

In honor of Professor Wei Zi-yun, the celebrated scholar of the novel *Jin Ping Mei* (Golden Lotus), the Research Center for Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences at National Cheng Kung University and the CCS jointly hold the first “International Conference on the Forbidden Legend: *Jin Ping Mei*” at the NCL on August 24. A ceremony for the donation of essays, letters, and books by Professor Wei was also arranged during the conference, which was the first of its kind in Taiwan.

Leading *Jin Ping Mei* scholars from China, Korea, Vietnam, Hong Kong and Taiwan gathered together to jointly discuss *Jin Ping Mei*, one of the Four Great Classical Novels from the Ming period. Aspects of various editions of the novel were discussed at the conference’s Taipei session, including the periods, compilation process, value orientation, overseas circulation, ideological content, differences in foreign language translations, and traditional culture writings. A total of 12 papers were presented. The objective academic analysis and animated discussions during the conference aimed to change public perceptions of *Jin Ping Mei*, a controversial novelist whose books were banned and burned.

## News from Taiwan Libraries

### ■ *“ICT Learning Center of Thailand Visit Digital Opportunity Center of Taiwan”*

The Ministry of Education, in order to shorten the digital gap between counties and cities and whilst creating digital opportunities, has, since 2005, introduced and set up in the country’s 18 counties 188 Digital Opportunity Center (DOC)

centers. This is to enable people in remote areas to have access to computers and the Internet. DOC mainly provides free IT courses, practical digital applications studies, information and web-related services and consultation as well as sponsoring after-school care of elementary school children.

In the end of July, Thailand Nan’s Library Information Communication Technology Learning Center visited the DOC Centers in Nantou County, Chungliao and LungAn to understand our current policy and implementation situation on reducing the counties-cities digital gap. Members of the visiting delegation included officials of the ICT sector, Kasetsart University professor and members from the Center, a total of eight persons.

### ■ *“Changhua County Launches Innovative E-book Service Making it an Easy Digital Surfing Scholarly City”*

To promote innovative digital reading, the Changhua County Department of Cultural Affairs purchased 878 e-books, enabling county citizens to borrow them free of charge. A press conference on “Launching Changhua County E-book Innovative Service” was held on the 9th of August to formally declare the official start of the e-book service. Changhua County, is one of the first county, besides the five cities, to establish cooperation with the National Taichung Library. The purchase of e-books is set up on the National Taichung Library network platform to enable citizens to borrow the maximum number of books in a most convenient way.

The National Taichung Library has set up an e-book service since the end of 1997. Basing on the analysis from the service platform readers,

Changhua County readers registrations and usage ranked it the first outside the five cities. This indicates the promotion of reading a success. Readers can go to Changhua County Library system <http://library.bocach.gov.tw> to find out e-book bibliography, click on the Bibliography URL, and link to the e-book platform to read and borrow books or using the Changhua County Public library card go to the National Taichung library e-book service platform: <http://ebook.ntl.gov.tw/> to login and register to be able to borrow books.

■ ***“City Library is 60-year-old: Antique Martial Arts Fiction Reappears”***

Taipei Public Library has gone through 60 years! The Library plans to make a special exhibition on the theme: “Reading Trajectory, Thanks for the Companionship” It will host an exhibition of a collection of old books library cards used since the beginning, librarians’ uniform and

old photographs. This will give the experience of going through a time tunnel back to the past. Books from the early days could only be read in the library and one had to deposit a refundable guarantee fee. Borrowing books for external use was opened in 1983. One can see the trend of time through the changes of a library card to an easy card to RFID library card.

To celebrate its 60th year, the Taipei Public Library organized a special exhibition on “Library Anniversary Exposition”. Copies of “antique-level” martial arts fictions brought people to relive wonderful reading memories. There was the memoir collection of the first human rights movement pioneer, Mr. Jiang Weishui; screenplays of 375 rent reduction publicity and others. All these recall and gave a savor of the dribs and drabs of Taiwan early days.



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