

3) We selected 20 villages that encompass approximately 100 volumes of material. The material was then compiled and published. Work on the digitization of these materials is still ongoing.

3. Making the voices of people at the grassroots level heard: Insight into basic-level society immanent in text

1) The content of historical records on villages tends to be centered around (1) the output of a village and its villagers, and (2) its social activities. On the other hand, those historical records which focus on irrigated areas, supply and marketing cooperatives and the like feature the content which is very specialist in nature.

2) Many villages kept records of their social composition, complete account books and materials authored by high-level superiors. The materials from each village are individual in their own way: some are rich in content relating to specific individuals, some include information on village activities, some have complete collections of records authored by high-level superiors, some have account books which are completely in order and some have materials which contain detailed classification of, and statistical information on, economic activities.

3) We can divide these records up into approximately 8 different categories: documents relating to grassroots branches of the Chinese Communist Party, administrative documents (including documents relating to high-level superiors), science and technology records, records on specific individuals, records on financial affairs, historical records, internal materials and others which do not fit one of the categories given above.

4. Reflecting back on collectivization: Social transformations in Shanxi's rural areas

1) During the process of gathering and organizing materials, the research methodology and academic line of enquiry that features within Xing Long's book, *Heading towards the Fields and Society*, gradually came into being. In essence, it also functioned as a key problematique with rich connotations, constituting a trinity comprised of historical materials, research content and theoretical methodology. All were interdependent, embodied the other and were tightly interrelated.

2) Key pieces of related research make comprehensive use of governmental documents, grassroots government documents (such as public notices and documents relating to rural areas) and account books. This research takes into consideration the macro context of the development of political history, while also paying sufficient attention to villages and the like on the micro level. Taking villages, communes, county areas or independent waterways and irrigation systems as their point of investigation, they have touched upon areas such as irrigation and water conservancy construction projects, agricultural technology, the emancipation of women, medical treatment and hygiene and everyday life.

Second Session Comments

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The theme of the second session was 'the general public, groups and the state', in which issues mainly related to the general public and the state were dealt with. A few moments ago the current situation regarding the collation and organization of non-governmental letters and grassroots records from rural areas was discussed separately, and particular reference was made to their important role in research on contemporary China. Not only did the two professors make great efforts to collate non-governmental materials, but also carried out the relevant fieldwork, too. In their fieldwork, they conducted investigations into the authors of the letters they collated, and the villages where the grassroots records had been produced, corroborating them using other textual evidence.

These sorts of documents are seldom found within state and government archives, nor are they easily understood. As such, the fact that research is being carried out on them is both exceedingly significant and also a cause for celebration. A tension exists between regional/non-governmental records and state/governmental records which requires our attention. Particularly within the study of social history, which takes non-governmental issues as its focal point, when interpreting these documents one should always maintain a distance between those non-governmental and political issues which have already been drawn into the social structure.

We believe that when using non-governmental or regional materials in one's research, there are several areas which require our attention. Firstly, how do we comprehend the interrelation between the individual, local authorities and the state and indeed society as a whole, when using these kinds of materials so as to avoid research 'fragmentation'? We must consider the individual and society and rural areas and the state together. Furthermore, through this we must discover the shortcomings of past research. In this regard, a body of quality research has already been built up in Japan which uses documents from rural areas.

There is already a type of document known as a *jikata monjo* 地方文書 (region-specific document) that is used for research into early modern Japanese history. The term is mainly used to refer collectively to old documents that concern rural areas that were formed in feudal times, and span the Muromachi through to the Edo period. Take, for example, Kanagawa prefecture. In 1868, there were 945 towns and villages, and by 1972 a total of 250,000 related documents had built up. In his book, *The Land System and Local Society in Early Modern Japan*, University of Tokyo professor Makihara Shigeyuki uses documents relating to the Oumi area to research a 'little feudal lord' called Higashino. Through his analysis of account books from that area, he explores issues relating to land from the perspective of the land system, particularly the changing situation of land ownership during the eras of Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideoyoshi. Through this analysis, he demonstrates Japan's changing social structure in that period.

Documents on rural areas from the Meiji through to the Showa period are also extremely important in the field of research on modern Japanese history. For example, Hayashi Yuichi, a former professor of Kanazawa University, explored the disputes of tenant farmers during the Showa Depression, making full use of historical materials from Gokamura in Nagano prefecture. He also analyzed the sociohistorical structure of the peasant movement from the perspective of Japanese fascism. Through his research we are able to see how the social structure of a local Japanese administrative village changed in modern times, and how it rebuilt itself when faced with a crisis. His research is included in Oishi Kaichiro and Nishida Yoshiaki's *The Administrative Villages of Modern Japan*. The historical records on Gokamura not only operate as a fundamental tool for illustrating what Japanese rural society was like at its zenith, but also serve as an empirical tool for solving numerous theoretical problems. The grassroots documents relating to rural areas stored at Shanxi University can also be said to be '*jikata monjo*', as they give an insight into basic structural problems in modern Chinese society in the context of rural areas.

The next point concerns the issue of how credible non-governmental and rural documents are. Many of these documents originate in unofficial or high-level state institutions. While the content of many of these documents is very specific and detailed, there is a level of arbitrariness and many areas are non-standard. Just because these documents originate from non-governmental or regional sources, it does not mean that they are entirely true and reliable; we must be vigilant in screening and analyzing them before using them for the purposes of research.

