

enhance the understanding of research data, artificial intelligence and meta-data among all sectors. A total of approximately 270 people participated online.



The National Central Library co-organizes the 2025 IO Talk Online Forum with the Library Association of the Republic of China

■ Director of University of Tokyo's Asian Research Library Professor Eiji Sagawa Visits NCL for Lecture and Exchange

On the afternoon of April 21st, Professor Eiji Sagawa, Director the University of Tokyo's Asian Research Library, visited National Central Library to present a lecture titled, "The Asian Research Library and the Establishment of Digital Resources." During his lecture, Professor Sagawa discussed the Asian Research Library's digitization projects and summarized the Library's experience promoting a Taiwan Research Center for Chinese Studies (TRCCS) as a collaborative partner with National Central Library's initiative to establish these centers abroad. In addition, Professor Sagawa and National Central Library colleagues engaged in discussion and exchange of their respective experiences.



Professor Eiji Sagawa describes the Asian Research Library's establishment of digital resources

Professor Eiji Sagawa received his Ph.D in Literature from Osaka City University and currently serves as a professor in the University of Tokyo's Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology and Faculty of Letters, where his research focuses on ancient Chinese history. The University of Tokyo Library is the 12th Taiwan Research Center for Chinese Studies (TRCCS) established abroad by NCL, and marks the first such center in Japan. The two institutions began collaboratively organizing lectures on Taiwan's Chinese Studies and other activities in 2014 and continue to maintain a close collaborative partnership. The Asian Research Library was established as a part of the University of Tokyo's library system in 2020 and houses a collection of over 50,000 volumes related to Asian Studies. In addition to their displayed collection, the library is also home to a basement-level automated storage and retrieval system including texts relating to all regions of the Asian continent, from East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Central Asia, to Western Asia.

During his lecture, Professor Sagawa focused on the origins and mission of the Asian Research Library as well as its collection and recent developments in its digitization programs. Professor Sagawa also shared his experiences receiving book donations and hosting lectures through the TRCCS. After his lecture, Professor Sagawa engaged in discussions and exchange with NCL colleagues from the Rare Books and Special Collections, Chinese Studies, Digital Platforms and Systems Departments.

Chinese Studies Symposium

■ NCL Organizes International Conference on Animal Depictions in Classical and Modern East Asian Culture, Bringing together Scholars to Expand Forward-Looking Topics in Taiwan's Chinese Studies

In order to promote academic exchange and develop new research topics, National Central Library's Center for Chinese Studies held an International Conference on Animal Depictions in Classical and Modern East Asian Culture in Taipei from May 15th to 16th, 2025. In addition to inviting 17 scholars from Taiwan, the USA, Japan, Singapore, and other countries to present papers and hold a round-table forum, the conference also invited Professor Sechin Y. S. Chien, Research Fellow at the Research Centre of Humanities and Social Sciences, Academia Sinica, to present a keynote speech based on his long-term research on animal ethics. In-person and virtual attendees engaged in enthusiastic exchange on the conference subjects.



Professor Sechin Y. S. Chien gives a keynote speech

NCL Director-General Han-ching Wang, who also serves as Director of the Center for Chinese Studies, expressed that September of this year marks 45 years since the founding of the Center for Chinese Studies in 1981. In addition to enriching collection resources and managing academic network platforms, the Center has also spared no effort in advocating new research topics and interdisciplinary dialogue. Therefore, on the recommendation of the Chinese Studies journal editing committee in 2024, NCL organized a 2025 special publication and academic conference on the theme of Animal Research. NCL invited Research Fellow Fong-mao Lee, Professor Chao-heng Liao, Professor Chien-hui Li, and Professor Wei-jin Chen to research and plan the conference. In addition, NCL presented the exhibit “Browsing the Classics: Amazing Animal Sightings” corresponding to the animal theme at the 2025 Taipei International Book Exhibition. Through digitization and enhancement of ancient classics, images from ancient animal literature reappear before a modern audience.



NCL Director-General Han-ching Wang gives remarks at the conference

Planning committee members Professor Chao-heng Liao and Professor Chien-hui Li expressed

that research on the history of animals is already an established trend in Japan, Europe, and the Americas, with outstanding achievements across the disciplines of religion and natural history research. However, work on this subject within the field of East Asian classical culture research remains a direction worth expansion. Therefore, scholars from across fields were invited to participate in the conference, presenting a total of 17 papers. On the morning of May 15th, the first session of the conference focused on Buddhism and Song Dynasty culture, exploring dog and cat metaphors within Zen Buddhist kōan, use of animal bones within Buddhist practices, and writing on mussels and clams in the Song Dynasty. The afternoon session shifted focus to discussions of the relationships between animals, literature, and religion. The respective research topics included analysis of the evolution of fox imagery in the I Ching, the function of imagery in research on animal writing, as well as the supernatural emotional relationships between people of the Song Dynasty and wild animals. Professors Cathy Huang Tsung-chieh, Li-jung Cheng, Li-chuan Tai, Heng-an Chen, and Chien-hui Li, all of whom have long devoted scholarly efforts to the study of animal history, were invited to participate in a round-table forum, where they shared and reflected upon the history of Taiwan’s native animals and international animal history, research trends, fluctuations, and common principles in the field of natural history. To close the forum, Professor Chien-hui Li offered encouragement, calling for “one hundred flowers to bloom and one hundred birds to sing” welcoming the future development of research topics

