

Beyond Maps: Revealing the Transformation of Japanese Military Airfields in North-East Taiwan, 1945~2010

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The "National Digital Archives Programs" supported by Taiwan's National Science Council preserve a great quantity of historical images, documents, maps and aerial photos, which provide valuable materials for experiencing Taiwan's historical landscapes and culture heritages through time and space. Meanwhile, the release of once confidential data-World War II military archives and aerial photographs-also offers a great opportunity for researchers. It is no doubt that historical map were important materials for digging the humanities and history of an area. However, if we can combine the usage of the military archives and aerial photographs with historical maps, it will be more effective for better understanding the regional changes after the War.

This article took Lan-Yang Plain located at Taiwan's North-East area as an example and utilized the digital archives mentioned above with present geographic information techniques. The results revealed the Japanese military airfields and its relative facilities which not only effected the pattern of urban development, but also became meaningful cultural landscapes and heritages. Besides, thanks to the well-developed mobile technology and commercial GPS products in our daily life, this study will furthermore introduce the application of the smart mobile navigation platform for guiding these historical military landscapes. This value-added innovation helps transform cultural and historical materials which were difficult to obtain or comprehend, to facilitate our understanding of local history, culture, and environment changes in our digital age.

Keywords: military archives, aerial photographs, Japanese military airfields, World War II, smart mobile navigation platform,