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Han Dynasty Documents:

The Place of Correspondence in Government Administration

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Within the study of the history of the Han Dynasty, a subject that relies on excavated historical sources, official documents constitute the main body of primary sources, particularly in the study of government administration. Correspondence, on the other hand, which exists in lesser quantity than official documents, has in the past been considered to be unrelated to administration and the legal system, and consequently, very little research has been done to date on the subject. However, as indicated in even some of the related research to date, there are examples of connections of correspondence to the activities of the government bureaucracy. Hence, this paper examines a selection of correspondence from the *Juyan* and the *Dunhuang Han* wooden documents (居延·敦煌漢簡) containing content related to the public sector and considers how correspondence should be placed within the study of documents related to Han Dynasty administration.

There is a surprisingly large and varied amount of correspondence related to many different aspects of public affairs. A survey of the correspondence reveals that documents known as *guanji* (官記) and *fuji* (府記), previously thought to be forms of official document, are in fact fundamentally forms of correspondence. It also becomes clear that there are missives that, despite having a correspondence format and style, performed the same function as public records submitted from higher to lower (下行) and lower to higher (上行) organizations. Thus, "official correspondence" was widely used in administrative settings, in the same manner as documents.

In most instances, "official correspondence" was used to handle matters

that had not yet reached the stage of official document production, or to deal with problematic matters that would be inappropriate for official documents. This correspondence was written in the simple, private writing style of the time and was used when there were matters that needed to be resolved in a "private or secret" fashion. By adroitly dividing their affairs between formal official declarations and private correspondence, Han Dynasty bureaucrats were able to nimbly and organically manage the administrative matters of state.

The author concludes that research on this type of dual "document administration" should be turned to the content of government-related correspondence and how this body of documentation functioned, in order to gain a better understanding of the real state of Han Dynasty affairs. Furthermore, the viewpoint taken in this article will hopefully prove effective in studying the large body of correspondence found among the excavated materials related to the late Eastern Han, Wei and Jin Dynasties.

The Formation and Significance of the Shi Miyuan Regime
during the Reign of Emperor Ningzong

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During the Southern Song Dynasty Reign of Ningzong 寧宗, two different types of successive political regime monopolized state affairs for long periods of time. The regime of Han Tuo Zhou 韓侂胄 controlled politics with the emperor as military aides but not as the grand chancellor (宰相), and was established by assuming the political authority of Xiaozong's 孝宗 reign and encouraging imperial despotism until the reign of Ningzong, when the Shi Miyuan 史彌遠 regime was formed. And so, the question arises as to why the following Shi Miyuan regime, which was centered around the position of councilors of state (宰執), could be formed after the fall of the Han Tuo Zhou regime employing a completely different political style.

After the downfall of Han Tuo Zhou, the policies forwarded by the Ningzong reign were criticized by members of the bureaucracy (士大夫), in that state councilors had been excluded from policy making, an approach that had led