

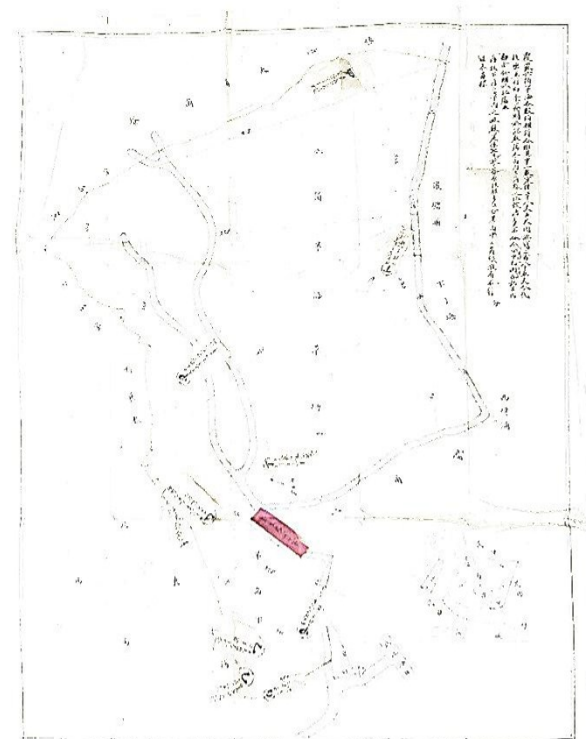
# **Land Deeds & Family Papers:**

Another Unique Collection in the CityU Library!

# Collection Donated to CityU

After concerted effort of various parties, our Library was very pleased to receive a remarkable donation in 2013. It is made up of some 360 Chinese land deeds and 1,500 family documents of Mr Tin-Pong Chow (鄒殿邦先生), the then Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce of Guangzhou in the early 20th century.

Business correspondences (公司業務信件)	124
Others (其他)	705
Chinese seals (印章)	125
Land deeds (土地法律文件)	359
Receipts (收據)	352
Company documents (公司業務文件)	138
Letters and correspondences (書信)	10
Drawings (繪圖)	71
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,886</b>



# Research Value of Old Land Deeds & Family Papers

- Those land deeds and documents, dated mainly from 1900 to late 1940 from an influential family, are very unique primary research materials. They provide important data on the economic and legal activities of China, particularly in Guangdong and Hong Kong.
- Reflecting
  - Inheritance and trading systems of real estates,
  - Evolving economic and financial systems, e.g. banking system, corporate ownership,
  - Monetary and fiscal policies in Early Republican China,
  - Changes of land laws over a period of time,
  - History of public administration,
  - Socio-economic conditions of the past, e.g. inflation

# CityU Scholars Highly Regard this Collection

Faculty members of College of Business:

- 1) Useful tools for empirical research of the Republic eras before the Communist Party came to power
  - Monetary policy: total money supply and types of currencies in circulation
  - Exchange rates with other currencies
  - Socio-economic conditions of the past, e.g. inflation

# CityU Scholars Highly Regard this Collection

Faculty members of College of Business:

- 2) Chinese Land Deeds are actually transaction contracts of properties.
  - It contains very rich micro and true information about free transaction of land and properties in the 19th to early 20th century.
  - Thus such deeds are vivid proof of the existence of free market in property trading and they contains reliable information of such transactions.

# CityU Scholars Highly Regard this Collection

Prof. Guobin ZHU, Professor, School of Law

## Summary in English:

The Chow Family Collection provides incredible primary sources in the study of history of commercial law, property law and land law of China. CityU or the Library must put in effort to facilitate the research on this collection.

## In original Chinese:

- 鄒氏家族契約雖為個案，… 從研究視角觀之，本收藏之於近代財產權法、財產法史、商事法史、甚至工商管理歷史的研究具有重要學術和歷史價值。
- 中國財產法史研究現狀基本處於巨集觀考察、法律文本研究狀態，缺乏微觀和個案分析，如對一地或一家族的深入探究。對商法史的研究也停留在機構和制度的層面。事實上，除了考察歷史上的財產權的成文法及其制度的之外，我們還應該把注意力放在這一制度的現實的民間財產關係、財產行為的一般規則之上，這包括對民間的民事行為慣例即“鄉規俗例”的研究。透過研究其發生、發展、演變的過程，或許可以探索其內部發展規律，進而揭示其對當今中國社會生活的深遠影響。
- 研究財產法史（和商法史）的方法很多，除了傳統的文本方法和歷史方法之外，微觀的及個案的研究方法值得特別推薦。職是之故，我特別希望大學或圖書館能夠組織力量展開研究，發掘這批檔案文獻的重要學術價值。

# CityU Scholars Highly Regard this Collection

Dr CHEN, Lei, Associate Professor, School of Law

- As a scholar specializing in Chinese legal history, I find this precious special collection very valuable and stimulating in various research agendas ...
- First, it sheds some light on approaching China' modernization in early twenties century from a socio-legal perspective and through a special case study of the Land registration system in Guangzhou.
- With this collection ..., one may propose that even there was a well-functioning property right, demonstrated by this well-preserved land deeds recording transactions, economic growth seems to be stealth. ... one may further argue that the casual link between a formalized property rights and economic development is questionable.