

Pochan CHEN 陳伯楨

October 29, 1973 – June 28, 2015

Prof. Pochan Chen, of the Department of Anthropology, National Taiwan University (NTU), passed away of heart failure at the age of 41 in Shin Kong Wu Ho-Su Memorial Hospital in Taipei on the morning of June 28, 2015. He was interred in a flower burial in Taipei following a funeral service attended by over 300 mourners on Monday, July 20<sup>th</sup>. He is survived by his parents, brother, and fiancée LIN Kuei-chen.

Pochan was born in Jilong, Taiwan on October 29, 1973 and raised in part by his maternal grandparents. He was reading newspapers by the age of three, early evidence of his life-long love of reading and learning. It seems that from that age on he never stopped, and his handle on publications in his fields of study was encyclopedic. He attended high school at Taipei Municipal Neihu High School (臺北市立內湖高中) as a member of one of this schools first cohorts of students, and after graduation was accepted to National Taiwan University, where he matriculated in the Department of Anthropology in 1991. At Taida he attended his first archaeological fieldwork. After graduation, he spent two years as a research assistant in the Institute of History and Philology of Academia Sinica, before matriculating in the Interdepartmental PhD Program in Archaeology at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) in 1996. There he received an MA degree in 1999 based on his thesis: “Rethinking of Austronesian Homeland and Dispersal – From the Perspective of Research Methodology,” and subsequently his a PhD in 2004 with a dissertation entitled: “Salt Production and Distribution from the Neolithic Period to Han Dynasty in Eastern Sichuan Basin, China,” both of which he submitted under the supervision of Prof. Lothar von FALKENHAUSEN.

His dissertation was based on more than a year of fieldwork in the Three Gorges at the site of Zhongba, in Zhong Xian County, Chongqing, which he first visited on his first trip to China in the spring of 1999 along with his advisor, classmates and colleagues from UCLA. Beginning in the fall of that same year, he joined a team of archaeologists from the Sichuan Provincial Institute of Archaeology, Peking University and UCLA and helped lead the excavations of part of the site. His dissertation work was based in part on those excavations and their contextualization within the broader regional cultural and social history. Many of his academic publications, as well as his book *Ancient Central China: Centers and Peripheries along the Yangzi River* co-authored with Rowan FLAD were based in part on these excavations.

Immediately upon graduating he joined the faculty of his alma mater, National Taiwan University, as an Assistant Professor. He was promoted to Associate Professor in 2014, and served on numerous committees at Taiwan National University in addition to being the secretary for the Taiwan Society for Anthropology and Ethnography, the Austronesian

Representative to the Society for East Asian Archaeology, on the editorial boards of *Taiwan Renlei Xuekan* 臺灣人類學刊 [*Taiwan Journal of Anthropology*] and *Asian Perspectives*, an affiliated professor at the Open University of Kaohsiung and Sichuan University, and an important advisor for numerous museum exhibits, and education and archive projects across Taiwan. In addition to his term as a visiting faculty member at Sichuan University in 2008 (during which he donated his entire salary to a relief fund for the victims of the disastrous Wenchuan earthquake), he was also a fellow at the Harvard-Yenching Institute during the 2010-11 academic year, during which the final manuscript for his co-authored book with Cambridge University Press was completed.

Throughout these years, Pochan continued his active field research in the People's Republic of China. He was a Principal Investigator along with LI Shuicheng (Peking University), JIANG Zhanghua (Chengdu City Institute of Archaeology), Rowan FLAD (Harvard University) and Gwen BENNETT (Washington University, St. Louis / McGill University), of the Chengdu Plain Archaeological Survey from 2005-2011. Subsequently, he has been a PI of the Tao River Archaeological Project together with WANG Hui (Gansu Provincial Institute of Archaeology), LI Shuicheng and Rowan FLAD. Simultaneously, he was constantly involved in an advisory capacity in a number of archaeological and ethnographic projects elsewhere in China and in Taiwan. This research has led to publications in numerous academic venues in addition to his co-authored book, including (but not limited to): *Xinshixue* 新史學 [*New history*]; *Nanfang Wenwu* 南方文物 [*Relics from South*]; *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science of the United States*; *Nanfang Minzu Kaogu* 南方民族考古 [*Southern ethnology and archaeology*]; *Kaogu* 考古 [*Archaeology*]; *Asian perspectives*; and *Kaogu Renlei Xuekan* 考古人類學刊 [*Journal of Archaeology and Anthropology*], as well as numerous edited volumes and the translation of a children's book on archaeology. He was a frequent awardee of funds from the Ministry of Science and Technology of Taiwan for his research and before his death had recently been informed that he would be receiving the Ta-You Wu Memorial Award 吳大猷先生紀念獎 in 2015, an award rarely bestowed on scholars in the social sciences and humanities.

