

Annex: Synopsis - *The Lamp of the Law: 60 Years of Legal Education at NUS Law*

The Lamp of the Law celebrates 60 years of the NUS Faculty of Law. Founded in 1956 as the Law Department of the University of Malaya in Singapore, the Faculty accepted its first cohort of students in 1957, and it is this anniversary that the volume celebrates. Written by NUS Law alumnus and legal historian Dr Kevin Tan, this book chronicles the development of the Law Faculty through the decades. The story of NUS Law is told in six chapters spanning some 200 pages.

Chapter 1 describes how, prior to the establishment of the Law Faculty, aspiring lawyers had to journey all the way to England to read law at university and then qualify at the Bar at one of the four Inns of Court, and how some early efforts were made to teach law at Raffles College in the pre-War and early post-War periods. It also documents how various proposals had been put forward to establish a Law Faculty and how, the crucial Braddell-Allen Report – that recommended the establishment of a Law Department – came to be written and adopted.

Chapter 2 discusses the early development of the Law Faculty during the time of its founding Dean, Lionel Astor Sheridan and the pioneering efforts of its early teachers. It was an exciting but uncertain time as it was initially unclear if the new law degrees would be recognised by the Singapore and Federal Governments for the purposes of qualification for practice.

Chapter 3 covers the turbulent 1960s, a period of great uncertainty at the Faculty as it went through a succession of four deans between 1962 and 1966. But it was also a time of consolidation, as the Law Faculty grew in strength and numbers and as its first graduates returned to their alma mater to take up teaching positions. Two members of the Class of 1961 (the first graduating class) – Thio Su Mien and Tommy Koh – would become deans of the Faculty during this period.

Chapter 4 covers the 1970s during which the Faculty transformed itself into a leading law school. This period coincided with a period of unprecedented economic growth and development in Singapore and a corresponding sophistication of its economy. This not only fueled increasing demands for lawyers, but lawyers with specialised skills and expertise, thus transforming the Faculty and its offerings.

Chapter 5 covers the period 1981 to 1999 when it established itself as the leading law school in Asia. During this period, the Faculty moved from its Bukit Timah campus to the new National University of Singapore campus in Kent Ridge. At the same time, the Singapore Government also took a much more active role in regulating the supply of lawyers in Singapore and in pushing the Law Faculty not only to produce lawyers but administrators as well. Numerous new initiatives and specialist courses stemmed from this period.

Chapter 6 chronicles the period from 2000 to the present and shows how the Law Faculty has not only grown intellectually but internationally with tie-ups with foreign universities, and offering its students a smorgasbord of cutting-edge courses and inter-disciplinary and joint degree programmes. During this period, the Law Faculty returned to its roots at Bukit Timah. It was also when the Faculty's various high-powered specialist centres, like the Centre for International Law, the Centre for Asian Legal Studies, the Centre for Maritime Law, the Centre for Law and Business and the Centre for Banking and Finance Law were established.