

rarely studied compared to the subject's academic treatment in the West.



Professor Barend J. ter Haar (left)

Professor ter Haar described his observations of witchcraft in China as a “witchcraft paradigm” with the main intention to interpret inexplicable phenomenon, such as weather changes and epidemics, and perhaps to sabotage social networks between people, for instance, by slandering a despised neighbor or even framing others with the charge of cult worship. Professor ter Haar further noted that the biggest manifestations of the witchcraft paradigm could be seen in the scenes of surging Red Guards, political accusations, and class struggle during the Communist Party of China's Cultural Revolution.

CCS News and Activities

Mid-autumn Festival Tea Party

The CCS held a Mid-autumn Festival tea party for foreign visiting scholars on the afternoon of May 26. A tea master demonstrated tea making skills to live musical accompaniment, giving the participating scholars a chance to appreciate the charm of tea culture and Eastern music.

Over 30 scholars and family members from 14 countries attended the party, which treated participants to a relaxing experience combining music, teaware appreciation, and tea tasting.



A group photo of the mid-autumn festival tea party

National Day Banquet

The NCL arranged a National Day banquet for recipients of the CCS Research Grants for Visiting Foreign Scholars and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Taiwan Fellowship grants. The participating foreign scholars were deeply honored to have the opportunity to participate in the National Day reception. A total of 24 scholars and family members from 16 countries attended the reception this year.

The event was held at the Baroque-style Taipei Guest House and garden area. Over 4,000 domestic and foreign dignitaries attended the program, which included Paiwan indigenous song and music performances by the Taiwu Elementary School Folk Singers from Pingtung County. The guests also feasted on Chinese and Western cuisine, including small steamed baozi from Din Tai Fung, Tainan danzai noodles, aboriginal millet mochi, and other delicacies.

International Conference on the Forbidden Legend: Jin Ping Mei

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,