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ARTICLES

PRIVATE DOCUMENTS AND PAPERS AS SOURCES FOR RESEARCH ON CHINESE ECONOMY AND SOCIETY DURING THE CH'ING PERIOD
-- A REPORT ON MATERIALS COLLECTED IN TAIWAN

Michael H. Finegan

Introduction

Those interested in studying the society and economy of premodern China on the local level may have difficulty in finding suitable source materials. The information in standard published sources is often not detailed or precise enough to answer all important questions about the livelihood and social relationships of ordinary people. Three types of sources which may help to answer such questions and which may be found in Taiwan today are private documents and papers, popular editions of books from the Ch'ing period, and local government archives. Although discussion here will concentrate on introducing the private papers to be found in Taiwan, it will be helpful to comment briefly on the other two categories of sources.

Books and Local Archives from the Ch'ing

In the used-book stalls and curio stores of Taipei there turn up many old books in traditional binding dating from the 18th century to the 1930's. Counting Ch'ing-period editions alone, the majority are of books designed for educational purposes, including the Four Books and the Classics, guides to writing essays and poems, guides to pronunciation and dictionaries, collections of examination essays, and works of literature. Also common are collections of medical prescriptions, religious and moral works, reference works (including letter-writing manuals, practical encyclopedias, and handbooks of family etiquette), novels, and works on geomancy, and occasionally there are books on mathematics and law. Almanacs (t'ung-shu) are common among early Republican editions. Most of these books are woodblock editions, and many were published in the large cities of Fukien. In the past these popular editions have often been ignored by book collectors and librarians, perhaps because they are not scholarly works or fine editions. They are well worth acquiring, however, for they show us what books were available to the common people for ordinary use, and also they have much to reveal about education, religion, medicine, social and economic relations, and other subjects.

In Taiwan there are several important collections of Ch'ing local government and quasi-government materials. The Tan-Hsin Archives from the yamen at Hsinchu are preserved at the National Taiwan University Law School, where they
are being used for research by Professor Tai Yen-hui. These archives consist of 1,163 files and volumes concerning government administration and criminal and civil cases. Most files contain numerous papers, usually concerning one case or matter or sometimes a series of related matters, and including legal and administrative documents, correspondence, transcriptions of oral testimony, and supporting evidence such as deeds, accounts, and maps. The Tan-Hsin Archives contain very valuable material for research and are the only Ch'ing local government archives readily available at present.

In the rare book room of the main library at National Taiwan University there is kept a collection of papers from the officially recognized leaders of a native tribe near Taichung. These papers, known as the An-li-ta-she wen-shu, consist of 1,100 individual documents, most of which are land deeds, and 31 manuscript volumes, including accounts, land registers, rent books, and records of lawsuits. Much of the material is from the late eighteenth century, and it is at least as useful for studying Chinese society, economy, and government as it is for studying the native tribe. The Taiwan Provincial Museum has additional materials from the An-li-ta-she, including maps and population registers (pao-chia-te'se). The same museum also has a series of government documents known as the Liu Ming-ch'uan Archives, another several hundred items of miscellaneous government documents, and a series of examination papers. Other museums, institutions, and individuals also possess a limited number of local government documents.

Types and Uses of Private Documents

In present day Taiwan it is possible to find many personal papers dating from the Ch'ing period. The selection is limited, however. By far the most common are land deeds, broadly defined, and related papers. The deeds include those for land grant, sale of property, supplementary payment after sale, mortgage, loan secured by land deeds, inheritance partition, sale of share in property from one partner or brother to another, partnership in the purchase, development, or lease of land, division of property upon dissolution of partnership, sale or other transfer of water rights, and tenancy. Related papers include property sales tax certificates (ch'i-wei), land registration certificates (chang-tan), and receipts (chih-chao) for taxes, rents, and fees. Land documents and the practices they represent are complex subjects. Fortunately, in the case of Taiwan, there are detailed studies which explain many of the complexities.

