

■ The National Central Library and the University of Malaya Jointly Hold the "A shared Sky" Ancient Books and Documents Exhibition, Creating the Splendor of Chinese Character Culture Across Time and Space

To deepen international cultural exchange and expand the international visibility of Taiwan's ancient books and documents, the National Central Library and the University of Malaya (UM) in Malaysia jointly held the "A shared Sky: The World of Chinese Texts and Cultural Exchange" exhibition at the UM Main Library, from June 20 to July 25. The World of Chinese Texts and Cultural Exchange) The opening ceremony was held with due solemnity on the morning of June 20, attracting nearly a hundred guests to participate, and the atmosphere was warm.



The ribbon-cutting ceremony for the "A shared Sky: The World of Chinese Texts" exhibition

The themes of the exhibition covered five major aspects, from the evolution of writing technology, knowledge exchange in the East Asian Chinese character cultural sphere, to cultural interaction in Southeast Asia and Taiwan's historical memory, presenting the cultural value of ancient Chinese books that transcend regions and time. The exhibits included reproduced ancient books from the National Central Library's collection, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese printed books, as well as documents of historical significance. A specially designed interactive experience area included "Classic of Mountains and Seas" puzzles, origami boats, commemorative badges, and photo sticker machines, allowing visitors to feel the beauty and cultural charm of ancient books in an immersive exhibition experience which was well received.

Han-Ching Wang, Director-General of the National Central Library, said in her speech that

books and reading are the common language of all mankind. The National Central Library is committed to promoting joint exhibitions with important libraries around the world, hoping to share Taiwan's cultural treasures with the world and enable the international community to gain a deeper understanding of the wisdom and beauty of eastern civilization. This renewed collaboration with the University of Malaya not only deepens academic and cultural exchanges between Taiwan and Malaysia, but also symbolizes the continuation and expansion of the long-standing friendship between the two sides.

In her speech, Assistant Vice-Chancellor of the University of Malaya, Ms. Lin Ai-lien, said that the University of Malaya ranked 58th in the world in the latest QS World University Rankings, making it the top university in Malaysia in the world rankings. She said the university was very happy to host this classic exhibition together with the National Library. Since the establishment of the Taiwan Resource Center for Chinese Studies (TRCCS) in 2015, it has collaborated with the National Central Library on a number of projects, including the donation of publications, the "Dream of the Red Chamber" exhibition, and lectures on Taiwan Sinology, which have far-reaching significance for deepening academic and cultural exchanges between Taiwan and Malaysia. We also look forward to closer cooperation between the two sides in the future, injecting more vitality into the academic research of Chinese language in the world.

This exhibition is divided into five major themes and its content is wonderful and rich.

1. Square It Off: The Evolution of Writing and Printing: Introducing the evolution from oracle bones and bamboo slips to printing, showcasing the historical development of Chinese character writing techniques

2. A World of Words: Chinese Texts and Asian Civilization: Through ancient texts from across Asia, we show how Chinese characters became a medium for cultural communication.

3. Paper Trails: Evidence of Malaysian History in Chinese: A glimpse into Malaysia's long history of cultural exchange through ancient books

4. Formosan Footprints: Discovering the Beauty of Taiwan

5. Treasury of Treasures: Highlights from Special Collection: The exhibition features a selection of the best from the National Central Library's collection, including the earliest two-color overprint, the smallest ancient book, and rare books such as the Yongle Encyclopedia.



The "A Shared Sky" ancient books and documents exhibition held at the UM Main Library

In conjunction with the exhibition, the National Central Library also held a "Taiwan Sinology Lecture" and invited Professor Jin-chu Huang, former professor of the Department of Chinese Literature at National Chung Cheng University, to give a lecture entitled "The Fate of a Female Journalist in the Late Qing Dynasty: The Life and Story of Hsieh-fen Ch'en." Through the life journey of this pioneering female journalist in the late Qing Dynasty, the book emphasizes her advocacy of women's rights, practice of women's autonomy, and her shift from women's education to revolutionary thought, ultimately resulting in her death from depression because of the constraints of the patriarchal system. The speech was rich in content and received enthusiastic responses, fully demonstrating Professor Huang's academic depth and charisma.

The National Central Library will continue to use cultural diplomacy as a bridge to promote in-depth exchanges in knowledge and humanities between Taiwan and the rest of the world through collection and academic promotion, so that everyone can experience the touching and charming ancient book culture that transcends time and space.



The "Taiwan Sinology Lecture" which Professor Jin-chu Huang, former professor of the Department of Chinese Literature at National Chung Cheng University, was invited to deliver

Events

■ NCL Signs Collaborative Agreement with Institute of Modern History at Academia Sinica to Digitize Ancient Books and Exchange e-Resources

The National Central Library has long been dedicated to the digitization of rare books and archival materials, while actively expanding its collaborations with government agencies and universities. The partnership established on May 26, 2025, with the Institute of Modern History at Academia Sinica, represents the Library's first major collaboration in recent years with Academia Sinica that integrates both physical collections and digital archival files. This initiative carries profound significance.

The Institute of Modern History at Academia Sinica (hereafter referred to as IMH), is focused on the study of the multifaceted historical transformations of modern China. In recent years, IMH has also actively engaged in archival digitization, establishing numerous databases with remarkable success. This collaboration with the National Central Library not only supports the digitization of rare books but also involves the exchange of existing digital archives. The scope of cooperation encompasses significant documents across various fields from the period of the Nationalist Government, providing highly valuable resources for the study of modern Chinese history and serving as an indispensable foundation for future research.

Looking ahead, we hope that through the digitization and reciprocal sharing of unique collections preserved at the Kuo Ting-ye Library, these precious materials may be safeguarded and passed down, opening new horizons for historical scholarship and public education alike.

In her remarks, Director-General Wang expressed her gratitude to Deputy Director-Generals Jen-shu Wu and Ling-ling Lien, as well as Director Ling-chun Lin and their colleagues, for their support and dedication to this collaborative project. The Kuo Ting-ye Library of the Institute of Modern History is renowned both domestically and internationally as a professional research library specializing in the collection of materials on modern Chinese history. This collaborative project not only ensures the digital preservation of valuable pre-1949 holdings from the Kuo Ting-ye Library but also facilitates the exchange of its existing digital archives, which include a wide range of historical sources on Chinese history and early KMT documents.

Moving forward, the National Central Library will make the digitized results of both parties' rare book holdings and archival materials accessible through the "Taiwan eBook database, thereby underscoring the lasting significance of digital preservation and its role in sustaining cultural heritage.