New Ph.D. Program
Established in EALCS, UC Santa Barbara
Specialization in Taiwan Literature/Cultural Studies
Aimed at Training Future Scholars to Promote
Taiwan Studies with International Perspectives

The Department of East Asian Languages and
Cultural Studies at UCSB has just approved the development of a Ph.D. program.
Applications are now being accepted for enrollment in September 2007.
Nine specializations are available, including a specialization with a foci on Taiwan literature and cultural studies.

Since the 1990s Taiwan has undergone rapid political, social, and cultural transformation, and Taiwan studies has become a burgeoning field in the academic world, attracting an international scholarly interest. In a timely response to this increasing trend, many universities and research institutions have recently directed their research toward this field, and many research groups have been established, as evidenced in the growing number of websites related to Taiwan studies.

With the on-going publication of *Taiwan Literature: English Translation Series* since 1996, the study of Taiwan literature has been a particular strength in the East Asian Department. Further, with the establishment of the Lai Ho and Wu Cho-liu Endowed Chair in Taiwan Studies, the department will continue to take the lead in developing the vital and distinctive Center for Taiwan Studies (CTS). Going beyond literature and translation and extending to other fields, such as history, popular culture, and cultural anthropology, the CTS strives to provide scholarly opportunities for students interested in Taiwan literature, culture, and translation. On a regular basis, it organizes international conferences and symposia, sponsors language programs abroad, attracts speakers to campus and sponsors a Visiting Writers Program, provides fellowships to support students, in addition to publishing a variety of books in translation.

The Ph.D. specialization on Taiwan literature and cultural studies will be supported by three faculty members: Kuoching Tu, who is the editor of *Taiwan Literature* and whose research focuses on modern Chinese poetry, Chinese theories of literature, translation studies, literatures in Chinese worldwide, and Taiwan literature during the Japanese occupation period; Michael Berry, whose research interests, in addition to literary translation, include modern and contemporary Chinese literature, Chinese film studies, Chinese popular culture, and cultural studies in the Chinese Diaspora with Taiwan as an important component; and Mayfair Yang, a socio-cultural specialist whose cultural and geographical region of emphasis is China and its offshoot cultures and the Diaspora in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Southeast Asia, and the West, and whose research includes social and critical theory, China and Taiwan, globalization and nationalism, gender and feminism, mass media, popular religion, ritual, and politics. Other Taiwan-related UCSB faculty members are also associated with the departments of history, religious studies, anthropology, global studies, education, art history, music, and political science. Application information is available at [http://www.eastasian.ucsb.edu/](http://www.eastasian.ucsb.edu/).
On Thursday, April 20, 2006 four of the most exciting and dynamic practitioners of Chinese-language fiction—Shih Shu-ching, Ping Lu, Luo Yijun, and Li Zishu—made a rare visit to UCSB to discuss their creative work and the transformation of the Taiwan literary scene over the course of the past three decades. The writers came from all over the world, representing the diversity and richness of Chinese fiction in the twenty-first century.

Shih Shu-ching is one of the most influential cultural figures in Taiwan and Hong Kong; her novels have won numerous awards and have been translated into many languages. Her works include *Queen of the City*, *The Barren Years*, *Passing by Loytsin*, and *Blush of Intoxication*.

Ping Lu is a prolific essayist, novelist, and short story stylist. She has taught at Taiwan University and the Taiwan National Academy of the Arts. Her major works include *Revelations from Forbidden Books*, *Death in a Cornfield*, and *When Will He Return?*

Luo Yijun is the acclaimed author of six novels, including *And Now She Remains in You*, *The Third Dancer*, and *Us*.

Li Zishu hails from Malaysia and is the author of two award-winning short story collections, *The Gate of Heaven* and *Mountain Plague*.

The program title, “Shih Shu-ching, Ping Lu, Luo Yijun, Li Zishu: Four Writers on the Fictions of Literature and the Realities of the Taiwan Literary Scene,” captures the two main lines of inquiry explored during each writer’s presentation—the writing process and the challenges of the publishing market in contemporary Taiwan.

