

Workshop on Local Primary Sources on Late Imperial China (900-1900)

September 2016

Text-reading session conducted by Dr Adam Yuet CHAU

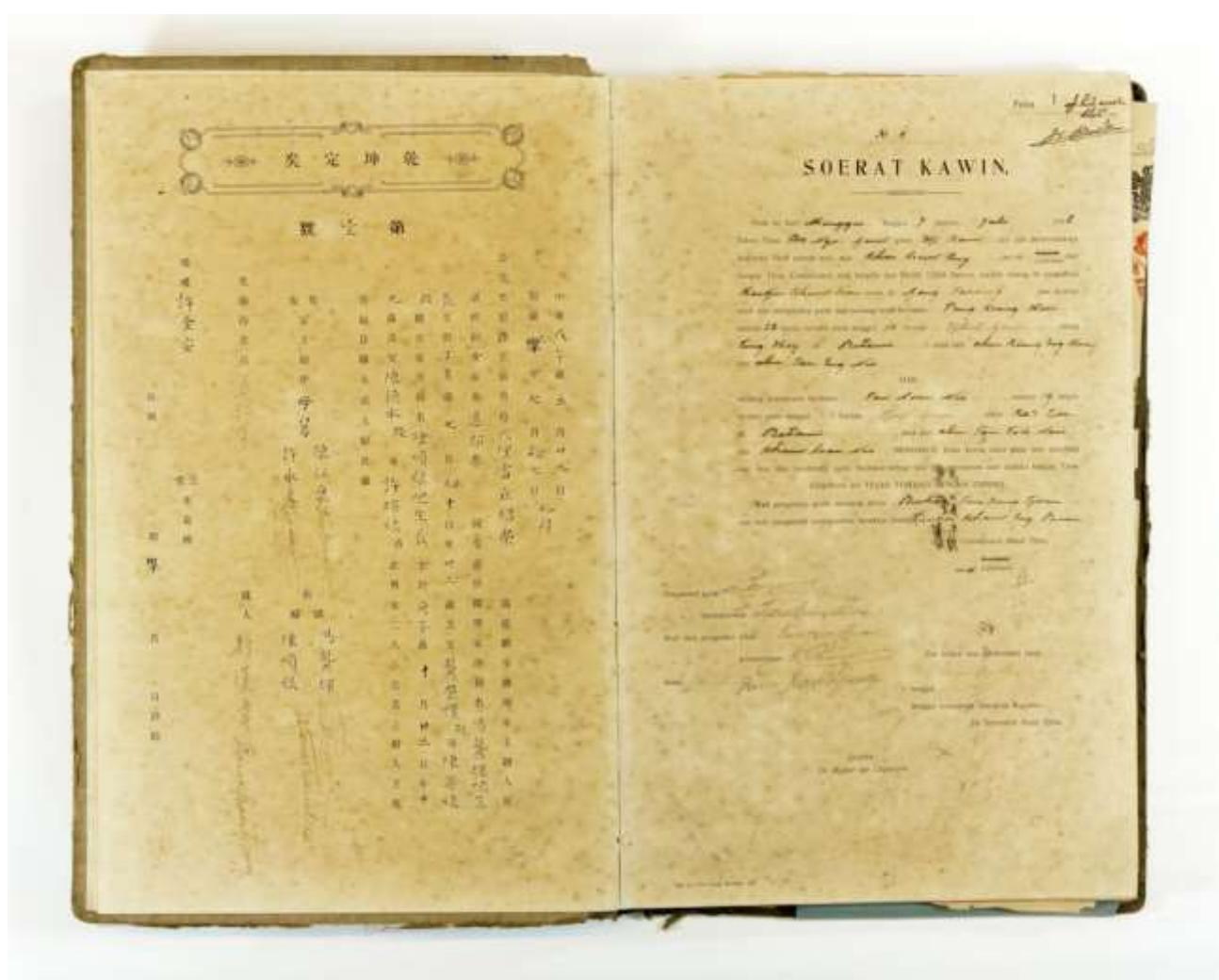
Text: <黃潤娘、陳瑞德離婚一案>

Questions (Please prepare and write/type out as much as possible your responses *before* this session):

1. What kind of text is it (e.g. what genre)? What are the linguistic clues in the text to establish its genre and function? Have you seen or read similar texts before for your own research or in other contexts? How are those similar to or different from the one here?
2. When is this text from? How does this text indicate when it's from?
3. Where was the text composed? How can you tell?
4. What peculiarities do you notice about the text (e.g. use of words, style, format, etc.)?
5. List all the words and expressions you don't understand (in sequence of their appearance in the text). Does not understanding these words and expressions impede your getting what is going on in the text? Which are the *top ten* words and expressions you wish to know to get a better understanding of the text?
6. List all the names of persons you can find in the text (in sequence of their appearance in the text). What are the different kinds of people who appear in the text (e.g. their gender, age, profession, racial or ethnic identity, place of origin, social status, etc.)?
7. List all the figures of authorities in the text (in sequence of their appearance in the text). From where/whom/what did they derive their authority?
8. What is the relationship between the two protagonists? What are the relationships between all the persons mentioned in the text?
9. List all the place names you can find in the text (in sequence of their appearance in the text). What are the relationships between these places?
10. What are the various kinds of spaces mentioned in the text? What is the significance of these spaces?

11. What kinds of institutions (both formal and social) are mentioned in the text? What can these institutions tell us about the makeup of local society?
12. List all the verbs you can find in the text (in sequence of their appearance in the text) – OK, not all the verbs, but at least 40-50. You can do this by colouring these verbs in the text with a highlighter. What interesting things relating to local social life can we derive from these verbs?
13. How many separate documents are there in this text? Why are there so many documents about this matter?
14. What are being described in the document? [Summarising in one or two sentences]
15. Provide a synopsis in English of the goings-on described in the text (between 400 and 500 words). What are the parts that you don't understand? What might have caused that incomprehension?
16. What other documents are mentioned in the text?

Images related (not directly) to the text (source: <http://www.kongkoan.nl/>):



書報

徽界曰大港墘

陳泉年收藏係是廈生

長要娶李咸之女名嬪娘年廿歲應求給婚字一派合

應稟明耑此奉

主

堂中农丹大人

靈

和聲
大清光緒十二年正月

九號

