

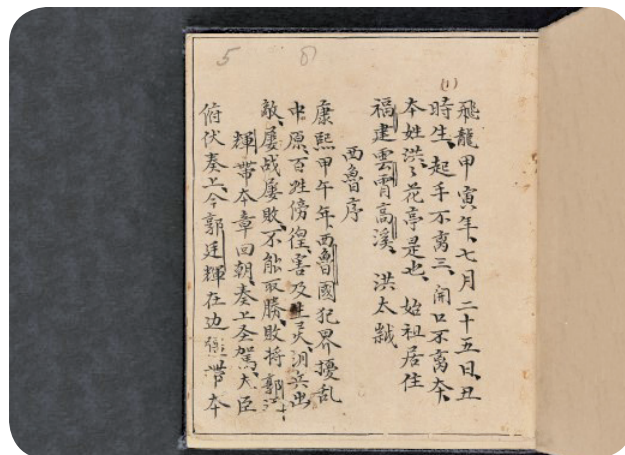
Union Catalog of Chinese Rare Books. In addition, in 2015 British Library Head of Asian and African Collections Dr. Catherine Eagleton and Chinese expert Ms. Sara Chiesura were invited to NCL to present special lectures. Furthermore, when NCL held the Conference on Cooperative Development and Sharing 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

portrayals of the Three Kingdoms period. It stands as a remarkable example of the fusion of visual artistry and literary tradition.



Li Liweng's Annotated Romance of the Three Kingdoms in BnF

Deepening International Cooperation to Safeguard Cultural Heritage

The National Central Library (NCL) and the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF) have not only collaborated on digitization projects, but have also continually strengthened their partnership through academic research, talent exchange, and curatorial initiatives. Notably, in November 2023, the NCL signed an agreement with the Bibliothèque universitaire des langues et civilisations (BULAC) to establish the world's first Taiwan Academic Digital Resource Center (TADRC). During the same visit, the NCL delegation toured the BnF's Opera Library and Museum, with Director Mathias Auclair providing a guided introduction to its collections. In December 2023, three BnF experts visited Taiwan for in-depth exchanges on collection development, digital resource management, and strategies for international exhibition collaboration, further advancing bilateral ties in cultural preservation and scholarly engagement.

These collaborative efforts have not only fostered dialogue between Eastern and Western cultures but have also enabled rare Chinese classics, long held overseas, to reenter the scholarly and cultural consciousness of the Chinese-speaking world. They open up even broader research possibilities.

Embark on a Journey Through Time to Discover Cultural Treasures!

Digital technology brings history closer and makes culture more accessible than ever. With just a click, you can explore this remarkable collection of rare ancient books and experience the wisdom and

elegance of bygone eras.

Start your intellectual journey today by visiting the Rare Book Image Search System:

<https://rbook.ncl.edu.tw/NCLSearch>

Let the past speak to you—one page at a time.

Quality International Books from the 2025 Taipei International Book Exhibition Donated to NCL Collection by Guest of Honor Italy and Other Participating Organizations

As a long-time advocate of reading cultivation and cultural exchange, National Central Library participates in the Taipei International Book Exhibition every year, promoting the ancient texts in the NCL collection to members of the public. In addition, NCL actively works to seek donations of quality books from exhibition participants from around the world after the close of the exhibition in order to provide even richer international reading resources for NCL readers.

This year, NCL received book donations from Guest of Honor Italy, as well as from many participating organizations including from Poland, Belgium, Chile, Japan, Thailand, and Hong Kong. These post-exhibition book donations number in the hundreds and include a diverse variety spanning literature, art, picture books, business, and practical books. In order to thank the many participating organizations for their donations of such excellent books, NCL Director-General Han-ching Wang personally visited each organization from February 5th to 7th to receive the donations and present letters of appreciation, expressing deep gratitude for their generosity.

Director-General Han-ching Wang expressed that the Taipei International Book Festival is a major annual event in the global world of publishing, featuring an impressive array of carefully selected works from countries around the world, allowing readers to explore the beauty of the world through books. NCL reached out to this year's Guest of Honor Italy as well participating organizations from other countries in order to actively seek quality book donations featuring characteristic themes from foreign cities to enrich the NCL collection, thereby allowing these excellent books to continue their influence long after the conclusion of the exhibition, becoming important resources through which members of Taiwan's public can gain understanding of international culture, economics, and social trends. In addition, these books will provide new perspectives on the strengths of the publishing industries of these countries, providing a valuable reference for foreign-language book acquisition in a variety of genres and