

Digital Preservation and Curation for Cultural and Intellectual Assets—National Central Library’s Experiences

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Drawing on its experience over many years of participating in national digital archival projects, the National Central Library (NCL) created an intergrated website called “Rare Books and Special Collections.” It has also continued digitizing ancient works in its collection. As of the end of 2015, over 8,100 titles of ancient books have been digitized. The NCL has also digitized newspapers, journals, dissertations and theses, posters, audio-visual materials, etc. Search systems have been created to make it easier for the public to find materials they desire. Furthermore, in an effort to increase the appreciation and use of these cultural asset in NCL’s possession, it has created 10 courses on digital themes where scholars and experts have given penetrating and captivating lectures, complete with audio and visual images. These lively presentations of cultural assets are available for educational use in elementary schools and for the public at large. The NCL’s reading lobby also has animated digital tours available on its Special Collections e-Archive Interactive Display System, which showcases the results of its digitizing efforts of ancient works and special collection holdings.

In recent years, NCL has actively collected manuscripts of notable contemporaries. The amount of manuscripts has reached very sizable proportions, making them invaluable in researching modern scholarship and contemporary literature and art history. To provide for proper archival of these manuscripts, as well as to make them available to patrons, in 2013 the system of “Contemporary Celebrities’ Manuscripts” was created. Since then, manuscripts, letters, works of calligraphy, paintings and pictures have been digitized and uploaded into the database.

In 2015, the NCL established a digital center as a way to preserve modern materials and facilitate the ditigization of library materials. It promotes the digitization of recent books and documents, and the creation of e-books from these materials made available on a public platform. Publications of government agencies, as well as books printed in China and Taiwan from 1911-1949, are its main focus. In addition, the NCL has actively invited the participation of government agencies, libraries, and archival institutions to collaborate on the digitization of materials. Collaboration includes the authorization of files and the collective scanning of printed books and materials.

The NCL has been promoting a new event called “One Hundred Authors, One Thousand Books: Authorizing Access for Global Readership” that actively seeks authorization from noted scholars and experts in Taiwan to have the NCL scan their books and research, then publish them as e-books on a public, open-access platform. The digitization work of these valuable books is done with the aim that they can be used by researchers around the globe, to increase the visibility and influence of traditional Chinese characters in this digital and internet age, and to strive to preserve and make widely available digitized academic publications and national cultural works.