Deeds and many other documents were commonly written by hand on large sheets of paper, usually square in shape, examples from Taiwan generally being about 45-50 cm. square. For convenience in storage these large sheets were often folded into small rectangles, and several together were then wrapped with another sheet of paper, on the outside of which was written the contents of the package. Lengthy inheritance deeds were written in bound volumes specially made for the occasion. These were usually about 10 to 30 pages in length. Receipts and certificates were printed forms, filled in when issued. Receipts and some certificates were originally divided into two or three sections and
cut apart when used. Individual sections of receipts from Taiwan measure about 25 cm. high by 12 cm. wide. Property sales tax certificates, about the same size as deeds, were attached to deeds of sale, and the deed, the certificate, and the splice were stamped with a government seal in red ink. Some people evaded the tax, and deeds without the seal were known as white deeds (pai-ch'i) in contrast to red deeds (hung-ch'i), which had been stamped.  

Sometimes deeds are preserved as copies or abstracts in property books, which are manuscript volumes prepared as records, unused account books commonly being utilized for this purpose. A property book is often more useful than a comparable set of original deeds, for in the property book the documents are placed in order, there may be additional information on the properties, and there may be included types of documents not very likely to be found in a set of deeds, for example, litigation papers and tenancy agreements. Similar to property books are volumes which record different kinds of exemplary deeds. Although names and dates may be deleted, in some cases the deeds may still be copies of original documents. Usually the handwriting of deeds and related papers is very neat and easy to read.

In deeds of sale and other relatively simple deeds, the text of the document is usually one continuous statement followed by the date and signatures, but for complex documents with many terms such as collective agreements and deeds for the division of property, there is often an initial text and then a detailed list of provisions. Deeds are written in a special legal style, and the format, terms, and phrases in different deeds are often identical or nearly so. As an example of what deeds are like we may describe the contents of a typical deed of sale from Taiwan. The text gives (1) the kind of deed and the name of the seller; (2) a description of the property including type, location, boundaries, and special features such as provisions for rent, tax, and water; (3) a declaration that for certain stated reasons the seller, finding no relatives wishing to purchase the land, has with the aid of a middleman found a buyer, who is named; (4) that the three parties have agreed to a price, which is given, and money and property are being exchanged on the date of the sale; (5) that the land is not encumbered in any way and the seller will take care of any claims which may arise; (6) that specified prior deeds are being delivered to the buyer; and (7) that the deed is being drawn up for fear that word of mouth is not reliable as evidence of the transaction. Then follow the date and the signatures of seller, middleman, witnesses, and amanuensis.

While often many of the expressions of deeds are more formalities than statements of real meaning, in certain cases similarities in language conceal important differences in content. For instance, in two nearly identical types of tenancy deeds from one estate the type of rent system employed hinges on a single word. Also, despite general similarities in deeds throughout the empire, there are some interesting regional variations in the way they were drawn up. For example, in parts of Anhwei, the deed of sale, the same as in other areas, was preceded by an agreement (i-tan) drawn up by the middlemen and agreed to by both buyer and seller in which all details concerning the property and the transaction were set forth. And, of course, there were also significant regional variations in customary law, and these are reflected in the deeds.
Land deeds and related papers are valuable sources for the historian today. They are primary and basic sources for the study of customary institutions and practices such as land tenure, landlordism, inheritance, tenancy, irrigation, and land development. For example, various land deeds provide evidence on the procedures involved in different forms of land transfer, on permanent tenancy and the two lords to a field system, and on the terms in mortgages and loans secured by deeds. Inheritance deeds give the information needed to analyze inheritance practices, and detailed ones also provide sufficient data to study the basic characteristics of landlord estates. Tenancy deeds are invaluable for understanding the liabilities of tenants, including rent deposit and supplementary payments as well as rent, and the different conditions attached to various rent systems. The partners of irrigation and land development projects tended to make series of detailed agreements setting forth the policies decided on and dealing with any problems that might arise, and with these agreements it is possible to analyze such projects.

