

Hunting Mao Era Sources in Today's China

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Overview

- A prevalent concern: Contemporary Chinese History is no longer doable...
 - This presentation:
 1. Observations: archival access
 - Official archives
 - Universities
 2. From Public to Private: Rules, Norms, Possibilities, Limitations, and Some Advice
- The answer: Still doable despite regulations and controls.

Public Archives

- Xiamen, Zhejiang, Dalian, Shanghai, etc.
- Scenarios? –rejected –nearly impossible –possible; different ways of operation
- If you are a Chinese Citizen, then bring your ID card, not your Passport.
- Trend: Digitization. Publishing Oral Histories (many have already passed away)& etc.
- Some hearsay information: Beijing, Chengdu, Guangdong/Guangzhou
- Letter of Introduction推荐信? Personal connections?
- What to expect? What not to expect? Sources and some labor.

Universities

- A complex nature: State-academic
- University libraries and archives of university history: No access.
- Research institutes on Contemporary History.
- Better understanding of the subjects, better management.
- What to expect?
- Collections of archives. International sources. Donor-related sources.
- Visiting scholars.
- The norm [for state and university archives]: **Do Not Publish the Document. Do Not Buy and Sell.**
- Not without precedent.

Market and Private Collections?

- Some private collections.
- Garbology. Still very doable. But...
 1. Particular Culture, preference: Chinese vs. Foreign; Local vs. Non-Local...
 2. Regulations and laws.
- But one needs to first understand some basic rules.
- Many scholars, in fact, never know about these.

Some Rules to Note Before Ever Thinking of Markets [1]

Disclaimer: I am not a legal specialist.

- 中华人民共和国保守国家秘密法.第二十条
- 国家秘密的保密期限，应当根据事项的性质和特点，按照维护国家安全和利益的需要，限定在必要的期限内；不能确定期限的，应当确定解密的条件。
- 国家秘密的保密期限，除另有规定外，绝密级不超过三十年，机密级不超过二十年，秘密级不超过十年。
- 机关、单位应当根据工作需要，确定具体的保密期限、解密时间或者解密条件。
- 机关、单位对在决定和处理有关事项工作过程中确定需要保密的事项，根据工作需要决定公开的，正式公布时即视为解密。

Some Rules to Note Before Ever Thinking of Markets [2]

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- 中华人民共和国文物保护法，第二条：
 - 在中华人民共和国境内，下列具有历史、艺术、科学价值的文物，受国家保护：
 - (一) 具有历史、艺术、科学价值的古文化遗址、古墓葬、古建筑、石窟寺和石刻；
 - (二) 与重大历史事件、革命运动和著名人物有关的，具有重要纪念意义、教育意义和史料价值的建筑物、遗址、纪念物；
 - (三) 历史上各时代珍贵的艺术品、工艺美术品；
 - (四) 重要的革命文献资料以及具有历史、艺术、科学价值的手稿、古旧图书资料等；
 - (五) 反映历史上各时代、各民族社会制度、社会生产、社会生活的代表性实物。
- 文物鉴定的标准和办法由国家文化行政管理部门制定，并报国务院批准。
- 具有科学价值的古脊椎动物化石和古人类化石同文物一样受国家的保护。

Some Rules to Note Before Ever Thinking of Markets [3]

- Additional points: 1. Ethnicity issues. 2. Later than the 1980s, regardless of political sensitivities, the declassification issue.
- Present state:

A Grey zone.

But if you publish those documents, you are inviting trouble.

Customs. –Entering: Declare. –Leaving China: 1949 line.

Culture: Influence of geopolitical tensions

Entering Markets

- Locations: Antiquity Markets 古玩/古董市场, Old Book Stores 旧书店 / 二手书店 & etc.
- Garbage Recycler?
- What to look for after knowing some basic rules?
- 1. Diaries 2. Newspapers 3. Flyers 4. Photos 5. Non-classified materials.
- Suggested Behaviors in Bargaining... Specific terms used.
Connections

Sellers? Price? Why?

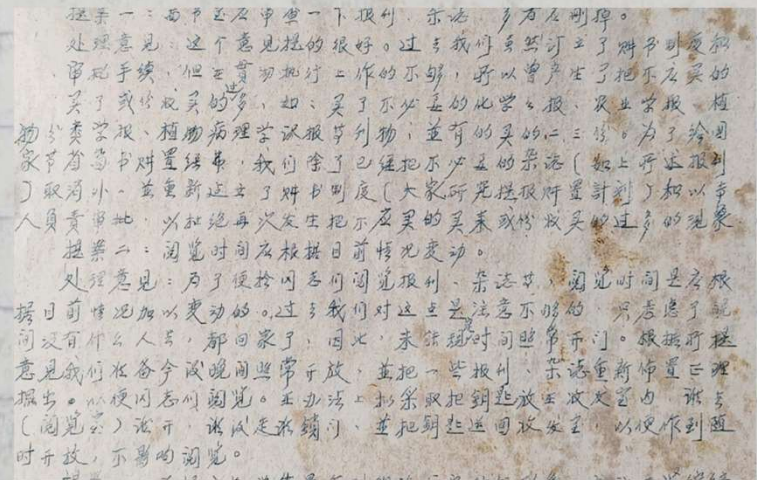
- ***Bargaining for price is normal. Buying without bargaining will cost you dearly.
- Different types of sellers: some know the value, some do not. Some were random antiquity sellers, others were specialized.
- 1. In at least 50% of cases, aim for a price 50% lower. Sometimes, even 80% lower.
- 2. Know the terms: e.g., 通走 = all these together
- 3. Antiquity markets often open early in the day (a specific date each week), some as early as 4-5 a.m. Go early, more choices; go late, no choice.
- 4. Hide your interest: prevent price skyrocketing.
- 5. Know the price influencers: Condition品相, Hard Cover, Symbols and Signs: Mao Zedong, Gift of particular purpose (抗美援朝 etc), Rarity, Particular Groups Connected (e.g. Gang of Four), Particular time (e.g. Mao's Death)

Prices for Some Items from the 50s to 70s

1. Books (for public, not including rare ones): small ones=5-30 rmb; big ones=50+
2. Diaries (depending on the content and condition): 30-500 rmb
3. Official Magazines, e.g. 红旗,人民日报合订本: mostly 10-30 rmb
4. Other Newspapers (monthly bound edition): 300-500rmb
5. Cultural Revolution flyers/ red guard publications: 10-100 rmb, sometimes you can buy a huge lot for 50 rmb.
6. Old Photos: ID photo/ group photo= 10-100 rmb; Event photo=100-500 rmb; Photo with Mao=30-???? Rmb (depending on rarity)
7. Letters: 50-200rmb (in fact, sellers might have more interest in the stamps)

Observations

- Historical values from high to low:
Handwritten (1 person) >
Mimeograph 油印 (10-100 persons) >
Machine Print > Books for the Public
- North vs. South: Southern sources are in a very fragile state due to environmental corrosion.
- Chances of collaboration with universities.



Mimeograph

Conclusion

- Research is still doable. In fact, a lot of chances.
- Positions and boundaries are very important.
- Know the market before making a purchase.
- *****Be Careful: Sometimes Mao Era papers were bound by nails instead of staples.**