

educational materials. The project will continue to expand to include elementary schools with more than 100 years of history and actively acquire through collaboration with various schools their old books, old pictures, and yearbooks to digitize. This way, even more valuable materials can be preserved and disseminated along with the library's current holdings.

### ■ **Gusting Winds Lecture Series: “Desire and Empire: Sima Xiangru’s Writing of All-under-Heaven”**

In an effort to promote cultural arts and encourage the public to read classical literature, on January 18, 2020, National Central Library and the Trend Education Foundation held the second lecture in Gusting Winds Lecture Series: “Trend Literature Theater: The Fantastical Han Dynasty”. The event was hosted by the Executive Director of Trend Education Foundation Jenny Chen; invited to lecture was Academia Sinica Academician and National Taiwan University Chair Professor Yu-yu Cheng, who spoke on “Desire and Empire: Sima Xiangru’s Writing of All-under-Heaven.”

Dr. Cheng’s research expertise is in classical Chinese literature, especially that of Han rhapsodies. The lecture began with an introduction to the Han dynasty and Han rhapsodies. The Han dynasty is the longest dynasty in Chinese history. During the apex of Emperor Wu’s reign, how to maintain unity in the dynasty was one of the emperor’s most critical issues. In Han rhapsody, the most important poet was Sima Xiangru. His two representative works, “Rhapsody on Zixu” and “Rhapsody on the Supreme Park,” not only describe through flowery words and many melodic sounds the possessions of a ruler but more so the desires of a ruler. That, it can be said, is almost without limit—such as the exhaustive nature of his writings.

Dr. Cheng gave a guided reading of selected passages from the two rhapsodies, showing through Sima Xiangru’s wordsmithing

a reflection of Emperor Wu’s desires, as well as creating a special dimension through text. Describing through lively words the empire or imaginative world that transcends time and space, he proclaims the formation of a supremely magnificent world never before known. It could also be said that through the text he created or constructed an eternal Han empire, embodying Emperor Wu’s bottomless desire to “possess All-under-Heaven” on his throne.

This lecture was the last event before Chinese New Year and attracted nearly 320 people. Dr. Cheng’s amazing presentation was a knowledge-filled afternoon feast. Bringing the wonderful lecture to a close was a Q&A session followed by Mrs. Chen’s summary remarks. NCL looks forward to future events of this nature with the Trend Education Foundation.



*Academia Sinica Academician and Chair Professor Dr. Yu-yu Cheng speaks on “Desire and Empire: Sima Xiangru’s Writing of All-under-Heaven.”*

### ■ **How Book History Can Enhance the Understanding of Texts: Examples from Early Modern Europe**

On January 14, 2020, National Central Library invited Harvard University Professor Dr. Ann Blair to speak at NCL on “How book history can enhance the understanding of texts: examples from early modern Europe.” Dr. Blair shared in her lecture the history of artifact research and textual transmission of knowledge. Through writing and dissemination, they form culture. Such queries as “Who wrote these texts?” and