

Renowned Australian Author and Broadcaster Richard Fidler Gives a Speech at NCL

National Central Library and the Australian Office in Taipei cohosted “A Travelogue of a Father and Son Seeking to Solve a Historical Mystery: Richard Fidler on Writing *Ghost Empires* and Book Signing Event.” It was held on March 17, 2019 at National Central Library (NCL). Mr. Richard Fidler, a renowned broadcaster and bestselling author in Australia, came to speak about his book. This was his only public address and book signing event in Taiwan. Also invited to the event was the popular Taiwan author Che-ching Hsieh as a discussant. Both authors took the audience down the enchanting thousand year old path of the Byzantine Empire. The event was also broadcast on Da Ai TV’s program Youth Love Reading to allow more readers to enjoy this rare feast.

In NCL Director-General Shu-hsien Tseng’s remarks, she expressed her gratitude for the Australian Office in Taipei’s long-term support of many reading promotion events put on by the Library, as well as their inviting many renowned authors from Australia to speak at the Library. The Office’s Deputy Director Marcus Wu also appreciated that the NCL providing this opportunity for the two organizations to collaborate



Mr. Fidler (middle) and Mr. Che-Ching Hsieh (2nd right) pose with Director-General Tseng (2nd left), Deputy Director Marcus Wu (1st left), and close to 300 attendees.

and for letting Mr. Fidler come to NCL to share his experience with readers here.

Ghost Empire’s creative impetus primarily came from Fidler’s fascination with the history of the Byzantine Empire, which caused him to take a trip from Rome to Istanbul. This trip also served as a rite of passage for his teenage son who is also a history buff. Fidler shared many interesting anecdotes from their travels, as well as their feelings in seeing countless historical buildings and vestiges. To them it felt like a trip through time and space. Mr. Che-ching Hsieh shared during the discussion that an understanding of the Eastern Roman Empire’s rise and fall can be had through a plethora of books; however, most of them are abstruse. Fidler’s *Ghost Empire*, on the other hand, is absolutely the best option for readers wanting to begin understanding this part of history.

The captivating discussion between the authors attracted close to 300 attendees. The book signing after the speech was very well attended, with the line stretching far into the distance. Everyone took advantage of this rare opportunity to interact closely with the funny and engaging Fidler. The event was filled with the wonderful feeling of reading as it came to a perfect end.



Mr. Fidler signs and adds an illustration on the book and mug for NCL.