

National Central Library

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Spotlights

■ A New Page in Taiwan-Poland Scholarly Collaboration: NCL and Adam Mickiewicz University Work Together to Establish a Taiwan Center for Chinese Studies

National Central Library (NCL) Director-General Shu-hsien Tseng cosigned a memorandum of collaboration on a Taiwan Center for Chinese Studies on October 22, 2019 with President Andrzej Lesicki from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poland. An opening ceremony was also held for this 33rd Taiwan Center for Chinese Studies that NCL has established overseas.



A group photo after signing the memorandum.

Adam Mickiewicz University dates back to the 17th century and was formally established in 1919. It was named after the romantic Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz and is an important academic center in Poland. The university's library is also one of the designated legal repositories in Poland. As such it has approximately three million books and periodicals, as well as newspapers, maps, and other documents. These are made available to the public for use as knowledge resources. Adam Mickiewicz University also has approximately 500,000 items in its special collections, including manuscripts, musical scores, maps, globes, posters, postcards, pictures, and materials from pre-1800s. These have been undergoing digitization to make them more accessible to the entire world.

National Central Library has enjoyed a long and close interaction with Poland in scholarly endeavors. To date, forty-one scholars from

Poland have received research grants by NCL's Center for Chinese Studies or Taiwan's Ministry of Education to conduct research in Taiwan. Adam Mickiewicz University is a collaborating school with the Ministry of Education's Taiwan Research Lectures. Furthermore, in 2017 NCL donated a large number of Chinese language teaching, Chinese language, and literature books to its library to expand its Chinese holdings.

In establishing this Taiwan Center for Chinese Studies at Adam Mickiewicz University, NCL provided 744 titles (806 volumes) of books on Chinese studies and Taiwan studies. Each year hereafter, this corpus will be added to. Also provided are digital collections and databases from Taiwan for the professors and students at the university to use.

In 2012, National Central Library began establishing Taiwan Centers for Chinese Studies at select important universities and research institutions overseas. This was done to strengthen the collaborative relationship with Chinese studies institutions throughout the world, to promote academic exchange on Chinese studies between Taiwan and other countries, and to disseminate the achievements of Chinese studies in Taiwan. This initiative was one of four award recipients of the American Library Association 2015 International Innovative Services Award. Not only do these Centers augment the interaction between NCL and research institutions throughout the world, thus providing more opportunities for collaboration, they also provide even more people the opportunity to use e-resources on Taiwan studies and Chinese studies, thus increasing Taiwan's visibility and influence on the world stage.

During the opening ceremony, NCL Director-General Tseng presented a replica of a national treasure Annotations of Mr. Dong Po's Poems, a work with over 800 hundred years of history, as well as a dual colored Diamond Sutra, the only surviving copy of its kind. These 22 volumes

will not only add to the university's collections, but also stand as a witness of this historic moment of collaboration. They also will provide opportunities for further collaboration in the future.



Director-General Tseng presents the university with a porcelain plate depicting blue magpies.

Establishing this Center at Adam Mickiewicz University garnered the attention and the attendance of scholars from related disciplines, the former director of the Polish Office in Taipei Maciej Gaca, and the university library's staff. The ambassador to Poland, Shi Wen-bin, was also in attendance and made a few remarks. He expressed his gratitude that Director-General Tseng personally came to Poland to sign the agreement and that the establishment of this Taiwan Center for Chinese Studies is an important milestone in the future of cross-cultural exchange between the two countries. Prof. Izabella Łabędzka thanked NCL on behalf of her university for providing the physical and digital resources.



A group photo of the dignitaries presenting at the ceremony.

The establishment of a Taiwan Center for Chinese Studies not only helps expand scholarly exchange and promote Taiwan-flavored Chinese studies but also is an important window internationally through which people can see the amazing books published in Taiwan and the abundant e-resources on Chinese studies. In this manner, the Centers are a place to show forth the achievements of Taiwan promoting Chinese studies.

■ National Central Library Director-General Shu-hsien Tseng Is Invited to Germany to Present a Paper and to Tour the Cologne Public Library, a Model Library of Service

In an effort to deepen ties with Taiwan and Chinese studies institutes in Europe, National Central Library Director-General Tseng Shu-hsien was invited to Germany to present a paper at the conference “Sinology–Chinese/China Studies–Guoxue: Their Interrelation, Methodologies, and Impact” on October 21, 2019. The conference cohosted by the Monumenta Serica Institute, Sankt Augustin and the Monumenta Serica Sinological Research Center. Later that afternoon, the group toured one of best public libraries in the world—the Cologne Public Library.

The conference was held at Siegburg, which is located in between the two large cities of Cologne and Bonn. The 15 scholars who presented came primarily from Taiwan, the U.S., Germany, Hong Kong, and China. Director-General Tseng was invited to speak on “Exploration of the Establishment of the Research Platform for Digital Humanities and Its Services—Taking the ‘Universal Type Digital Humanities Research Platform on Chinese Ancient Books’ Established by the NCL as an Example.” In her paper she gave an overview of recent developments in the digital humanities in Taiwan, as well as the creation of related research tools. Furthermore, she provided deep-level analysis of the relationship between libraries

and the digital humanities, discussing libraries’ role in research on the digital humanities, as well as an overview of efforts to promote the digital humanities by national libraries across the globe. She went into specific detail about the Universal Type Digital Humanities Research Platform on Ancient Chinese Books (<http://ming.ncl.edu.tw>) that was cocreated by NCL and National Chengchi University. She also gave an accounting of how NCL in recent years has actively explored the role of ancient books in the digital age and the achievements in innovative digital application of ancient books. Director-General Tseng’s presentation resonated with many in attendance. Scholars from Germany, Beijing, and Sweden all were eager to share their thoughts, complementing and affirming NCL’s efforts in creating digital humanities and sharing their achievements. There was a good deal of energy in the room during her presentation.



NCL Director-General Tseng presents her paper.

After the meeting, Director-General Tseng and those with her went with the head of Monumenta Serica Sinological Research Center Dr. Wojciech Rybka, S.V.D. to tour the central library of the Cologne Public Library which was nearby. The head librarian Hannelore Vogt extended them a very warm welcome. In 2013, her library was the first to offer Makerspace, providing devices and the technical know-how. This effectively flipped the way libraries provided services, attracting patrons to come to the library to read, experiment, discuss, explore, create, and share. Dr. Vogt, who has