

Taiwan Lecture in Malaysia – Part I: University of Malaya

On the 13th of July, Director General of National Central Library (ROC, Taiwan), Shu-hsien Tseng and the Vice Chancellor of University of Malaya, Professor Dato' Dr. Mohd Amin Bin Jalaludin, signed a memorandum of cooperation on “Taiwan Resource Centre for Chinese Studies.” This marks the NCL 15th TRCCS set up overseas and 2nd Centre established in Malaysia. On the same day, NCL, University of Malaya, and Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman jointly organized the third Taiwan Lecture on Chinese Studies in 2015 – “Dream of the Red Chamber and Doraemon: Historical Research in the Digital Age” – by Professor Yi-Long Huang, a prestigious Academician at Academia Sinica, R.O.C, Taiwan. Professor Huang’s lecture exemplifies his outstanding and innovative research results on the “Dream of the Red Chamber” by using electronic resources.

Professor Yi-Long Huang can be regarded as one of the most outstanding and versatile scholar of history in Taiwan. Professor Huang graduated with a Ph.D. Degree in physics in Columbia University, and he soon became Dr. HU Shih Visiting Chair for Chinese Studies in Leiden University. Throughout his outstanding academic career, Professor Huang has won innumerable great awards for his excellent research results, including the Award for Outstanding Research from National Science Council, Taiwan Award for Lifetime Academic Achievement from Ministry of Education. Professor Huang then became the Full Professor of the Institute of History in Tsing Hua University, Taiwan, as well as Honorary Professor in Hong Kong University. Recently, Professor Huang was not only honored as the Academician of Academia Sinica, the highest honor for a scholar in humanity, but also as the Distinguished Chair Professor of Humanities and Social Sciences in Tsing Hua University, Taiwan.

Before the lecture started, the Director of the Institute of Chinese Studies of University of Malaya, Professor Danny Wong Tze Ken, expressed his sincere gratitude for the NCL setting up TRCCS one year ago. Besides TRCCS, Director Wong also mentioned that University of Malaya has also signed numerous memorandum with diverse universities in Taiwan, and the mutual communication as well as academic exchange have greatly benefitted both sides. The lecture was then moderated by the Malaysian Red-Chamber expert Professor Chan Kong Choy (陳廣才).

In the lecture, Professor Yi-Long Huang states that if scholars of humanities apply the research tool of “big data” to their studies, then the traditional methodology can be renewed and updated in accordance with the modern innovations in technology; by applying e-research to the studies of human science, scholars will gain unprecedentedly new insight. During the lecture, Professor Huang exemplifies how we can trace the network of Cao Xueqin (the author of *Dream of the Red Chamber*)’s acquaintance with a very solid research methodology, and new discoveries of the prototypes of the characters in the novel will come up. In this way, the significance and the profound meaning of the novel will be highlighted, and we will be able to read this great Chinese novel anew. Professor Huang’s humorous lecture combines professional academic research with many interesting facts and up-to-date news, and the participants (including many renowned scholars in Malaysia and students of Chinese literature) all responded enthusiastically. Many experts of *Dream of the Red Chamber* from around the world also came to the lecture and felt greatly rewarded after the lecture.

As the moderator Professor Chan Kong Choy points out, Professor Huang’s lecture demonstrates that if we can combine previous academic results of *the Red*

Chamber with innovative, state-of-art research tool, we will be able to accomplish unprecedented research achievement and initiate another revolution of *the Red Chamber* studies. The lecture also proves that a scholar of humanities can also become Doraemon, who has many surprising gadgets in his pocket, if he or she knows how to apply new research tools – especially the tools of the technology and big data.

This Lecture was certainly a rare opportunity for people in the academic of Malaysia to see a world-class master of style. It also gave the audience a unique sense of awe and inspiration and at the same time enabled more people to see Taiwan's rich academic research, bringing about a greater space of cooperation between NCL and Malaysia.



Moderator Professor Chan Kong Choy introducing Professor Yi-Long Huang



Professor Yi-Long Huang delivers his highly-rewarding lecture



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The audience responded enthusiastically and raised many interesting questions



The group photo