

## ***Taihoku* Prefecture Archives (1921-1945): Historical Value of Local Administrative Documents of *Ohka Shoo* in Japanese Colonial Taiwan**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Studies on local administration and local communities in Japanese colonial Taiwan are scarce due to a lack of primary historical materials. Unlike the well-preserved official documents of Taiwan Sotoku-fu, local administrative documents of the Japanese colonial era that survived till today are rare. The *Taihoku* Prefecture Archives (臺北州檔案) is one of the few. They are excellent materials for studying the local administration of Japanese rule in Taiwan and have a unique and high historical value.

In 1920, the Taiwan Sotoku-fu implemented reforms of the local official system and granted limited autonomy to each local government unit. *Shoo* or *Zhuang* was the smallest local administration unit at that time. The *Taihoku* Prefecture Archives are in fact local administrative documents of *Ohka Shoo* (or *Yingge Village*) office in *Taihoku* Prefecture from 1921 to 1945, and have 187 volumes containing about 6,000 files. These archives have been made accessible to the public since 2009. Although they are nearly complete primary historical materials about a local community over a long duration and have covered many aspects of local administration of Taiwan under Japanese rule, they have never been studied in full detail.

This paper introduces the outline of the *Taihoku* Prefecture Archives including their history, the contents of each file, and the classification of files according to their contents. Both local governance and social indoctrination in *Ohka Shoo* are then reviewed in the light of the archive documents. Potential applications of these documents for future research on Taiwan under Japanese rule including local industrial history, educational history and local administrative history are also suggested.

**Keywords:** *Taihoku* Prefecture, *Ohka Shoo* Village, Local Administrative Documents, Municipal System, Social Indoctrination