



Poster of the "Special Exhibition of Buddhist Sutras at the National Central Library"

Exhibition of Selections from the NCL Russian Collection

The NCL organized an exhibition of works from its Russian Collection on January 30 to February 16, 2007. The exhibition was held in conjunction with the Russian National Pavilion exhibit at the 2007 Taipei International Book Exhibition (TIBE), which was held from January 30 to February 4, and the "Three Giants of Russian Literature" exhibition organized by the Council for Cultural Affairs from November 12, 2006, to March 25, 2007. Over 4,000 Russian volumes in the fields of philosophy, literature and art were selected from the library collection for the exhibit, including the works of Russian literary giants Leo Tolstoy, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Anton Chekhov, Aleksandr Pushkin, and Mikhail Aleksandrovich Sholokhov. The works of Alexander Solzhenitsyn, winner of the 1970 Nobel Prize for literature, were also featured along with about 60 Russian works in translation.

Several distinguished guests attended the

exhibition on the afternoon of February 2. They included Dr. Sergey N. Gubarev, head of the Representative Office in Taipei for the Moscow-Taipei Coordination Commission on Economic and Cultural Cooperation, and Mrs. Gubarev; Representative Chiang Shu-yi of the Department of West Asian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Dr. Vladimir Maliavin, director of the Institute of Russian and Slavic Studies at Tamkang University, along with six graduate students of the institute; Ms. Marsha Lee, a Russian language broadcaster and reporter at Radio Taiwan International; Mr. Andrew Pridvorov, president of Russian publishing house Feoria; and Dr. Alexander Tsverianishvili, Russian language consultant at the Government Information Office. The visitors were all impressed by the size and quality of the library's Russian collection. Dr. Maliavin suggested that the NCL could forge closer ties with major universities in Russia to further enrich resources in Taiwan for Russian studies.



Dr. and Mrs. Sergey N. Gubarev (third and fifth from right), Representative Chiang Shu-yi (third from left), Dr. Vladimir Maliavin (far left), Ms. Marsha Lee (second from left), Mr. Andrew Pridvorov (fifth from left), Dr. Alexander Tsverianishvili (fourth from right), and NCL Director General Juang Fang-rung

The NCL has long maintained close exchange relations with 11 organizations in Russia, including the National Library of Russia and the Institute of Far Eastern Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences. The demand for information on Russia has grown as increasing numbers of people from Taiwan visit Russia for tourism or business. The NCL has started compiling a catalog of Chinese, Russian and English language Russian resources in the library collection to facilitate public access.

CCS News and Activities

CCS Seminars

The Center for Chinese Studies (CCS) held three seminars in December 2006 and January 2007. On December 5, 2006, CCS visiting scholar and assistant professor of history at the University of Calgary, in Alberta, Canada, Dr. David Curtis Wright presented a lecture on "The Battle of Yashan: A World Class Naval Battle between the Song and Yuan Periods." The lecture was presided by Huang Kuan-chung, director of the Institute of History and Philology at Academia Sinica. Dr. Wright believes that the naval battle between the Yuan forces under Chang Hung-fan and the Song forces of Chang Shih-chieh in the seas off Yashan Island in southern China on March 10 to 20, 1279, was the largest naval battle in China's history. However, its importance and scale have been overlooked by both Chinese and foreign historians. The battle involved at least 200,000 soldiers and at over 1,500 ships, making it a world-class naval battle. This was the last battle between the Song and Yuan forces, with the final outcome that Lu Hsiu-fu jumped into the sea with the child emperor, killing both and marking the final end to the Song dynasty.



Dr. David Curtis Wrigh (left) with Director Huang Kuan-chung (Photo by Caesar Tsai)

For the second seminar on January 1, 2007, Dr. Mark Stevenson of the School of Social Sciences at Victoria University of Technology in Australia presented a lecture entitled "A Small Window on the Tibetan People: Changes in Qinghai Tibetan Culture and Society Viewed from Window Lattice Carvings." The seminar was presided by Fung Ming-Chu, chief curator of the Books and Documents Department at the National Palace Museum. From field studies in semi-nomadic, semi-agrarian Tibetan areas of Qinghai, Dr. Stevenson discovered unique customs of life. However, the economies in these areas have undergone changes with the economic reforms and opening measures introduced by China since the 1980s. The rural lifestyle of the communities has also started to experience material changes similar to those occurring in other inland regions of China. One such change is the gradual disappearance of carved wood window lattices as homes make increasing use of glass and lead-framed windows. Illustrating his presentation with photographs taken during his field studies, Dr. Stevenson elaborated on the material changes he witnessed in these communities and their impact on the local culture and society.