

NCL and the University of Toronto cooperate to set up the TRCCS

NCL Director General, Shu-hsien Tseng and Mr. Larry P. Alford, Chief Librarian of University of Toronto Libraries, signed a memorandum of cooperation on "Taiwan Resource Centre for Chinese Studies" (TRCCS) followed by the inauguration opening ceremony on 23rd September. This is the NCL's first TRCCS in the Canada and 16th TRCCS set up overseas.

After the ceremony, the University of Toronto (UT) organized the "Forum on Special Collections in the Digital Age." Invited speakers were NCL Director General Tseng; Director Hsiao-ming Yu of NCL Special Collections Division; University Librarian of National Taiwan University Library Professor Sherry Chen; Ms. Anne Dondertman, Associate Librarian for Special Collection and Director of the Fisher Library, University of Toronto Libraries; Dr. Stephen Qiao and Ms. Lucy Gan of the Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library, University of Toronto Libraries. Altogether, there were five speeches focusing on the experience and achievements on special collections digitization between Taiwan and Canada. It brought about new ideas and opened more cooperation possibilities in the future.

Chinese rare books are important world cultural heritage. The NCL has long been very active in acquiring the right to digitize, reproduce and disseminate overseas original Chinese rare books, to promote and upgrade Chinese Studies research locally and abroad as well. Through the talk of NCL Director General Tseng, more people could see the achievements of the NCL's long-term efforts to cooperate with foreign agencies, and it creates a successful marketing of Taiwan!

The University of Toronto was established in 1827 and is one of the oldest universities in Canada. It is the only Canadian university to be named in the top 20 in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings. Currently there are 44 libraries on campus spread over three school campuses. Their academic resources are abundant. Among them, the Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library has more than 3,000 titles, 40,000 volumes of Chinese ancient books. Moreover, it has many precious ancient books, including "Mu Collection", the Song edition "Collected Works of Liu Tsung-yuan" of the year 1126 and the only copy in existence, "Illustrated Divination Manual of the Liuren Method" and many others.

The UT is NCL's very important collaboration partner in Canada. Mr. Larry P. Alford, Chief Librarian of UT Libraries came to Taiwan in 2012 to sign a cooperation agreement with NCL Director General Tseng, and presented a keynote speech attracting a lot of audience.

Last year, the two libraries worked together to promote the digitization of ancient books. The NCL completed the digitization of Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library's rare books comprising 222 titles, 294,817 images. The versions included Song, Ming and Qing dynasties ancient books. They are being uploaded to NCL Rare Books Image Search System. It is therefore evident that the choice of UT to establish the TRCCS this year is a significant occasion to deepen our mutual relationship.

The NCL has not only donated many Chinese books published in Taiwan and provided the digital resources, including Taiwan digital archives and electronic databases, for the faculty, students, and researchers at the UT. At the opening ceremony, Director General Tseng particularly donated replicas of The Annotated Poetry of Su Dongpo, a national treasure of the Republic of China that is more than 800 years old, and The Diamond Sutra, an only existing copy of the earliest wood block print book with dual color. These gifts will certainly enrich the collections of UT Library. It is also a witness to a historic moment of our mutual cooperation opening up opportunities for future cooperation.

The NCL's "The Establishment of Taiwan Resource Center for Chinese Studies" project has awarded the "2015 ALA Presidential Citation for Innovative International Library Projects." It is one of the four winning award on global development programs. This recognition not only increases the interaction with research institutions of other countries, it also opens up more opportunities for cooperation, it allows more people to access Taiwan and Chinese Studies related electronic resources. This opens Taiwan's visibility and influence in the international arena.

The establishment of the TRCCS at the University of Toronto attracted a good number of people to participate in the opening ceremony. Among them are Ms. Vinitha Gengatharan, Director of International Strategy & Partnerships; Ms. Julie Hannaford, UT deputy librarian; Professor Thomas Keirstead, Chair of the Department of East Asian Studies; Professor Vincent Shen and Professor Johanna Liu; Director General Rong-chuan Wu, and Director Victor Hong-min Liu of Taipei Economic and Cultural Office, Toronto.

Many members of local media attended the ceremony and conducted interviews. They were quite interested to know the reasons for the choice of the University of Toronto to set up the TRCCS and the difference between the TRCCS and the Confucius Institute set up by Mainland China. In her speech, NCL Director General Tseng pointed out that the University of Toronto is a world-renowned academic institution. Its academic energy and capacity are very strong. They have a good number of scholars and experts in Chinese studies and many graduate students. She

also mentioned in particular that the TRCCS will not only help expand academic exchanges, promote Chinese Studies with particular Taiwan characteristics, it is also a very important international window, through which more people can read good books published in Taiwan and access rich online materials for Chinese studies showcasing Taiwan's efforts and achievements in promoting Chinese studies.

In his speech, Representative Wu besides extending his congratulations to both parties, gave concrete examples to introduce Taiwan's economic achievements, as well as the hard work and creativity in the efforts made for the preservation and extension of culture.

In their speech, Ms. Vinita Gengatharan and Mr. Larry Alford who represented the University of Toronto pointed out that there are many Taiwan nationals living in Toronto; there are also many teachers and students from Taiwan at the University. In the past, University of Toronto had cooperation with a number of Taiwan academic institutions. They were very happy with the establishment of the TRCCS which will deepen the cooperation and relations with Taiwan. They also expressed that this cooperation is most welcomed by teachers and students and will certainly offer them help and assistance to a great extent.



NCL Director General Tseng, Chief Librarian Mr. Larry Alford of University of Toronto Libraries, Director of International Strategy & Partnerships Ms. Vinita Gengatharan, and Director General Rong-chuan Wu of Toronto TECO delivering their speeches



Director General Tseng and Chief Librarian Alford sign a MOU during the opening ceremony.



Director General Tseng donates replicas of *The Annotated Poetry of Su Dongpo* and *The Diamond Sutra* to the University of Toronto libraries.



The TRCCS is unveiled at the University of Toronto Libraries (3rd left: Dr. Stephen Qiao, Director General Wu, Director General Tseng, Ms. Vinitha Gengatharan and Mr. Larry Alford)



Many members of local media attend the ceremony.



Director General Tseng is interviewed by some local media.



Group photo with Mr. Larry Alford



Some speakers of the Forum on Special Collections in the Digital Age: Director General Tseng, Director Hsiao-ming Yu and Dr. Stephen Qiao



Director General Tseng and companions visit the Robarts Library.



Director General Tseng and companions visit the University College.