

Professor Siu-hung Lau Lectures on
“Su Dongpo’s Two Moonlight Songs: *Jiang Cheng Zi*
and *Shui Diao Ge Tou*”

On October 16, 2013, the National Central Library (NCL) and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Houston presented a lecture on Su Dongpo as part of the Taiwan Lectures on Chinese Studies series and in conjunction with the Antiquarian Book Exhibition “A Genius of All Ages: Su Dongpo.”

For this Taiwan Lectures on Chinese Studies presentation Professor of Chinese Literature at National Taiwan University Lau Siu-hung was invited to talk on “Su Dongpo’s Two Moonlight Songs: *Jiang Cheng Zi* and *Shui Diao Ge Tou*” His speech was introduced by NCL Director General Tseng Shu-hsien and Director General Steve Hsia of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Houston also delivered some remarks. Professor Lau received his doctorate in Chinese Literature from National Taiwan University’s Department of Chinese Literature. His research specialties include *Ci* poetry, Song-era literature, and *Shi* poetry. He has authored several books, including *Between Reading and Writing—Commentaries on Ci Poetry*, and *New Theories of Genre and Historical Perspectives on Ci Poetry*, and an anthology of *Shi* Poetry, *Outside Light Years*.

The venue of Houston, with its NASA Space Center, inspired Professor Lau to devote this lecture to Su Dongpo’s moonlight songs. Professor Lau began with a general discussion of the moon in Chinese literature, and then proceeded to talk about two favorite themes in Su Dongpo’s writings: sunlight breaking through the clouds after a rain storm, and moonlight. This was followed by a detail exegesis of both of the moonlight songs, one in remembrance of his deceased wife, and the other about missing the companionship of his younger brother. From the poetic attainment Su Dongpo achieves in these works, spanning cold and chilly to the bright and open, his deep feelings and life philosophy can be experienced and understood.

The Su Dongpo exhibition and lecture attracted nearly 100 guests, mostly of Chinese ethnic background, who listened with rapt attention. They peppered Professor Lau with questions following his lecture and when the NCL's Center or Chinese Studies Section Chief Geng Li-chun announced that prizes to encourage guest participation for audience members correcting answering questions, complimentary copies of two NCL publications *A Genius of All Ages: Su Dongpo* and *Life, A Walk through Misty Rain with Straw Hat*, the venue atmosphere became lively.



Taipei Economic and Cultural Office Director General Steve Hsia



Professor Lau Siu-hung lectures at the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Houston



A member of the audience asks a question after the lecture



Members of the audience enthusiastically seek to be chose to answer a question after the lecture in order to win a prize