

Prof. Dafydd Fell Lectures at Ghent University on the Use of Rap in Taiwanese Political Communication

On May 9, 2015, the National Central Library (NCL) of Taiwan partnered with Ghent University, Belgium, to hold this year's first Taiwan Lecture on Chinese Studies in the European region. Prof. Dafydd Fell of SOAS delivered the lecture, entitled "The Use of Rap in Taiwanese Political Communication."

The lecture was moderated by Prof. Bart Dessein of Ghent University's Department of Chinese Language and Culture. Ms. Tseng Shu-hsien, Director-General of the NCL, gave an introductory speech. Ghent University, the NCL's co-sponsors for this lecture, was also one of the institutions with which the NCL partnered last year to establish a Taiwan Resource Center for Chinese Studies (TRCCS).

The speaker, Prof. Dafydd Fell, is currently a professor in the Department of Politics and International Studies and the Director of the Center of Taiwan Studies at SOAS, University of London. He is also the editor of Routledge's Research on Taiwan Series, and in 2004 helped found the European Association of Taiwan Studies.

Prof. Fell is a long-time observer of Taiwan's political development. His lecture focused on Taiwanese rap music, exploring the role and impact of rap music in Taiwan's political communication. He pointed out that over the last 30 years, rap has become an important musical genre in Taiwan. Taiwanese rap emerged in the aftermath of democratization, and has been a surprisingly commonly used tool in Taiwan's political communication. He analysed five political rap songs released since the late 1980s, demonstrating how rap has been used both to fight and satirize power, and also as a political campaigning tool. It has even been employed by the state to try to connect with younger voters and used in public information campaigns. Prof. Fell's lecture attracted a number of students from Ghent University, who were keen to discuss rap music as a factor in Taiwan's elections and the democratization process with the speaker.

After the lecture, Dr. Lin Neng-shan of the NCL screened a short video specially produced by the Center for Chinese Studies. The video briefly introduced the work of the Center, the

Research Grant for Foreign Scholars in Chinese Studies, the Taiwan Fellowship, and the various Chinese Studies digital resources provided by academic institutions in Taiwan. The video's purpose is to encourage more overseas scholars to apply for financial support to carry out research in Taiwan.

The lecture coincided with Ghent University's 3-day "Taiwan Match-Making Event," at which the presidents and senior administrative staff from five Taiwanese Universities, including the NTU and the NCCU participated in multilateral discussions. After the lecture, Director-General Tseng accepted an invitation to meet with delegates attending the lecture to introduce the NCL's collections, academic resources, and international partnerships.



Left to Right: Prof. Bart Dessen, Prof. Dafydd Fell, and Director-General Tseng Shu-hsien



Prof Dafydd Fell delivers his lecture



Short video produced by the Center for Chinese Studies is screened



Audience attends the lecture