

UC SANTA BARBARA

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UCSB Conference Explores Chinese Literary Modernism in Taiwan

Scholars from Taiwan, China, Japan, and the United States will gather at the University of California, Santa Barbara for a three-day conference that examines the remarkable literary movement that took place in Taiwan in the 1950's and 60's. The conference also will honor the life, work, and legacy of Pai Hsien-yung, a professor emeritus of Chinese literature at UCSB and an active participant in the movement. It is free and open to the public.

Titled "Modernism Revisited: Pai Hsien-yung and Chinese Literary Modernism in Taiwan and Beyond," the conference begins at 5 p.m. on Thursday, May 1, with a screening of the film "Love's Lone Flower" followed by a discussion with director Tsao Jui-Yuan and Pai Hsien-yung at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art. Among the other events--most of which will be conducted in Chinese--are a screening of the film "Three Times," and panel discussions and dialogues with leading writers, filmmakers, and literary critics.

In the late 1950's and early 1960's, as Chinese literature in the mainland was relegated to Maoist doctrines and socialist realist models, a literary revolution was being carried out in Nationalist Taiwan. It was at the gates of Taiwan University that a group of literature students working under the renowned critic T.A. Hsia began a landmark journal titled "Modern Literature." The journal not only introduced the work and theories of literary modernism from the West through translations of important writers such as James Joyce and Franz Kafka, it also served as a forum for the young

student editors to publish their own fiction and critical essays. Those students--including Pai Hsien-yung--would later go on to dominate the Chinese literary scene as leading writers and critics for the next several decades.

Participants in the conference at UCSB include novelists Hua-ling Nieh, Chu Tien-wen, S.K. Chang, Chang Ta-chun, Shih Shu-ching, Lee Yu, Wu He, and Claire Pei. Also present will be poets Ya Hsien, K.C. Tu, Dominic Cheung, and Wai-lim Yip as well as filmmaker Tsao Jui-Juan.

More information about the conference, including a complete program of events, is available at www.eastasian.ucsb.edu/projects/Modernism/program.html

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About UC Santa Barbara

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