When land was sold, earlier deeds were surrendered to the new owner as evidence of his clear claim to the land, and so for each property there was a series of deeds. In a series of land deeds from Taiwan the earliest ones often indicate when settlement on or development of the property began. In the later deeds changes in land use and value are reflected, and from the series as a whole patterns and rates of land turnover may be calculated. Land deeds also provide information on property conflicts, family relationships, and many other social and economic topics. Some of the uses of deeds are not always readily apparent. For instance, changes in the use of money are reflected in the deeds. Further, the seals on deeds are data for the study of local governmental and sub-governmental institutions, and the forms of signatures are evidence concerning literacy. Even if the number of deeds pertaining to a research topic is limited, often they still can be used effectively in conjunction with other sources such as local histories, genealogies, and the writings of people who lived in the locality. As a number of recent articles from China have demonstrated, records of cases in the judicial archives of the Ch'ing central government can provide much of the data on customary law contained in deeds, but such materials will function better as complements to rather than substitutes for the deeds themselves.

Although land deeds are rather common and examples have been published for Taiwan and some other parts of China, this should not lessen the interest in acquiring them. Many publications of deeds do not give sets but simply scattered examples of different types. When original deeds turn up, however, it is often as sets of related documents, and the research potential for such sets is much greater than for isolated examples; also, such sets often contain unusual items of great interest. Further, for studying regional and local variations in deeds and the practices they reflect, what has been collected and published to date is far from adequate. There is a definite need for many more examples and for careful studies based on them.

Compared with land deeds, other kinds of documents turn up only sporadically, and it is difficult to predict precisely what will appear. The following description is based primarily on those documents I saw available for sale in
Taiwan stores. Deeds and other documents concerning family matters are rather common. Inheritance deeds were basic documents in the family system, and because they were also a type of land deed that transferred property from one generation to the next, large numbers have been preserved. Besides information on property, they often give material on family organization and relationships and on family history. Although more difficult to find, there are also documents relating to birthday celebrations and to marriages, the latter including formal marriage documents (hun-shu), deeds for marriage into the wife's family and assigning one or more of the future sons to continue the line of the wife's parents, and deeds from the relatives of a deceased husband allowing remarriage of a widow. Handwritten genealogies can be very useful sources for studying families and the family system, but they appear for sale only very occasionally, presumably because they are still valued and useful to the families that keep them.14

Although business papers share many of the characteristics of land deeds and similar legal documents, it is useful to treat them as a separate category. Many business documents were written on small rectangular slips of paper, about the same size as receipts, and either straw or red in color. Because of cursive script, special and abbreviated terminology, and complex practices, they are more difficult to use than land deeds. In one set I found, most of the documents were nominally loan agreements, whose actual function was to provide advances from a trading firm to producers for sugar to be delivered several months in the future. The set also contained requests and receipts for advances, bills of exchange (hui-p'iao), by means of which merchants in one city transferred credit to those in another, orders, and contracts for the future delivery of sugar at a specified price (hsu-tui-tan). These and other types of business papers provide information on the actual operation of business at the time. They are not very common, however.15

Guild rules and notices and partnership deeds are other sources of information on business. Two early nineteenth century manuscript volumes, for instance, contain numerous undated and unsigned guild agreements and notices from northern Taiwan. The agreements, which consist of an introductory statement followed by specific rules, were generally aimed at particular problems such as fixing unified standards or dealing with government exactions. The notices were sent to other businesses to report specific events and often to call meetings to deal with problems which had arisen. These agreements and notices provide information on business and guild practices, such as terms of payment, brokerage, relations with other groups, and sanctions for breaking of regulations. Partnership agreements give data on the capital of enterprises and detailed information on their management and organization. A series of such agreements can be used to reconstruct the history of an enterprise. Agreements dissolving partnerships are easier to find than those forming them, for businesses often bought property and such dissolution agreements were kept as evidence of property rights.16

