

華南研究資料中心 通訊

South China Research Resource Station Newsletter

香港科技大學人文學部 華南研究中心成立典禮

香港科技大學人文學部華南研究中心於1997年11月21日舉行了簡單而隆重的開幕典禮。當日由人文社會科學學院院長丁邦新教授主禮，出席嘉賓除了科技大學副校長孔憲鐸、OCGA (Office of Contract and Grant Administration) 主任 Dr. Tony R. Eastham、公共事務部主任秦家德博士及人文社會科學學院全人外，香港歷史博物館、香港政府檔案局、臨時區域市政總署博物館、古物古蹟辦事處、皇家亞洲學會香港分會皆派員到賀，而日本東京大學東洋文化研究所所長濱下武志教授、國立暨南國際大學歷史研究所所長徐泓教授、中山大學歷史系明清社會經濟史研究室主任劉志偉教授、中山大學文學院副院長陳春聲教授、廣州市文化局、廣州博物館、香港華南研究會、香港博物館皆

致送花籃祝賀。

華南研究中心於1997年由錢立方、張兆和、蔡志祥、何傑堯、廖迪生籌組，97年7月由大學正式核准成立，中心設於香港科技大學人文學部。中心成立的目的是在於推動海內外從事華南研究者和機構間之學術交流與合作。透過組織田野考察，舉辦學術會議，徵集、收藏及編輯各類官私檔案文獻，希望使香港科技大學成為華南研究學者交流心得之所；更期盼中心之活動能有助加深研究者對中國社會的歷史、文化及社會經濟變遷之了解。

有關華南研究中心成立的始末，香港科技大學人文學部主任高辛勇博士在開幕典禮致詞中有詳細的介紹，現將其講詞刊載於下，以饗各有興趣的讀者。

Inauguration of the South China Research Center

Karl Kao

Humanities Division, HKUST

The South China Research Center at HKUST is set up for the purpose of promoting research on South China. It aims at facilitating studies on the region by organizing conferences, disseminating research results, and sharing archival documents. Included in its plan,

particularly, is the growth of the Center into a center of collection of the kinds of anthropological documents which are not only related to the region but specifically to common folks -- the documents that are usually not available from the Government bureaus and departments

or conventional museums and archives.

Among its various goals, this endeavor of collecting regional archival and folk documents, it seems to me, is of particular significance for its uniqueness and also its urgency. As an international finance center, Hong Kong is undergoing a very rapid change these days in many ways— both cultural and physical. The City's population is constantly flowing in and out, with many of the Hong Kongers having business activities conducted through family or clan connections all over the world, while, on the other hand, the city's surrounding villages or rural suburbs are disappearing quickly, yielding to continuous demands of land development. Both the city itself and its surrounding areas are changing their landscape and culturescape almost daily. What is happening to the greater Hong Kong area is, to an extent, also happening to Southern China, and in fact to China as a whole. Many of the documents of sociological and anthropological nature tend to get lost, disappear in this rapid change, despite of or because of the fact that the change means precisely we are in a computer age where electronic record keeping has become the norm and old documents are easily discarded, disposed of. The Center's work of collecting the archival and folk documents, such as business ledgers, land deeds, and village handbooks, is an important effort in preserving and recording the history in the local, urban, and folk settings. The Center will be an important place where records of common people's life are kept. It will be an important, unique source of information for both contemporary and future historians and anthropologists.

The actual activities of the Center was started before the Center was established; the first conference "Folk Document and local society in South China", was organized in 1993 by more or less the same group of scholars who still constitute the main talents of the Center. The 1993 conference has since then become the first of a series of annual events and, along with the conferences,

this research group has also put out Documentary Series, working papers and Newsletters, and acquired some significant, rare collections. Although the collection is small, it is growing. With the establishment of the Center now, research can be expected to be facilitated as it continues in an institutionally reinforced manner.

I should mention that Dr. Chi-cheung Choi's devotion and leadership has much to do with turning the idea of the Center into a reality. Besides Dr. Choi, who is now also the Director of the Center, other active members of the research group based in HKUST who have contributed much to the establishment of the Center and its research activities include Dr. Siu-woo Cheung, Dr. Tik-sang Liu, Dr. May-bo Ching, Mr Muk-chi Ma, Mr. Wing-ho Wong and Mr. Sui-wai Cheung.

Without the supports of various funding agencies and the Administration at the University, the group and the Center would not have been able to do what they have done so successfully. Dr. Choi has already mentioned those individuals and organizations that have helped the Center at its various stage of development. On behalf of the Division, I'd like to also express my gratitude to them.

Besides providing financial support for the Center's activities, the Dean of our School, Prof. Ting Pang-hsin, has also graced the Center with a personal touch of his for this ceremony. He has written the name of the Center in an elegant calligraphy which has then been carved on a beautiful piece of red wood. Professor Ting will officially inaugurate the Center for business, by following a custom that people in South China follow in celebrating a happy occasion such as a wedding. This is called 簪花掛紅 -- or "Adoring the Plaque with Golden Flowers and Red Ribbon."

Thank you.

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