

National Central Library

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Spotlights

Academician Yong-yih Tseng Donates Xiqu Yanjinshi Manuscript to National Central Library

Academician Prof. Yong-yih Tseng, Honorary Academician of Academia Sinica, donated his manuscript of Xiqu yanjinshi (The Evolutionary History of Traditional Opera) to National Central Library. On July 1, 2020, NCL held a donation ceremony in its International Conference Hall and invited Prof. Tseng, his family, students and friends. Xiqu yanjinshi is a colossal work with ten major chapters: “Southern Opera in the Song, Yuan, and Ming,” “Northern Dramas in the Jin, Yuan, and Ming,” “The Background of Traditional Opera in the Ming and Qing,” “Poetic Dramas in the Ming and Qing,” “Southern Dramas in the Ming and Qing,” “Modern Traditional Operas,” “Puppet Plays,” etc. It is the summation of research on traditional Chinese operas and a new milestone after Guowei Wang’s *Song Yuan Xiqu shi* (The History of Traditional Opera in the Song and Yuan).

Prof. Tseng is the only author in the Chinese world that can produce Kun opera. The structure of the script, the wording and rhyme are all meticulously done in the old style. It is as if they were written by the great playwrights of the Ming and Qing. Each is an exquisite work in its own right, especially *A New Version of Han Fei, Li Si, and Qinshi Huang, A Kun Opera; A New Version of Erzi chengzhou, A Kun Opera; A New Version of Meng Jiang nu, A Kun Opera; A New Version of Liang Shanbo yu Zhu Yingtai, a Kun Opera; Zheng Chenggong, a Peking Opera; and A New Version of Taohua shan, an Opera.*



NCL Director-General Tseng (left) presents Prof. Yong-yih Tseng (right) with a plaque of appreciation.

Postal Address:

No.20 Zhongshan S. Rd.
Taipei, Taiwan 100201,
Republic of China
Tel: +886-2-23619132
Fax: +886-2-23820747

E-Mail:

iechief@ncl.edu.tw

Website:

<http://www.ncl.edu.tw>



Invited to the donation ceremony were famous opera singers Wen-hua Tang, Yuhang Wen, Yangqiang Zhao, and Ming-ling Chu who performed the arias “The Eight Immortals Cross the Sea,” “The Heavenly Official Bestows Blessings,” and “The Yellow Dragon Descends.” National Central Library also unveiled “Pages of Drunken Maundering: An Exhibition of Academician Yong-yih Tseng’s Manuscripts.”

NCL Director-General Shu-hsien Tseng stated, this is the second manuscript Prof. Tseng has donated to NCL. In 2017, he donated a cache of manuscripts, totaling more than 300 in all. In addition to scholarly works, there were many travel records, emotive prose, and old poems. Including the *Xiqu yanjinshi*, his manuscripts total over 2 million characters. Prof. Tseng is a cultural icon and his donation will be an example to others, causing others in society to place more importance and give more support to National Central Library’s archiving efforts of such manuscripts.



A group photo of the dignitaries attending Prof. Tseng's manuscript donation ceremony.

NCL Director-General Tseng also pointed out that in the information age people have largely abandoned paper and pen when writing books. In future days, there may not be any more manuscripts produced. Because of this, in terms of cultural legacy and cultural asset preservation, the manuscripts of famous people should diligently be sought out and treasured. Manuscripts received by the National Central Library in recent years total more than 80,000. NCL has also created

the Contemporary Celebrities' Manuscripts database. The manuscripts and paintings received have been digitized and preserved in the online database. In this way, they are accessible to the entire world and made easy for patrons to view, admire, and research.

■ National Central Library Receives the Manuscript of Prof. Hsien-yung Pai's New Book, Globally Recognized after Digitization

On 15 September 2020, renowned author Prof. Hsien-yung Pai released his latest masterpiece, *Forty Years of Joy and Sorrow: General Pai Chung-Hsi and Chiang Kai-shek*. The book could be said to be a military history of the Republic of China. At the book's launch, Prof. Pai donated the 483-page manuscript to the National Central Library. It was received by the NCL Director-General, Shu-hsien Tseng.



Prof. Hsien-yung Pai projects photos as he recounts history at his book launch.

Forty Years of Joy and Sorrow: General Pai Chung-Hsi and Chiang Kai-shek is Prof. Pai's third work describing his father, after *Father and the Republic: Collected Silhouettes of General Pai Chung-Hsi and Pain Relief: General Omar Pai Chung-Hsi and 228*. The book is divided into three volumes: volume one *Northern Expedition Anti-Japanese War*, volume two *The Civil War of the Kuomintang and the Communist Party*, and volume three *Taiwan Years*. The first two volumes are led by Yanbo Liao, and the third volume is written by Prof. Pai. The book makes extensive