During the morning session on the second day of the conference, scholars explored topics focusing on the images of animals, animal deities and animal ghosts within Buddhist beliefs, including transformations in the image of Yaksha spirits within child-protecting beliefs, as well as natural history observations of bird species through collections of historical literature. In addition, scholars explored animal writing within fictional stories through the Ming Dynasty classic *Journey to the West*, and the Qing Dynasty “stories of the strange” genre text *Shuo Ling*, investigating stories of tiger transformations across animal stories in different dynasties. The afternoon session shifted focus toward cross-cultural comparisons, specifically exploring the topics of post-war pre-modern zoos, Asian natural history under the European colonial gaze, as well as the popularity of Atlantic canaries in Taiwan in the 1960s. These topics presented perspectives on animals and culture, academic research and politics, and socioeconomic connections. The lively discussion between scholars and attendees during the general discussion brought the conference to a fruitful close.



A group photo of international conference participants

■ The Center for Chinese Studies Holds Academic Seminars for Global Chinese Studies Lectures

The Center for Chinese Studies (CCS) promotes academic exchanges in order to increase interaction between the local and overseas Chinese Studies communities. To this end, the CCS established the Research Grant for Foreign Scholars in Chinese Studies, which every year assists 20 overseas scholars in coming to Taiwan to conduct research for periods of between 1 to 6 months. Besides hosting Academic Seminars for Global Chinese Studies from time to time at which these scholars can present the fruits of the research, the center also often invites renowned scholars from around the world to visit and deliver lectures. Between April and June, 2025, 2 scholars gave their presentations. Topics and speakers for each session are as follows:

On April 18th, 2025, Associate Prof. Jens Reinke, Buddhist Studies at the Buddhist Seminary of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, gave the lecture on “Amitabha 2.0: Buddhist Care for the Dying in Contemporary Taiwan.”

On April 22th, 2025, Associate Prof. Renata Vinci, University of Palermo (Italy), gave the lecture on “Transcultural Narratives of the Mediterranean in Late Qing Travel Writing: Kang Youwei and Beyond.”

News from Taiwan Libraries

■ NTHU Launches Taiwan’s First University-Based Public E-Book Platform: Free Access, No Registration Required

At the end of May, the National Tsing Hua University (NTHU) Library launched Taiwan’s first university-run public digital reading platform, the Digital Archive and Open Reading Pavilion. This

platform offers free and registration-free online access to a wide range of valuable content, including research findings, nature records, and historical and cultural materials.

Unlike commercial e-book platforms, this initiative focuses on original works that are unpublished, out-of-print, or shared with author authorization—such as handwritten notes and locally published booklets—preserving materials that are often overlooked yet culturally significant. Library Director Lin Teng-Sung emphasized the platform’s core principles: permanent preservation, authorized use, and free public access. All works are for non-commercial use, with authors retaining copyright.

The collection spans education, popular science, the arts, and regional cultural history. A dedicated “Tsing Hua Section” features works by faculty, students, and alumni, as well as historical documents related to the university. Government and institutional publications from entities such as CPC Corporation and Chunghwa Post are also included, bringing previously limited-access materials into the public domain.

Notable works such as *Jia Xin Camellia*, co-authored by Shennong Award recipients, and the writings of former NTHU President Liu Jing-Liang have been reintroduced through the platform. NTHU is actively collecting more works and welcomes submissions of original or previously published content, provided authors are willing to authorize public access—further promoting knowledge sharing and cultural preservation.

Access the Digital Archive and Open Reading Pavilion: <https://or.lib.nthu.edu.tw/FrontEnd/subjectPavilion>

■ National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts Reopens Art Library with New Vision for Artistic Learning

On May 17, the Art Library at the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts (NTMoFA) reopened on its 3rd floor with a fully renovated space and expanded services. With nearly 160,000 volumes covering art history, design, photography, and more, the library now offers a more comfortable, flexible, and engaging environment for the public.

Formerly known as the “Information Center,” the rebranded Art Library better reflects its purpose and invites broader public engagement. It now includes a Special Collections section, which houses significant documents on Taiwanese art history, and a Collections Work Area where visitors can observe the book conservation and restoration process.

The opening ceremony featured a special