Given the emphasis on education and examinations in Ch'ing China, it is not surprising that we should be able to find many documents relating to those subjects. Manuscript volumes containing copies of examinations or practice examinations are common in the used book and curio stores. Original examination
papers also appear for sale. These are long sheets of thin paper folded accordion style into booklets about 26 cm. high by 10 cm. wide or a little larger. The name of the academy or government unit administering the examination is printed on the front cover. For academy and some government examinations the name of the student is also written on the cover, and in addition the student's rank in the test is given on the front of academy examinations. Following this front cover is a page for the teacher's comments, which may be written either directly in the space or on a slip attached there. Next is the space for the examination itself, consisting of several pages ruled into squares, with the examination topic usually being written before the essay or poem. Government examinations included a series of tests, and the particular test is indicated on the cover of the paper. Also available, in addition to examination papers, are small slips bearing academy examination questions, official copies of provincial level examinations in red ink on brown paper, used to protect candidates' anonymity, certificates for the purchase of chien-sheng status, and a variety of records relating to schools and education. It may also be possible to find official announcements of admission to sheng-yuan status (chieh-pao).

Copies of litigation papers are another common category of document. Some are written on individual slips of paper and are mixed in with deeds and receipts, and some are copied into manuscript volumes such as property books. The lawsuits most frequently concern property disputes or quarrels and fights arising from such disputes. Some common types of litigation papers are complaints (kao-chuang), responses to complaints (su-chuang), warrants or summonses (hsin-p'iao), pleas to allow conciliation, and agreements to comply with magistrates' decisions (kan-chieh-chuang). Sometimes private papers include kinds of materials generally lacking in the official records of lawsuits, for example, conciliation agreements, agreements to cooperate in seeking legal redress, records of payments for legal expenses, and letters concerning litigation.

Ch'ing account books can be found with difficulty. They are usually square volumes, in large or small sizes, with cloth covers blue, black, or brown in color. Two standard sizes are 17 cm. square and 21 cm. square. Often the pages have printed columns, which may be divided into upper and lower sections for recording separately income and expenditure. Two common, general types of account books are journals (jih-ch'ing-pu) which record all transactions day by day and ledgers (tsung-pu) in which transactions are listed by customer or supplier. Rent books are another kind of account book, and there are also many specialized types of account books used by merchants. The usefulness of account books varies considerably. Periodic balancing of the accounts is an indication that they have been kept carefully. When quantities as well as prices are given, the entries are of course more useful than if prices alone are recorded. Further, whereas isolated account books, particularly ledgers, may not tell us much about the enterprises from which they come, a series of related books may provide a good basis for detailed analysis.

Account books can be very valuable research sources. The journal for one year and several ledgers covering a number of years from one prosperous peasant household, for example, contain prices for many different commodities, a price
series for rice, information on farm operation, including crop and animal production, hired labor, tools, rent, and marketing, data on consumption patterns, including diet, clothing, and household expenditures, and information on loans, travel, education, religion, marriages, funerals, and many other topics. The terms of written and oral agreements concerning rent, labor, and loans are regularly recorded in the accounts, and as they also tell us about the actual performance of these terms, they are a good complement to the kind of information we can find in deeds. Account books are sometimes difficult to read. The writing may be quite cursive, and there are generally many names and special terms. The possible value of the material makes decipherment worthwhile, however.

Letters turn up from time to time, but not as frequently as we might expect. Most useful are series of letters, either in the original or as copied into letter books. There are two types of letter books, one containing samples of different kinds of writings for use in study or reference and the other being a record of documents. The former is much more common, and although the contents are often heterogeneous, at least some of the letters and documents may well be copies of originals. In many cases, however, dates and signatures and even names are deleted. The latter type of letter book may prove a very useful source, for series of letters are often very revealing about personal attitudes and behavior and such topics as family relationships and conflicts. Cursive script, names and special terms, and uncertain references make some letters difficult to read. Originals of letters are generally written on small sheets of paper of different colors, sometimes lined and decorated with printed designs.\textsuperscript{20}

