

Exhibitions

■ *Exhibition of the History of Wood-block Printing in Taiwan*

On March 21, the NCL kicked off a special exhibition of rare books published in southern Taiwan during the Ching dynasty. The exhibition traces the more than century-long history of wood-block printing in Taiwan, from the nascent Ta-t'ong-li, dating back to 1646. The return of Confucian and Han Chinese influence in wood-block printed books becomes evident after the liberation of Taiwan from the Dutch by Cheng Cheng-kung in 1661. This was also a period when wood-block printing techniques in China were advancing. The first publishing house, Sung Yun Hsuan, was established in 1821, beginning a period of popularization of publications. The publisher thrived for over a hundred years until it



Cover of the exhibition guide (Photo by the National Central Library)

fell victim to the flames of war in 1945, bringing to an end Taiwan's wood-block printing industry.

The exhibition includes several rare works collected by Yang Yung-chih, an associate researcher at the Taiwan Culture Center of the Taiwan Development Institute. They include works by publishers Sung Yun Hsuan, Te hua Tang, Tung Pi Chai, Chou Chien Kang, Tian Tan, and Hua Shan Tang, such as the Amitabha Sutra and Annotated Diamond Sutra. These works open a window to over century of document and information styles for researchers and the general public alike. They also provide an invaluable record of the development of Taiwanese culture and the history of wood-block printing, folk customs, and religion. (Chinese text excerpted from the exhibition guide.)

■ *Constitutional Archives Exhibition*

A constitution provides a country's legal foundation and a basis for the protection of the people's rights. The drafting and revisions of a constitution, moreover, provide an important testament to the history of democratic countries. The Constitution of the Republic of China (ROC) came into force on December 25, 1947. In 1948, the Constitution was appended with the Temporary Provisions Effective During the Period of Communist Rebellion reflecting the needs of the civil war with the Chinese communists. The provisions were later revised and finally abrogated. Over the years, the Constitution itself has undergone six amendments.

In order to broaden public awareness of the