The event was moderated and coordinated by Professors Michael Berry and K. C. Tu (UCSB), and featured a special guest, UCSB Professor Emeritus Kenneth Pai Hsien-yung, who delivered a penetrating response to the four presentations. Renowned author of such books as *Taipei People* and *Crystal Boys*, Professor Pai eloquently tied the writers’ reflections together in a *tour de force* that deftly traveled from commentary on Ping Lu’s *Love and Revolution: A Novel about Song Qingling and Sun Yat-sen* to childhood reminiscences about meeting Song Qingling in Shanghai on Easter Sunday, 1947. The event was co-sponsored by the CCK Center for Chinese Studies, in conjunction with the Center for Taiwan Studies, the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies, and the East Asia Research Focus Group at UCSB.
In an effort to promote the understanding and scholarly research of Taiwan literature worldwide, the CTS sponsored its third international conference entitled “Taiwan Literature and History,” with support from the Council for Cultural Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Taiwan. Held at UCSB in October 2006, the conference had the following objectives:

1. Enhance the understanding of Taiwan literature as it has developed since 1895 in three epoch-making periods: the Japanese occupation period (1895–1945), the postwar period (1945–1987), and the period after the repeal of martial law (1987 to present);
2. Discuss particular issues involved with the writing of the history of Taiwan literature, exchanging perspectives and interpretations of Taiwan literature and history; and
3. Strengthen the academic interaction between the CTS and international scholars, graduate students, and translators of Taiwan literature.

The conference also celebrated the forthcoming publication of the English translation of *A History of Taiwan Literature* [Taiwan wenxue shigang] written by the renowned Yeh Shih-t’ao and co-translated by Christopher Lupke and Kuo-ch’ing Tü. The completed book is expected to be released in spring 2007. *A History of Taiwan Literature* has previously been translated into Japanese; this English translation now makes the book available to English readers for the first time, incorporating all the Japanese notes into one volume that virtually goes beyond the original scope of the original “outline history.” Although Yeh Shih-t’ao was not able to attend the conference and deliver the keynote address, the editor and co-translators were present and available for questions and discussion.

Presentations by twenty scholars and students were made over two days, providing a venue for profound and stimulating dialogues among colleagues in the field and an opportunity to exchange perspectives, discuss areas of mutual understanding, while focusing on common concerns and joint efforts.
A lively crowd gathered at Stork Pavilion, on Wednesday, May 17, 2006 at a reception preceding the panel discussion, “Taiwan in World Politics: Paradox, Predicament, and Prospect,” hosted by the Center for Taiwan Studies and co-sponsored by the East Asia Center and the Department of East Asian Languages (UCSB), and TECO, Los Angeles. Attendees included UCSB administrators, faculty, and students, members of the Santa Barbara Asian community, and distinguished TECOLA representatives.

Adjourning to the MultiCultural Center Conference room after the reception, panelists Thomas Gold (Dept. of Sociology, UC Berkeley), Alan P. Liu (Emeritus Professor of Political Science, UCSB), Robert Rauchhaus (Dept. of Political Science, UCSB) engaged in a stimulating and well-balanced discussion of the current economic and political situation of Taiwan, moderated by Mayfair Yang (Depts. of Religious Studies and East Asian Languages, UCSB) and hosted by Kuo-ch'ing Tu (Dept. of East Asian Languages, UCSB). The discussion, based on an academic theory perspective, centered on the interconnections between internal conditions and external relations of Taiwan.

Professor Gold focused on Taiwan’s strong and distinct cultural identity, which has been reinforced by Taiwan’s successful transition to democracy since the 1990s. He discussed the wide range of views in Taiwan on its prospect of becoming a genuine independent nation-state in the future. Professor Liu addressed Taiwan’s external relations, particularly regarding its relations with China and the U.S. He saw Taiwan’s having abundant moral power (also known as defensive power), such as its democratic values, loyalty and skills of its citizens, and merits in development, which inhibit China’s carrying out its repeated threats of using force against the island if it does not choose to unite with China. Dr. Rauchhaus acknowledged Taiwan’s merits, such as being a free and democratic country, but he felt that “hard,” not “soft” or “moral” power dominates international politics. He thought that in the long-run, China will “swallow up” Taiwan unless Taiwan can seize some critical, dramatic moment of crisis or social upheaval in China or elsewhere to turn it around.