He was a regular and enthusiastic conference attendee, participating in many small conferences, the Society for American Archaeology meetings most years, several meetings of the Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association, as well as every meeting of the Society for East Asian Archaeology except for the first one, starting with his presentation of a paper at the second SEAA conference in Durham in 2000. He was also advising on the planning of the Seventh International SEAA conference to take place at Harvard and Boston University in 2016. His contributions to meetings and conferences were always well considered and inevitably raised the quality of the sessions in which he took part.

Pochan was particularly dedicated to teaching, including public outreach through museums, advising and classroom instruction. He received teaching awards from National Taiwan University on a number of occasions for his dedication to teaching and to his students. He regularly taught a courseload beyond that required, and the list of courses he taught at National Taiwan University is impressive in its breadth as well as its length, including courses such as “Physical Anthropology,” “Archaeology of Ancient China,” “Historical Archaeology,” “Computers and Statistic Applications in Archaeology,” “Quantitative Research in Anthropology,” “Archaeology and Contemporary Societies,” “Seminar on the Middle and Upper Yangzi Valley,” “Archaeology of Trade and Diasporas,” “Gender Issues in Archaeology,” “Archaeological Theory,” and “Human Geographic Information Science” among others.

Pochan’s last trip to China was in May, 2015 when he joined the field season of the Tao River Archaeology Project for two weeks during his academic term. He was unable to stay until the end of the season due to teaching responsibilities, but did join the team for work at each of the sites of focus for the season: Dayatou (in both Lintao and Guanghe Counties) and Majiayao and Siwashan (both in Lintao County). The team also visited the Guanghe County seat, where the county government was planning a conference on the Qijia culture to occur at the end of July in concert with the opening of a new museum focused on Qijia. Given recent work by the TRAP project at Qijiaping, the type site of the Qijia culture, Pochan intended to attend this conference to report on this recent work. In advance of the conference, during this visit, he also sat for an interview with the director of the Guanghe Wenwuju. He returned to Taiwan about ten days later via Hangzhou, a place he had never previously visited, and taught his last two weeks of classes. He was stricken by a heart attack on his way home from a celebration with students marking the end of the academic year.

The impact of his life and career is evident from the emotional series of eulogies given at his funeral. The ceremony started with statements by Jeff CHENG 鄭玠甫 (PhD student at Boston University), TU Cheng-sheng 杜正勝 (Research Fellow, Academia Sinica; Professor, Chang Jung Christian University; Former Minister of Education of Taiwan and Former Director of the National Palace Museum); TSANG Cheng-hwa 臧振華 (Distinguished Research Fellow, Academia Sinica), CHEN Jo-Shui 陳弱水 (Dean of Humanities, National Taiwan University), HSU Fu-Chang 徐富昌 (Professor, Department of Chinese Literature, National Taiwan University), and LIN Wei-Pin 林瑋嬪 (Chair, Department of Anthropology, National Taiwan University). These were followed by a series of short films showing images of his life, and more comments by ZHENG Yiting 鄭怡庭 (Assistant Professor, National Taiwan Normal University, Comparative Literature), Rowan FLAD (Professor, Harvard University, Anthropology), CHIANG Chihhua 江芝華 (Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, National Taiwan University), representatives of classmates from college (CHENG Jianwen 鄭建文), overseas students (CHEN

Binghui 陳炳輝), advisees (CHOU Meng-jhen 周孟蓁) , and his other students (LAI Yiyu 賴奕諭), and, finally his partner LIN Kuei-chen 林圭偵 (Assistant Research Fellow, Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica).

Fellowships are being established in his honor at National Taiwan University and UCLA commemorating the major impact he has had on the field. NTU will host a commemorative event in his honor on their campus on September 25, 2015, and a session commemorating him will occur at the 81<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology in Orlando, Florida in April, 2016.