

Tai ping Street in the Dadaocheng area of Taipei. Western-style buildings along Yanping North Road Section 2 in Taipei. Transportation vehicles were also one of the favorite subjects of Japanese photographers.



Danshuei River and Taipei Bridge
The steel span pictured in the distance is the Taipei Bridge, built in 1925 during the Japanese occupation period. The sunset view of the bridge was once considered one of the eight top scenic attractions of Taipei. The new Taipei Bridge was completed in 1997.

CCS News and Activities

■ CCS Seminars

Visiting scholars completing their studies at the Center for Chinese Studies (CCS) delivered lectures at seminars on March 30 and April 7 this year.

The keynote speaker at the first seminar was Ostubo Yoshiyuki, a doctoral candidate at Japan's Osaka University. His paper was entitled: "Political Decision Making in the Qing Court from the Perspective of the Issues Facing the Guangxu Emperor at Personal Assumption of Power." The seminar was hosted by Prof. Wu Chih-keng of the

Department of History at National Taiwan Normal University. Mr. Ostubo's study covered a period from the announcement in the 12th year of the Guangxu imperial reign that the young emperor would personally assumed the reins of government from his mother Empress Dowager Ci Xi, through the request by the Grand Ministers of the court that the Empress Dowager continue to administer the state from behind the scenes, up until the final decision to begin the emperor's political training. Referencing several historical works, including the Guang-xu Xuan-tong liang chao shang-yu-dang (Instructions of the Guangxu and Xuantong emperors) and the lesser-known Weng Tong-he ri-ji (Diary of Weng Tong-he), Mr. Ostubo found that with regards to the actual participation by the nobility and officials in the political decision-making meetings, the key person was the Guangxu emperor's biological father Prince Chun. The study also found that the Grand Ministers in Attendance of Manchu and Mongolian noble status and concurrently serving imperial tutors all participated in the meetings, providing insight into the main decision makers in the Qing court as well as to the decision-making process at that time. Such meeting-based policy setting process is not stipulated in the Da Qing hui-dian (Collected statutes of the Great Qing), but the system was acknowledged nonetheless. Research into Qing policy making, therefore, cannot be limited to the Da Qing hui-dian but must involve more detailed investigation, the paper concluded.

The keynote speaker at the second seminar was Prof. Wang Ching-chia of the Department of History at Rowan University in the U.S. His paper was on the topic, "Reconstruction and Deconstruction: Inner Tensions in Discussions of Contemporary Taiwanese History." The seminar was hosted by Prof. Hsu Cho-yun of Academia Sinica. Prof. Wang's study looked

at the development of Taiwanese historical research over the years in reference to various works, such as *Writing in History (1950-2000): Tradition and Transformation, 1950-2000*. The lecture touched on Taiwan's emergence in the 1970s and 80s as the top economic performer among the four Asian tigers, the huge social changes brought about by the termination of martial law, the flourishing of intellectual thought at that time, and the evolution of historical studies in Taiwan from the public to private domains and from national ethnicity to social life. It probed into the "small issues" of women, ceremonies and customs, home life and religion, and did not restrict itself to just the "big matter" of national ethnicity. It noted that deepening traditional generalities can enrich cultural content, but also posed the question, "Are not the small things are also beautiful?" Economic development in Taiwan has slowed significantly from the past, the social climate is filled with Greater China thinking, and historical research today, many years after the shift from the public to private domains, must comprehensively survey "the boundary between the divine and the human" and "the adjustment from ancient times to the modern world." For example, this social need is apparent in Prof. Hsu's critically-acclaimed *Across the River of Time: Cultural Transition in Chinese History*. There is a desire for a restructuring of history today. In his deconstruction and reconstruction of the deep significance of Taiwanese historical study, Prof. Wang proposes that we move from "little history" to "macroscopic history" in an attempt to set a new course for the study of Taiwan history.

The two CCS seminars attracted a high turnout and animated discussions. (Chinese text by Te-Erh Kao)



Mr. Otsubo Yoshiyuki (front row second from left), Prof. Wu Chih-keng (front row, second from right), and seminar participants (Photo by Caesar Tsai)



Prof. Wang Ching-chia (front row, third from left), Prof. Hsu Cho-yun (front row, second from right), NCL Director Juang Fang-rung (front row, far right) and seminar participants (Photo by Caesar Tsai)

Review

■ *Illustrated Catalogue of Archaic Document Exhibition*

The NCL collection contains over 2,400 archaic documents, ranging from legal contracts dating back