Following the panel presentation, audience and panel members actively exchanged views on various aspects of Taiwan’s future, particularly the rapid and fundamental social changes inside China, which may push China toward democracy in the near future. In this context, current tensions between China, Taiwan, and the U.S. may be resolved peacefully.
Presentation of The Peony Pavilion
a Community Sensation

One of the highlights of the 2006 cultural events in Santa Barbara was the October presentation of the Kunqu opera, *The Peony Pavilion*, written by Ming Dynasty poet, Tang Xianzu, performed by Suzhou Kunqu Opera Theatre of Jiangsu, and produced and brought to the United States on tour by East Asian Department Professor Emeritus Kenneth Pai under the sponsorship of the UCSB Department of East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies and UCSB Arts & Lectures in association with the Santa Barbara Museum of Art.

Playing to sell-out audiences for three consecutive nights to present a nine-hour production, a troupe of seventy actors, dancers, acrobats, and musicians enthralled the audience with their rendition of the story of a beautiful young woman who dreams of the perfect lover as she sleeps in a garden. Disappointed upon awakening to reality and not finding the lover, she slowly succumbs, leaving behind a portrait and a poem. The man of her dreams does exist, however, and by chance, he discovers these and falls in love with her image. Over the course of the three nights of performances, the plot develops with the lover pursuing the ghost of the young woman, and finally, the couple is united in life when the power of his love defies death and brings her back to life.

Received by the Santa Barbara community with great acclaim, critics from the local press reviewed the trilogy performance as the highlight of the season's cultural events and raved about the refreshing, exotic beauty of this traditional Chinese art form. “Sometimes an event comes along in Santa Barbara that is so different, so overwhelming, and that asks such commitment and indulgence of its audience, that it becomes identified with for that entire year. In that sense, 2006 belongs to *The Peony Pavilion*” (Entertainment & the Arts, *Santa Barbara Newsspress*, October 10, 2006).

Kunqu opera evolved 600 years ago during the Ming Dynasty, when art and culture in China flourished. In its earliest form it consisted of epic poems sung by male actors to the accompaniment of woodwinds. Later, sponsored by wealthy people, these became more elaborate productions, and were performed with complex choreography, lasting for as long as an entire week. The art form evolved over the centuries, refined by writers, musicians, and performers. However, under Chairman Mao’s regime, classical Chinese opera was obliterated. It is only recently that, with Professor Pai’s efforts at reviving it, Kunqu opera is now undergoing a renaissance in China and abroad.

Kuo-ch’ing Tu, professor of Taiwan studies and director of the Center for Taiwan Studies at UCSB recently was quoted in the *Santa Barbara Independent* “Kenneth Pai is probably the most famous contemporary writer in the Chinese Diaspora, often mentioned in conversation among Chinese intellectuals as a potential candidate for the Nobel Prize.” Certainly, his revival of this exquisite ancient art form is a major contribution to the arts and humanities.
This June I had the opportunity to travel to Taiwan for three weeks to study its culture and Mandarin at the Mandarin Training Center (MTC), National Taiwan Normal University, in Taipei. My Chinese language professor introduced this intensive language program to me halfway through the academic year. Excited by the opportunity and eager to learn, I soon embarked on the adventure of a lifetime.

Facilitated by the Center for Taiwan Studies, and subsidized by the Cultural Division of TECO, L.A. the trip was well organized from beginning to end: The initial information meetings were very clear about what was expected, what to expect, and what we should bring. While we were in Taiwan we saw many impressive and moving places; much more than one would expect in a mere three weeks.

The people that I set out with on this trip, the professors as well as my classmates, were all very friendly and I got a great feeling of togetherness and bonding while we traveled together. The people we had the pleasure of meeting were all very welcoming and eager to help us out and share their culture. Even at night I felt very safe walking around the city, and people were eager to offer directions.

