

WANG GUNGWU

National University of Singapore University Professor and Emeritus Professor of Australian National University



Professor WANG Gungwu is National University of Singapore University Professor and Emeritus Professor of Australian National University.

His recent books include *Wang Gungwu, Educator and Scholar*, edited by Zheng Yongnian & K.K. Phua, (2012); *Renewal: The Chinese State and the New Global History* (2013); and *Another China Cycle: Committing to Reform* (2014). His dialogues on world history were edited by Ooi Kee Beng and published as *The Eurasian Core and its Edges* (2015)

He is Fellow and former President, Australian Academy of the Humanities; Commander of the Order of the British Empire; Foreign Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Science.

In Singapore, he is Chairman of the ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute; the East Asian Institute and the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at NUS.

Professor Wang received his B.A. and M.A. from the University of Malaya in Singapore, and his Ph.D. at the University of London. He was Professor of History at the University of Malaya; Professor of Far Eastern History and Director of Research School of Pacific Studies at the Australian National University. From 1986 to 1995, he was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong.

Heritage and History

The way people use their intangible cultural heritage is as interesting as how endangered heritage is being protected. Different parts of the world have quite distinct uses for their past. The modernity and globalization that has come to Asia during the past century have brought the continent closer, but great differences among them still remain. Here Singapore is exceptional. The multiple cultures of its peoples are separate and distinct. The island's brief common past has driven its peoples to identify with the values demanded by the modern and global. It is therefore a challenge for them to fully appreciate their heritage. But when they do, it is remarkable how alive and valuable heritage can be.

Singapore's cultural heritages, tangible and intangible, project themselves in local, national, regional, global and civilizational terms. There is a high level of complexity in each of its multiple communities. I shall look at the communities of Chinese descent and their experiences with their living heritage and comment on how they have been used.