Papers relating to religion are not unusual. There are manuscript volumes containing a variety of religious writings, including ones with copies of amulets (fu). Other papers include prayers and records relating to temple subscriptions. Another very common type of manuscript volume is that of medical texts, many of which contain series of prescriptions. Miscellaneous documents include various printed certificates issued by the government, for example, household registration certificates (hu-k'ou-men-p'ai) and certificates of merit awarded to soldiers, and also public notices and a variety of collective agreements such as ones from inter-village leagues promoting security.\textsuperscript{21}

While it is certain there will appear types of documents other than those that have been described, it is hoped that the above discussion has covered the most common types. Private documents are useful for teaching as well as for research. In courses on Chinese historical sources private papers may be used as materials for study, and they may also serve to introduce students to Chinese handwriting. For courses on Chinese history and civilization private documents may serve as illustrative material. For example, land deeds, tax receipts, and examination papers could be used respectively in discussions of peasants and landlords, local government, and the education and government recruitment systems.
One way to collect private papers is to make copies of documents in private and public hands. Under the Auspices of the Committee on Taiwan Historical Studies of the Association for Asian Studies, Mr. Wang Shih-ch'ing has been achieving very impressive results using this method. Another way to collect documents is to purchase them from the curio and used book stores in Taiwan. While doing research in Taiwan from 1976 to 1979, I acquired numerous documents in this way.

In the past, two major reasons for families to preserve their documents were to prove ownership and to have records that could be checked. In particular, for pieces of real estate it was customary to keep together all previous deeds of sale and other relevant documents in order to prove the rights the person had over the land. In many cases these documents have been preserved carefully and are still in perfect condition today. Other records and documents, for instance, account books, were also kept as evidence, but over the years they tended to lose their utility and so have not been as well preserved as land deeds. Some other materials such as letter books and examination papers were kept as models and examples of writing, and undoubtedly papers were also kept out of pride and respect for ancestors. The family genealogy was of course kept carefully both because of the importance with which ancestors and family and lineage members were viewed and also because it served the function of vital records.

Although genealogies generally are still treasured, many other documents which have survived to the present are being disposed of. In many cases early deeds are no longer considered useful as evidence, and other old documents have become mere relics of a past age. The tearing down of old houses and the migrations and new values of the younger generation are other factors that lead to the disposal of old papers. Also dealers who go out to search for antiques and curios may persuade the owners of old documents to part with them. Of course, there are still many families who like to keep at least some of their old papers.

In the first stage of the disposal process the materials are often gathered by paper and junk collectors, and the papers may pass through the hands of one or more curio dealer before reaching a store. In many cases a peddler from out of town will sell parts of his wares to several stores, with the result that sets of documents and also multi-volume books may be divided among different stores. In the curio and used book stores deeds and receipts are sold mainly for their calligraphy, their seals and their old age. Most often they are sold at moderate prices one by one or in small quantities. It is also possible to buy complete sets at lower unit prices. A deed may cost U.S. $2.00 to $6.00, and a receipt $0.50 to $1.00. For a deed with an attached sales tax certificate, the price may be $4.00 or more. An examination paper costs about $2.00 to $5.00. It should be added that for these various documents sometimes lower and more often much higher prices will be met. High prices are common for certain unusual items, for example, special certificates and deeds of sale for bondservants.
Since account books and similar manuscript volumes generally do not fulfill the aesthetic criteria of the deeds, certificates, examination papers, and receipts, they can be bought for comparatively low prices, usually U.S. $2.00 to $10.00 per volume or less. The manuscript volumes that appear most often in the used book stalls are copies of examination essays, sample letter books, and medical and religious works.

The materials for sale in Taipei are mostly from northern Taiwan (Miao-li to I-lan, and especially Taipei and Taoyuan) and the Taichung area. Papers from southern Taiwan are less common, no doubt because of the distance from market. Documents from the mainland are by no means uncommon. I purchased sets of papers from Fukien, Chekiang, and Anhwei, and examples from Hupei and Kwangtung. The Taiwan papers for sale in the stores date from about 1750 on, that is, the period from which extensive settlement began in the northern part of the island. Although the condition of deeds is often good, it is not always so, and many old manuscript volumes have suffered minor or major damage from bookworms, rats, damp, and dirt.

