



NCL shared research from Taiwan with the US and deepened international exchange

NCL Director-General Han-Ching Wang noted that in recent years, there has been a growing international demand for academic research from Taiwan. In response, the National Central Library has not only continued acquiring print publications to support 50 global partner institutions—including the Harvard-Yenching Library—through the establishment of Taiwan Resource Centers for Chinese Studies, but also has subscribed to electronic books for three overseas Taiwan Digital Academic Resource Centers, including the Bibliothèque Universitaire des Langues et Civilisations (BULAC) in France. These initiatives aim to enhance the accessibility of Taiwan's scholarly achievements and improve the availability of academic resources abroad. Beyond organizing book exhibitions, NCL also seeks to better understand the resource needs of international scholars and related academic trends.



The exhibition had information on display for various types of stipends

The recipient institution, The Ohio State University, founded in 1870, is one of the leading public research universities in the United States. Its library system comprises a central library and 21 subject-specific branch libraries, housing a collection of over six million volumes, ranking 17th in North America in terms of holdings. Its special collections include medieval manuscripts, modern literary archives, printed books, artworks, pamphlets, photographs, periodicals, maps, and primary source

documents. Regarding its Chinese collection, according to Professor Guoqing Li, the earliest recorded Chinese-language acquisition dates back to 1929—a 1924 edition of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's *The Principle of the People's Rights* (Minquan Zhuyi), published by Minzhi Book Company. The university began to significantly expand its Chinese collection in the 1960s, when Chinese language instruction was introduced. The collection has since grown to over 150,000 volumes. It is estimated that the library holds more than 271 (258 titles) pre-1911 Chinese rare books and manuscripts. The majority of these materials are housed in the main library, with additional items held in the Fine Arts Library and the Billy Ireland Cartoon Library & Museum. In recognition of this diverse collection, the National Central Library additionally donated 12 award-winning Taiwanese graphic novels, including *The Sprouting Banana Plant* (Bājiāo de Yá) by artist Zuo Hsuan, which recently received the Silver Award at the Japan International Manga Award.

By participating in the Association for Asian Studies (AAS) book exhibition, Taiwan not only promoted its academic achievements but also brought important publications to Ohio, with the aim of deepening local understanding of the richness and diversity of Asian and Taiwanese humanities research, while providing valuable resources for scholarly reference and use.



A group photo of the dignitaries in attendance

■ NCL and British Library Write a New Chapter of History with Digitization Collaboration

In recent years, National Central Library and the British Library have established an excellent collaborative relationship. In November 2013, NCL and the British Library signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the International Dunhuang Project (IDP), working together to promote the collective sharing of ancient Chinese text resources and the Dunhuang Manuscripts. In 2015, NCL and the British Library also signed an MOU on the Database of the

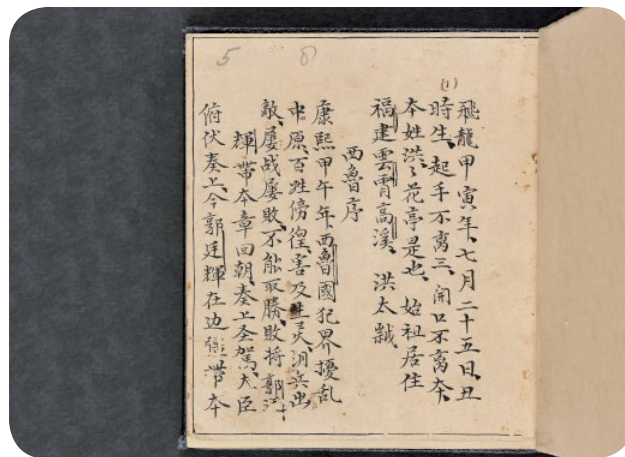
Union Catalog of Chinese Rare Books. In addition, in 2015 British Library Head of Asian and African Collections Dr. Catherine Eagleton and Chinese expert Ms. Sara Chiesura were invited to NCL to present special lectures. Furthermore, when NCL held the Conference on Cooperative Development and Sharing of Chinese Resources in 2021, British Library's Dr. Mia Ridge was specially invited as a keynote speaker.

As guardians of national knowledge, education, and culture, NCL and the British Library share a common goal of providing platforms for both academic research and members of the broader public who share an interest in culture, learning, and knowledge. Therefore, in 2022 the two institutions signed an MOU initiating a collaboration by which NCL and the British Library would establish a digitization of Chinese-language collections.

The British Library is a world-class treasure-trove with over 200 million volumes in their collection, including works in over 400 languages. NCL's current collaboration with the British Library has made impressive progress in the two years of its operation (from 2023-2024), digitizing a total of 48 texts, encompassing 15,200 frames. These included letters and documents left behind by Major-General Charles George Gordon of the "Ever Victorious Army" while he helped the Qing Dynasty Government during the Taiping Rebellion. Such documents are incredibly precious for scholars researching Qing Dynasty history and the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom.

These texts include the first scroll of the ancient title Hongmen Xinwu Anyu Tushi: the incredibly precious "Xilu Preface." The preface not only records the Xilu Narrative that is closely connected to the origins of the Heaven and Earth Society (Tiandihui or Hongmen), but also makes mention of the shocking burning of the Shaolin Monastery. In addition, even the familiar character Chen Jinnan from famed wuxia novelist Jin Yong's *The Deer and the Cauldron* makes an appearance in this preface.

This collaboration with the British Library brings us closer to the treasures of ancient cultures, allowing readers more convenient access to precious historical resources housed abroad. We look forward to this treasury of history becoming an invaluable resource for researchers and cultural enthusiasts alike! For anyone interested in exploring the fruits of the digitization collaboration between NCL and the British Library, we welcome you to explore NCL's Digital Images Database of Rare Chinese Books linked below: <https://rbook.ncl.edu.tw/NCLSearch/Search/Index/1>



NCL and the British Library initiate a new chapter of history with their digitization collaboration

■ NCL and Bibliothèque nationale de France Collaborate to Make Rare Chinese Books Available Again: 41 Books Are Now Online

The National Central Library (NCL) and the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF) have maintained a longstanding and close partnership, committed to advancing the sharing of academic resources and facilitating the cross-border transmission and intergenerational preservation of invaluable cultural heritage. Since 2012, the two institutions have engaged in multi-faceted collaboration in areas such as rare book cataloging, academic symposia, expert exchanges, and digitization projects, working together to promote the organization and preservation of classical Chinese texts.

The collaboration in digitization has yielded fruitful results—41 rare Chinese classics are now available online!

In 2015, the National Central Library and the Bibliothèque nationale de France successfully completed the digitization of 126 titles, primarily consisting of traditional Chinese fiction and drama, achieving remarkable results. In 2023, the two institutions once again joined forces to digitize an additional 41 classical Chinese texts, resulting in a total of 27,670 high-resolution images. These invaluable materials have now been officially made accessible online.

Among the newly digitized works, special attention is warranted for the BnF's rare edition of Li Liweng's *Annotated Romance of the Three Kingdoms*—a 17th-century version of the classic novel *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. It contains 78 exquisitely detailed woodblock illustrations that vividly capture the sweeping drama and rich character