Similarly, the people at MTC made us feel at home from the very beginning. The small class sizes created an informal setting that made learning a fun and comfortable experience. The lesson material was carefully selected and well presented, and it was useful to us immediately. Topics discussed ranged from asking for and giving directions, haggling at night markets, ordering food in restaurants, and discussing travel plans. In the classroom we not only learned Mandarin, but also about Taiwanese culture and norms. We often discussed things that we had seen the day before, while at the same time learning new words and practicing our speaking skills.

During the hottest time of day we attended class, but in the morning and evenings we explored the city, experiencing the local cuisine and culture and visiting awe-inspiring sites. All the places we went to—the museums, temples, national parks, memorials, a teahouse, the night markets, and clubs, just to name a few—were memorable and exciting places to visit. The food, though very different from what I was used to, was delicious.

The last week of the trip was spent traveling around the island visiting two national parks, an old temple, and a crafts village. The village and temple were both amazing, but words cannot adequately describe the national parks. They were breathtakingly beautiful, and even though they’re both on the same island, they were very different. Alishan had jagged gray peaks covered by forest with small creeks running through the vales. Taroko had more rounded mountains covered in lush green vegetation with rivers coursing through the deep canyons.

There is far more to see and do in Taiwan than this brief article can describe here. A firsthand experience will be an experience that lasts a lifetime.

—Arthur Ritmeester
During the 2004–2005 academic year I was a recipient of the Blakemore Freeman Fellowship for Advance Chinese Language studies at National Taiwan University’s International Chinese Language Program. My modern Mandarin language abilities improved from intermediate to advanced, and I also was able to start Minnanese (Taiwanese), and classical Chinese training. However, by the end of the academic year my language skills had not yet reached the level I needed to complete my doctoral program. Hence, recommended by the Center for Taiwan Studies, I was grateful to receive the support of the Taiwan Ministry of Education Scholarship for the 2005–2006 academic year, which enabled me to continue my studies, as well as to start preliminary field and archival research for my dissertation on the Mazu cult.

My primary goal was to strengthen my modern Chinese and Minnanese skills. Once a week I traveled to the Academia Sinica, where I was a research fellow at the Institute of Ethnology. I also made my way to various historic Mazu temples around the island on weekends and holidays. In February and March 2006, I participated in the annual Mazu pilgrimage to Beigang, Taiwan, which is the primary topic of my proposed doctoral dissertation. In addition to studying Chinese, I joined the NTU cycling club and established some very warm friendships with local Taiwanese students.

I was able to attend several other events beyond the classroom of great interest to me. For example, on September 28, I attended the 2,555 birthday of Confucius at the historical Taipei Confucius Temple. On October 19, I attended the primer of the documentary, *Between Heaven and Earth, Temples of Taiwan*, at the Taipei Science and Technology Educational Center.

What I am most appreciative of is the outpour of support and friendliness from professors at NTU and the Academia Sinica. Professor Chang Hsun, whom I met at the Academia Sinica, has done a lot of research on Mazu, agreed to be my advisor as a research fellow at the Institute of Ethnology. During my first meeting with Professor Chang she gave me a copy of her recently published book, *Wenhua Mazu*, and offered to let me borrow her personal library resources on Mazu. Professor Rong Lingmei assisted me in my research as well and graciously published my article entitled “Mazu yu Taiwan xinyiming de Meiguo hua” in *Taiwan Historical Materials Studies Journal* No. 25. Professor Rong referred me to the recently established Taiwan Association for Religious Studies at Zhenli daxue (Aletheia University) as a resource. There I met with Professor Johnny Chang, who invited me to present a paper on Guangong temples in America at an international Guangong conference held in Taipei this past October 2006. I became a member of the Taiwan Association for Religious Studies and was given all the past publications as a gift for joining.

The language training, my research, and the professional relationships that I made would not have been possible had I not been awarded the Taiwan Scholarship to extend my studies in Taiwan for another year. The networks and foundation that I was able to establish in my first year abroad, were able to flourish as I made my way beyond the classroom and began to explore other parts of Taiwan during my second year.
Learn more about the Center for Taiwan Studies at http://www.eastasian.ucsb.edu/projects/taiwancenter/

Please see insert for CTS book availability and to place an order

Center for Taiwan Studies
East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies
HSSB 2226
University of California
Santa Barbara, CA 93106