In Taipei the major sources for acquiring private papers are the curio stores in Kuang-hua shang-ch'ang and Chung-hua shang-ch'ang and the used-book stalls in the former. Stamp dealers are another source. Only certain stores sell documents, and I acquired papers regularly from four stores and occasionally from another twelve. Several of the storekeepers were quite helpful in finding things for me. This was especially important for account books, which otherwise would have been difficult to find. Private papers may also be obtained from curio stores in Taichung and to a lesser extent in Tainan.

Because private papers are a useful, unique, and perishable source for the study of local social and economic history and one in danger of being lost if not collected, it is to be hoped that research libraries and scholars will take an interest in supporting projects for the collection of these papers, for acquiring sets of original papers that become available, and in making use of the documents through research, publication, and teaching.

Notes

1. A microfilm of the archives in 32 reels has been made and is available from the University of Washington. For general information on the archives, see David C. Buxbaum, "Some Aspects of Civil Procedure and Practice at the Trial Level in Tanshui and Hsinchu from 1789 to 1895," Journal of Asian Studies, XXX, No. 2 (1971), pp. 255-79. A selection from the first 15 percent of the archives, on administration, has been published as Tan-Hsin tang-an hsüan-lu hsing-ch'eng pien ch'u-ch'i (T'ai-wan wen-hsien ts'ung-k'an, No. 295; Taipei: Bank of Taiwan, 1971), 4 volumes. At the beginning of that work there is a classified list of the contents of the whole archives. A number of local archives in China have been reported or described recently, including ones for Pa-hsien in Szechwan and Pao-ti-hsien in Peking.
2. The Liu Ming-ch'uan archives have been published: *Liu Ming-ch'uan fu T'ai ch'ien-hou tang-an* (T'ai-wan wen-hsien ta'ung-k'an, No. 276; Taipei: Bank of Taiwan, 1969), 2 volumes. In Shantung there are massive archives from the K'ung family offices, and selections from them are being published. See Ch'u-fu-hsien wen-kuan-hui, ed., *Ch'u-fu K'ung-fu tang-an shih-liao heu-an-pien* (Ch'i-Lu shu-she, 1980-).

3. The standard introduction in English is Santaro Okamatsu, *Provisional Report on Investigations of Laws and Customs in the Island of Formosa* (Reprint ed.; Taipei: Ch'eng-wen Publishing Co., 1971). See pp. 38-41 for a list of different types of deeds. At the end of the book is an 87-page appendix in Chinese of different kinds of documents. Reference 10 is a ch'ang-tan and 14 a ch'i-wei. For more detail a good place to start is the first two volumes of text and three volumes of reference materials in Rinji Taiwan kyukan chōsaikai, *Rinji Taiwan kyukan chōsaikai dai ichibu chōsa dai sankai hōkoku-sho*: *Taiwan shihō* and *Taiwan shihō furoku sankōsho* (Rinji Taiwan kyukan chōsaikai, 1910-11), 13 volumes; hereafter cited as *Taiwan shihō* and *Taiwan shihō furoku sankōsho*. This work has been reprinted by the Ta-lu shu-tien in Taipei.


6. This description generally follows reference 2 in Okamatsu. See Okamatsu, pp. 34-38, for a discussion of the features of deeds. According to Okamatsu, for example, generally relatives were not in fact consulted prior to sales of land despite statements in deeds to the contrary. For translations of deeds and other documents see Fu-mei Chang Chen and Ramon H. Myers, "Customary Law and the Economic Growth of China during the Ch'ing Period," *Ch'ing-shih wen-t'ien*, III, No. 5 (1976), pp. 1-32, and III, No. 10 (1978), pp. 4-27.


