

For Immediate Release

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**UCLA Releases New Research on "Asian American Literature in China, Italy, Korea, Sweden, Germany, Singapore, Poland, and the U.S."**

Los Angeles-UCLA's renowned *Amerasia Journal* releases its latest issue entitled "Word Travels: Asian American Literature in China, Italy, Sweden, Germany, Poland, Singapore, and the U.S." Three years in the compiling and edited by adjunct UCLA Professor Russell C. Leong, this special international edition gathers leading scholars from the People's Republic of China, Italy, Korea, Sweden, Germany, Poland, Singapore, and the U.S.

According to Leong, "The publishing, translating, and teaching of Asian American literature internationally is a relatively new trend, within the past decade, especially in China. This phenomenon has introduced this rich literature to thousands of new readers in Asia, Europe, and the Americas."

This edition features essays by scholars from the following countries:

**China**

In today's China, the poems, stories, and novels of Chinese American writers are being read, taught, translated, and critiqued in major Chinese universities in Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Xian, Nanjing, Hangzhou, Hong Kong, and also in Taipei. In this section we feature essays by three of the leading proponents of Chinese American literature in China: Prof. Wu Bing, director of the Chinese American Literature Research Center of Beijing Foreign Studies University; Prof. Zhang Ziqing of Nanking University's Foreign Literature Dept., and Prof. Yingguo Xu of the Tianjian University of Science and Engineering, who edited the first anthology of Chinese American literature published in China.

**United States**

According to U.S. historian Prof. Gordon H. Chang of Stanford University, "Happy Lim was perhaps the most important organic intellectual among Chinese in America." Through Chang's path-breaking essay and translations of selected poems published here, "The Many Sides of Happy Lim," readers throughout the world can journey with Lim through an often tragic, but brave, profound, revolutionary, and poetic life. In the 1930s, Lim began writing and publishing his poetry, and for the next fifty years, wrote poetry, short stories, and essays, mostly based upon his own life as a service worker in San Francisco Chinatown. He was identified with the Left throughout his life, and, with others, founded the Chinese Workers Mutual Aid Association, the most important Left political organization in San Francisco Chinatown.

**Sweden**

By 1979, Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* had been translated in Sweden and introduced to readers through newspapers and magazines. Translations of Kingston's work were followed by Swedish translations of books by Gish Jen, Gus Lee and Amy Tan, according to Mona Pers. According to Pers, books like *The Woman Warrior* offered some sociological and cultural understanding of "people from other cultures coming into our homogenous environment." Thus, argues Pers, aspects of ethnicity and biculturalism were

more important, for Swedish readers, than the intrinsic artistic or literary qualities of Asian American writers.

#### Italy

According to Jeffery Paul Chan in "L'AMA Non Ci Ama, Lost & Found in Translation" the themes of Asian American literature—including migration, assimilation, and ethnic prejudice, resonate in a society in which Filipinos are the largest group, followed by Chinese, Sri Lankans, and Bangladeshis. In a brief commentary, "Nomadism is Our Destiny," Scilla Finetti places Asian American literature squarely within the realm of the emigration experience in Italy.

#### Germany

Thomas Girst, in "Teaching Asian American Literature to German Eurocentrics," reminds us that the theme of political division and unification in Asian American literature resonates deeply for Germany readers. The split between North and South Korea, the experiences of Vietnamese who settled earlier in East Germany, and literature around the Japanese American incarceration help to provoke discussion around national, cultural, and ethnic German identity today.

#### Korea

Ninety percent of what is taught or read in Asian American literature consists of works in the English language. Yet, Kun Jong Lee, in "Korean-Language American Literary Studies: An Overview," points out that the breadth and depth of Korean American literature cannot be grasped fully without looking at works written in the Korean language.

#### Singapore

Walter S. H. Lim, in "Some Musings on Cultural Responses to Asian American Literature" notes that the issue of majority/minority identity issues, are much less so for Singaporean students, so that their understanding of Asian American literature differs than that of Asians who are minorities in the West.

#### Poland

Dominika Ferens, in "A Pole with a Stake in Asian American Literature," points out that gaps in historical knowledge, contemporary migrant and immigration experiences, cultural constructions of racial difference affect the way her Polish students read Asian American literature.

This special issue of *Amerasia Journal* costs \$15.00 plus \$5.00 for shipping and handling and 8.25 percent sales tax for California residents. Make checks payable to "Regents of U.C." VISA, MASTERCARD, and DISCOVER are also accepted; include expiration date and phone number on correspondence. The mailing address is: UCLA Asian American Studies Center Press, 3230 Campbell Hall, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1546. Phone: 310-825-2968. Email: [aascpress@aasc.ucla.edu](mailto:aascpress@aasc.ucla.edu)

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