For example, non-governmental letters were originally a form of information and emotional exchange that were private. However, in contemporary China, the freedom of personal communication and privacy of

communication for citizens is not well protected. The communication rights of certain groups of people are limited, and in this way, when they write a letter, they have to consider that this letter could be read by someone else. As such, they do not dare to express their true feelings in writing. Article 90 of the 1954 Chinese constitution stipulates that “privacy of communications is to be protected by law”. However, the respective constitutions of 1975 and 1978 only stipulate freedom of communication and do not mention the issue of protecting privacy of communications. Freedom of communication simply means that communication will not be interfered with. It allows you to write letters but its connotations are different to protection of privacy of communication. In article 40 of the 1982 constitution, “freedom of communication” and the “protection of privacy of communication by law” were finally stipulated. After that, article 252 of the penal code eventually stipulated that “concealing, damaging or illegally opening another person’s letter violates a citizen’s right to the freedom of communication. A serious breach of this will result in a sentence of no more than one year in prison or criminal detention”. As such, a law has finally been introduced that truly protects one’s privacy of communications. In 20th century China, from the 1950s through to the late 1970s, certain citizens, such as landlords, rich peasants, counterrevolutionaries, bad elements, people on the right, dictatorship targets and some suspects were limited in the freedom of communication they could enjoy. Their letters were not only able to be opened and inspected by the Public Security Bureau and other state organizations, but also by rural brigade cadres, factory leaders and security personnel.

After the Hu Feng Incident in 1954, people became particularly worried that their letters would be made public or turned over to the authorities by the recipient. In May 1954, Hu Feng presented the central authorities with a paper entitled *On Shu Wu*. In it, he inappropriately referred to and quoted a private letter that Shu Wu had sent him. In May 1955, Shu Wu responded to a call for articles by the People’s Daily. In his article, ‘On Hu Feng’s Sectarianism’ he heavily quoted from the private letters he had received from Hu Feng. These letters were later abbreviated, categorized and annotated, and published under the title of *Documents Relating to Hu Feng’s Anti-Party Clique*. This was the first time an individual’s private letters were published for the malicious purposes of political strife. Thenceforward, many intellectuals were worried about whether or not their letters would be publicized or turned over to the authorities, and thus were unable to express their thoughts in a truthful manner. In fact, as early as in the 1930s, Lu Xun quoted from letters he had received from other people in ‘A Response to Xu Maoyong and a Discussion of the Anti-Japanese United Front’ and ‘A Letter Regarding the Trotskyists’ despite not receiving their consent. This kind of practice was not unusual in China for a period, as the concept that communication privacy ought to be protected by law was still largely unheard of.

Within these regional documents, some people have seen the meeting minutes of work forces from the Socialist Education Movement. The main research on these work forces discusses how the documents they submitted to higher authorities were written in accordance with the way documents were written by higher-level bodies, how they received the approval and consent of higher-level bodies, and how they didn’t report the actual circumstances the village was facing. In this way, although these kinds of reports were produced by grassroots government, their content did not reflect reality and was instead modelled upon documents produced by their superiors. This is precisely why reliability is an issue when utilizing these kinds of resources. Within these materials relating to rural areas, one can find many application forms, self-criticisms and pledges of determination written by peasants. However, many of these indiscriminately use expressions borrowed from newspapers such as “the ideology of the exploiting class”, “the bourgeois prerogative” and “the theory of permanent revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat”. To what extent these peasants truly understood these concepts requires more consideration. A large number of these kinds of documents exist, but their content merely parrots others, many of

the phrases originating in periodical publications.

Finally, when using the documents of specific individuals or regional documents, one must be cognizant of the issue of privacy; an issue which touches upon academic ethics. Many self-criticisms are contained within rural document collections. These contain information on issues which pertain to marriage, male and female relations and an individual's character. These people or their descendants are still alive, and some still live in the same villages. As such, extra care is required when quoting or making public such materials.

Third Session: *The Inside and Outside of China as Viewed From Archival Materials*

New Tools for Research on Hu Shih: An Introduction to the *Hu Shih Archival Materials Search System* and *Database of the Collected Works of Hu Shih*

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Hu Shih occupied a pivotal position within the history of 20th century China; a position of such significance that no one can neglect him. He was renowned for the ideals he upheld and for the undertakings into which he poured his life and soul into. However, what kind of significance did his ideals and undertakings possess that can still inspire and enlighten us today? To answer this question, we must make an effort to, in his words, “reinstatement his true colors”. The problem is, his unique life story and world of thought is highly intricate and complex. Indeed, we will only further refine our understanding of his life and intellectual legacy by making a conscious effort to avoid falling into the trap of ‘simplifying’ or ‘pigeonholing’ his place within history. That said, a *Collected Works of Hu Shih* which is relatively complete and highly convenient, has still to be published. Furthermore, organization of his correspondence with friends and of his book collection have yet to be completed. As such, the only way to propel research on Hu Shih forward is by extensively gathering documents relating to him.



The Hu Shih Memorial Hall at Academia Sinica is located in the Nankang district of Taipei City. Originally established in 1962, the Memorial Hall has gone through a number of renovations, and has long served as the world's premier institution for the commemoration and research of Hu Shih. Indeed, the institution spares no efforts when it comes to pushing forward research on Hu Shih. At its most basic level, the Hu Shih Memorial Hall stores the firsthand records of Hu Shih from his final years (the majority of materials in this collection are from 1949 on). With the aid of contemporary science and technology, the institution has collaborated with the Institute of Modern History at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and with Peking University Library to combine and digitize all Hu Shih related records and his collected writings, which have hitherto been split between Mainland China and Taiwan. By the time of writing (July 2016), we have already published the *Catalog of Hu Shih's Collected Writings* (2013), and have completed work on the *Database of the Collected Works of Hu Shih* and the *Hu Shih Archival Materials Search System* (which primarily feature documents from 1949 onwards), which are accessible at the following URL: <http://www.mh.sinica.edu.tw/koteki/metadata.aspx>. These resources are available