8. Fu I-ling, *Ming-Ch'ing nung-ts'un she-hui ch'ing-chi* (Peking: San-lien shu-tien, 1961), pp. 20-67, provides a good example of the use to which deeds may be put in studies of the land system in Fukien.
9. A remarkable and little-known work, Rinji Taiwan tochi chōsakyoku, ed., Giranchō kannai hashō chōsasho (Rinji Taiwan tochi chōsakyoku, 1905), 2 volumes, records all available deeds and documents relating to the major irrigation projects in I-lan and also gives an analysis of each project.

10. Fu I-ling, "Ming-tai ch'ien-ch'i Hui-chou t'u-ti mai-mai ch'i-yueh chung te t'ung-huo," She-hui k'o-hstfeh chan-hsien, 1980, No. 3, pp. 129-34, utilizes deeds from Hui-chou to show changes in the medium of exchange during the early Ming period.

11. Two recent books have used private papers effectively in conjuction with other sources. See the work by Meskill cited in note 4 and James Hayes, The Hong Kong Region, 1850-1911 (Hamden, Connecticut: Shoe String Press, 1977).


13. Many deeds and other documents from Taiwan are recorded in early Japanese studies. These include Taiwan shihō furoku sinkōsho and a number of important publications of the Rinji Taiwan tochi chōsakyoku: Taiwan tochi kankai ippan (1905), on the land system, Taiso torishirabesho (1904), on ta-tsu rent, Taiwan tōgyō kyukan ippan (1909), on sugar production and trade, and the work on irrigation referred to in note 8. Only this last work provides comprehensive series of deeds, each of the others giving a variety of representative examples. The early journal, Taiwan kanshū kiji, also contains many deeds and documents as do two important works by Ino Yoshinori, Taiwan hanseishi (Taiwan sōtokufu minseibu shokusankyoku, 1904), on administration of the native tribes, and Taiwan bunksashi (Tokyo: Tōkō shoin, 1928), a masterly comprehensive study of Ch'ing Taiwan. Early Japanese studies on local history and local economy and more recent Chinese local history periodicals such as T'ai-wan wen-hsien and T'ai-nan wen-hua are other good sources for Taiwan documents. With the exception of Taiwan the number of deeds and documents easily found is quite limited. The major collection of deeds is Chūgoku tochi keiyaku bunshōshū, Kin-Shin (see note 7), which gathers together deeds from 33 different published sources and studies. Niida Noboru recorded many exemplary deeds from Yuan and Ming practical reference books: Chūgoku hōseishi kenkyū, dorei nōdōhō, kazoku sonrakuhō (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1962), pp. 741-829. Deeds and documents may be found in some collections of epigraphy, genealogies, and special works on local institutions. For an example of the last see Ch'en-chou-fu i-t'ien tsung-chi (Reprint ed.; Taipei: Ch'eng-wen Publishing Co., 1970), hsia/31a-46b. In China there are major collections of documents including deeds, from the Hui-chou area and from northern Fukien. For the major collection of Taiwan deeds and private documents see note 22.


17. The first illustration following p. 180 in Vol. 2 of Taiwan bunkashi shows two examples of examination questions given to students and a complete academy examination from the Ta-kuan shu-shê near Taipei. On the government examinations, with examples and illustrations, see Etienne Zf, Pratique des Examens Litteraires en Chine (Reprint ed.; Taipei: Ch'eng-wen Publishing Co., 1971).


20. For illustrations of letters see Yen-p'ing Hao, The Comprador in Nineteenth Century China: Bridge between East and West ("Harvard East Asian Series," No. 45; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), p. 38, and T. C. Lai, A Scholar in Imperial China (Hong Kong: Kelly and Walsh, 1970), pp. 54-68. In the Taiwan Branch of the National Central Library there is a valuable series of original letters from the 1860's written to a well known scholar serving as an official, Yang Chun, concerning the contribution and transport of relief rice to the mainland. See Yang Chun, Kuan hui t'ang shih wen ch'ao, ch'ih-tu.