

which Mark Twain was raised). He spent the next decade developing a far more enlightened view of the Chinese laborers he saw in the West. How and why did he change?"

This is what libraries are for. They allow us to see what Mark Twain read, and what he made of his reading. Through his correspondence we can see his mind at work. It is only by wrestling with the full range of what Samuel Clemens put on paper that we can see the growth of a man born into unthinking acceptance of the racial and imperial thinking of his day.

He became, of course, a critic of these traditional ways of thought. This is famously so for the issue of African Americans and their rights. It is not as well known that Samuel Clemens was a bitter critic of the imperial order in Asia-- well before he spoke up on older forms of discrimination in the United States. In the New York Tribune he was working towards the contempt he would express loudly after traveling again across the Pacific. For example, in *Following the Equator* (1898) he observed that on the borders of China "our land-robbery, claim-jumping, is becoming a European governmental frenzy." This was typical of Mark Twain's scorn for imperialism and its impact on this part of the world.

For generations, Mark Twain scholars have lived off the trove of letters and drafts that were not published in his lifetime, detective work that has no end. In 2010 the Mark Twain Papers made available to the general public the first volume of the full Autobiography of Mark Twain. The correct, uncensored text had not been published before. The general editor of the Mark Twain Project, Robert Hirst, reports that a week rarely goes by without a personal letter or scrap of Clemens' writing, possibly genuine, appearing for sale on the internet. We are still learning about how Mark Twain came to see China and the Chinese the way he did.

The documents that sit in the Bancroft Library and go out to the world at the click of a few keys, are part of a living reminder of the philosophy that guides great libraries, the National Central Library in Taipei among them.

The small mirror from the Berkeley library

can make us look at West meeting East in ways we should not forget.

First there is this, in the letter to his mother that shows us young Samuel Clemens taking his first despairing look at the Chinese. He adds the good news that he has found free libraries. "If books are not good company, where will I find it?"

Second there is the view out the airplane window when a scholar from Asia lands at the San Francisco Airport, or when North Americans take off from this hub for Asia: It is a city, named to honor Mark Twain's mentor, Anson Burlingame.

### Sources:

1. I am grateful to my library colleagues Robert Hirst and Peter Zhou for discerning comments. The opening of sources to readers, wherever they may live, is a proud achievement of libraries today. To see Mark Twain's correspondence in full context, explore: <http://www.marktwainproject.org/>
2. See his letters to Jane Lampton Clemens on Aug. 31, 1853 and on June 27, 1866; to Anson Burlingame, Feb. 19, 1868 (two letters); and to Mary Mason Fairbanks, June 17, 1868.
3. Other "e-Scholarship," supported by the University of California, makes once obscure primary sources, as well as the latest scholarship, available in a true revolution of access: <http://cshe.berkeley.edu/publications/chronicle/7/Fryer.pdf> <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/2r87m203> (The Treaty with China)
4. Martin Zehr, "Mark Twain, 'The Treaty with China,' and the Chinese Connection," is very helpful and available at <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/5t02n321>
5. Mark Twain, *Following the Equator; a Journey Around the World* (Hartford, CT 1898), 624 -- Available through HathiTrust <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/nyp.33433003303025>

## Spotlights

### ■ *IFLA President Dr. Ingrid Parent Gave Special Address and Visited NCL*

Dr. Ingrid Parent, the President of IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations

and Institutions) was invited to visit Taiwan for a professional communication from November 10–15, 2012. She gave address on the topic of the “21 Century Libraries: Centres of Learning, Social Action, Inclusion, and Cultural Heritage” and had a communication with local library professionals.



*President Parent (right) giving a speech at the NCL*

Dr. Parent’s address has a revelation and it probed into the current issues that libraries encountered and concerned. Her speech has received ardent responses, feedbacks, and questions from the attending audience for deeper communication.

In order to keep library services in Taiwan abreast of international trends, join international profession associations, and take part in their activities, NCL has invited IFLA Former President Ms. Ellen Tise coming to Taiwan for professional communication in April 2011. This year it is our honor again to invite, in conjunction with National Taiwan University Library, the current IFLA President Dr. Ingrid Parent for giving a speech and networking with local library professionals. IFLA is currently a most important international organization in the field of library and information science, and it is leading ahead the development and trends of library services in the world. It is believed that by this trip to Taiwan, Dr. Ingrid Parent will understand more library development in Taiwan and will share her Taiwan experience with international library professionals.

Since it is the first time that Dr. Ingrid Parent visited Taiwan, after her special topic address we arranged particularly for her to visit NCL rare book room and introduced to her the Chinese classics

bibliography databases. She paid detailed attention to understand the NCL’s collection and preservation of cultural heritage, as well as commended those facilities.

### ■ *Chinese Cabinet at the Russian Academy of Sciences’ Institute of Oriental Studies*

In conjunction with government policy to promote Chinese studies and Chinese culture, the National Central Library continues to actively promote Chinese studies and engage in cultural diplomacy. After establishing a Taiwan Chinese Studies Resource Center at the University of Texas Austin in November of this year, a month later, on December 24, the NCL successfully set up a Chinese Cabinet at the Russian Academy of Sciences’ (RAS) Institute of Oriental Studies.

This act will greatly increase Russian sinologists’ and library patrons’ understanding of Chinese studies in Taiwan. It also increases Taiwan’s visibility and cultural image in Russia. The director of the institute Vitaly Naumkin (who is also a member of the advisory Scientific Council under the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia) and Taiwan’s representative to Russia Jack Chen both attended the ceremony to witness this historic moment.



*RAS Institute of Oriental Studies director Vitaly Naumkin (left) and Taiwan representative to Russia Jack Chen.*

The NCL has established close cultural ties