding moments and to the theory and practice of constitutionalism in these states. This volume helps plug the wide knowledge gap in comparative constitutional history in Southeast Asia and furthers our understanding of contemporary constitutional practice and also anticipates possible developmental trajectories in light of the foundational values embedded in and manifested through these constitutions. Through the comparative historical study of these early constitutions, plausible theoretical insights may be gained to further our understanding of Southeast Asia's constitutional history.

Both books were the culmination of research projects funded by NUS Law's Centre for Asian Legal Studies (CALs). They are aimed at expanding the scope of constitutional law knowledge in and of Asian jurisdictions.

The book launch was well attended by faculty members, research staff, students, and members of the public. Associate Professor Dan Puchniak (NUS Law) opened the event with a welcome speech as the Director of CALS. Besides Adjunct Professor Kevin Tan '86, Professor Thio Li-ann (NUS Law) and Associate Professor Jaclyn Neo '03, the discussion panel included eminent academics in constitutional law in Asia – Judge Raul Pangalangan (International Criminal Court) and Professor Yeh Jiunn-Rong (National Taiwan University).





Associate Professor Jaclyn Neo '03, co-editor of *Pluralist Constitutions in Southeast Asia*, presenting a copy of the book to Associate Professor Dan Puchniak (Director, Centre for Asian Legal Studies (CALS), NUS Law)



Adjunct Professor Kevin Tan '86, co-editor of *Constitutional Foundings in Southeast Asia* presenting a copy of the book to

Associate Professor Dan Puchniak (Director, Centre for Asian Legal Studies (CALS), NUS Law)



Judge Raul Pangalangan discussing the books' contributions to constitutional law studies in Asia



Professor Yeh Jiunn-rong sharing his insights on the state of comparative constitutional studies in Asia



Associate Professor Jaclyn Neo '03 and Professor Yeh Jiunn-rong listening to comments from the audience