

in a Changing Century: International Symposium Celebrating Nine Decades of the National Central Library” was a success. She also presented certificates of appreciation and gifts to the directors-general of national libraries from eight countries in Europe, Asia, and North America, thanking them for traveling great distances to add their well wishes to NCL’s 90th-anniversary celebration and for sharing their successes in library services and new findings in research. What they shared in the symposium was beneficial to all and a great example of international exchange.

The robust development of librarianship around the world, as well as innovative and sustainable service ideas, were on display in each session of the two-day conference. This provided the librarians, students, and scholars from Taiwan in attendance with wonderful learning opportunities. We believe that librarians of the future will not only dedicate themselves to their occupation but will also function as protectors, disseminators, and innovators of knowledge and culture. They will create a whole new vision for library services and together promote the continued development of human culture. They will also disseminate scholarly research internationally and increase Taiwan’s visibility. The International Symposium Celebrating Nine Decades of the National Central Library concluded with a group photo of attendees and many sincere goodbyes.



A final shot at the conclusion of the conference.

■ **Making Friends through Literature: NCL Director-General Shu-hsien Tseng Heads a Delegation to the Collège de France to Launch New TRCCS**

NCL and the Collège de France formally opened the new Taiwan Resource Center for Chinese Studies in Paris on May 31, 2023. The ceremony

was directed by NCL Director-General Shu-hsien Tseng and Collège de France Administrator Thomas Römer. Representative Wu Chih-chung from the Bureau de Représentation de Taipei en France and Director of the Education Section Mei-chen Lu, the renowned sinologists Professor Pierre-Etienne Will and Professor Frantz Grenet, as well as Collège de France’s Director of Documentary Networks and Partnerships Anne Chatellier, and Chinese Studies Librarian Delphine Spicq were all invited to attend the ceremony. NCL began establishing TRCCSs in 2012. The Collège de France marks its 37th partnering institution. Currently, a total of 45 institutions have signed contracts with NCL.

Director-General Shu-hsien Tseng stated the Collège de France is an institution of higher learning and research located in Paris, France. It was established during the 16th century, and from then until now it still insists on academic freedom, independent thinking, and the pursuit of equality in education. NCL, which also believes in openness and in creating a free academic environment, has for the last thirty years received many teachers and researchers from the Collège de France and given them grants to research various topics in sinology. Our two institutions have enjoyed many close interactions. Because of this, she visited Europe in 2012 with a group of librarians to attend the European Association for Chinese Studies’ biennial conference. During that time, she made a point to visit the Collège de France and was impressed with its vast Chinese studies collection comprised of 250,000 books (including ancient works) and 1,300 journals. Indeed, it has the most local gazetteers from China of any library in Europe. Therefore, in 2021 during the worst of the pandemic, both parties overcame many obstacles to continue working toward the establishment of a Taiwan Resource Center for Chinese Studies. After it was set up, a Taiwan Lecture on Chinese Studies was also held along with a conference. The interaction between scholars was something to behold. There was even more exchange than normal happening in other international Chinese studies events. Consequently, when NCL visited Europe this time, special plans were made to have a signage unveiling ceremony at the Collège and officially launch its TRCCS.



A group photo of Prof. Anne Chatellier, NCL Director-General Shu-hsien Tseng, and Representative Mei-chen Lu (from left to right).

As a show of NCL's investment in the new center and in hopes for its success, two national treasures found in its collections were replicated and presented to the library. These two are *The Annotated Poetry of Su Dongpo* (1213) and *The Diamond Sutra* (1341). The first one is an exquisite specimen of printing and is one of the extant copies closest to Su Dongpo's own time. After this book was published, it wasn't seen in bookshops during the subsequent two dynasties (the Yuan and Ming). It wasn't until the latter part of the Qing dynasty that Fanggang Weng obtained the book and found it to be more valuable than any of his other books. So he changed his studio name to Baosu shi (The Room that Treasures Su Dongpo), hung a portrait of Su Dongpo up in it, and invited scholar friends each year on the 19th day of the 12th lunar month (Su's birthday) to come and read the poems together. Consequently, many famous scholars wrote short comments in the work or affixed their seals. Around 1900, the book was transferred to a Mr. Siliang Yuan in Hunan. His residence later caught fire and his book collection succumbed to the flames. As luck would have it, a family member saved this book, with only the edges of the bamboo strips being singed. This only strengthened the saying that the gods and spirits were protecting this book. The copy of the *Diamond Sutra* printed by the Zifu Temple was a very rare first edition of dual-color printing. As such, this work has a very important place in the history of printing. During its transmission, it became imbued with a rich sense of legend. Presenting replica copies of these works can not only enrich the Collège de France's holdings but

also serve as witnesses of the historic collaboration that is beginning between the two libraries. This is the beginning of much more collaboration to come.

■ NCL “The Imprint of Civilization” Held at the National Library of the Czech Republic

The aroma of ancient books bade a farewell to the spring and welcomed the summer months in Prague. On June 1, 2023, the National Central Library and the National Library of the Czech Republic teamed up for the first time to cohost the opening ceremony of “The Imprint of Civilization.” The exhibition was available from June 1 to August 31. The theme was “Writing Creates a Civilization,” featuring oracle bone characters, bronzeware rubbings, and other precious replicas. Information was also provided on the developmental history of writing and printing. An “Exquisite Works” section showcased a national treasure, the Yongle Encyclopedia in NCL's special collections. “Bridging East-West Civilizations” brought together books on astronomy, calendrics, vegetation, and historical geography to showcase how the interaction between the two civilizations since the 17th century has influenced the world. In addition, in a hat-tip to Prague where the exhibition is held this year, a new addition was created for the exhibition called “Exploring the Vestiges of the Czech Republic,” showing references to Bohemia in ancient books. Bohemia is an ancient name for what is now the Czech Republic.

NCL Director-General Shu-hsien Tseng stated that books and reading are the lingua franca of the world. This exhibition is a continuation of NCL's “The Imprint of Civilization” collaborative exhibition, with past partners including the National Library of Latvia (2015), the National Széchényi Library in Hungary (2016), the National Library of Estonia (2021), and the Biblioteka Narodowa in Poland (2022). “The Imprint of Civilization” seems to have become a brand for Taiwan in international cultural exchange. Due to the amazing reception this exhibition has enjoyed, this is its fifth iteration. It is hoped that through working with the National Library of the Czech Republic, it will open up a more impassioned collaborative relationship