

Zhang Letian Fieldwork Database

Rare primary source material from Mao-era China

From 1954 to 1982, Chinese society was buffeted by upheaval from the “Great Leap Forward” and the “Cultural Revolution.” China was in tumult and the PRC was all but closed. Zhang Letian, a Fudan University professor and well-known expert in the field of development and transformation of rural China, diligently collected rare materials from this era while conducting fieldwork in his ancestral village of Lianmin (Haining, Zhejiang Province). The meticulous research he compiled has been digitized and made available online through East View as the Zhang Letian Fieldwork Database (张乐天联民村数据库) by China’s Social Sciences Academic Press. The database offers a remarkable glimpse of social development and the changing fabric of everyday life in a typical Chinese village during an era of great change.

No other resource offers such significant historical depth for research on a period when many primary source materials were suppressed or difficult to obtain. The content is rich in detail, with in-depth case studies and comparisons useful for research in sociology, ethnology, anthropology, and related disciplines.

About the Zhang Letian Fieldwork Database

Highlights from the Zhang Letian Fieldwork Database include:

- Residency registration records for hundreds of households and thousands of individuals
- Accounting records for the Lianmin Production Team in the People’s Commune period, including more than 3,000 photographs
- Economic output—all agricultural and industrial production data, with more than 7,000 archival photographs, and the only known set of original documents on work division anywhere
- Land reform documents and photographs from the 1950’s
- Household records not known to exist elsewhere that offer a window into the day-to-day life of China’s rural population
- Oral history—recordings from 2008-2010 include searchable transcripts of interviews in local dialects on major events, personal narratives, and special issues, and downloadable as MP3 files
- Primary source and archival materials—a vast collection of historical documents on the city of Haining, arts and literature, and major political movements and campaigns, plus more than 5,000 photographs
- Multi-media—electronic materials, including images and videos with searchable transcripts offering cultural and social vignettes of traditional handicraft, agricultural practices, silk making, and more
- Scholarly works authored by Professor Zhang

For more information or trial access, please contact info@eastview.com or visit <https://www.eastview.com/request-trial>

Zhang Letian Fieldwork Database - <https://www.eastview.com/resources/e-collections/zhang-letian-fieldwork-database/> - April 30th, 2026 8:25 am UTC. Product information subject to change without notice. Please refer to eastview.com or contact your East View representative for the most current information.