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CHINESE VILLAGE CLOSE-UP

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FOREWORD

The major part of the present book comprises my research findings from field studies in Kaixian'gong Village on three different occasions, once in 1936, again in 1957, and once again in 1980. These three years happen to mark three distinct historical periods in modern Chinese history. The year 1936 came right on the eve of the War of Resistance Against Japan; 1957 was the first year after the completion of China's socialist rural collectivization; and 1980 saw the initial success of the new economic policies adopted at the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 1978, which had set to rights many things distorted during the "cultural revolution" (1966-76).

In a time of such political upheaval and social transformation as during the last fifty years in China, I can only consider myself fortunate to have been able to carry out systematic studies on a single village in different periods. These three visits, widely separated in time, have allowed me to personally witness and record the various stages of social transformation as reflected in the microcosm of Kaixian'gong. My intention in incorporating my previous findings in one book is to present the historical context of the ongoing reforms so that the reader may better understand and appreciate their far-reaching significance.

By way of introduction, I would like to acquaint my readers with my original purpose in studying sociology and the circumstances under which I undertook these studies.

Why I Took up Sociology as a Profession

My original ambition was to become a medical doctor. I had actually finished all the preparatory courses at Dongwu University for entrance to the Peking Union Medical College. But I changed my mind later and entered the Sociology Department of Peking University instead. One may perhaps wonder why I did this.

Medicine is concerned about people's health conditions rather than their social environment. A doctor would generally do no more than diagnose the patient's illness and write out the appropriate prescription. He would not, nor should he, delve into questions concerning the patient's livelihood and the various social factors that may have contributed to the illness. For me this was far from sufficient, considering social conditions at that time. I was of the opinion that people's diseases were attributable not only to viruses and germs, but even more to poverty, malnutrition and other social ills. Therefore the elimination of disease would be out of the question without first eliminating the causative social factors.

However, I had never even heard of sociology before I entered Peking University. But the introduction into this new science by Professor Xu Shilian, dean of the sociology department, was so impressive that I decided on the spot to become his student.

The extent of my knowledge at that time was that few people living in this society had a clear understanding of it. More often than not, we proved helpless in the face of the myriad omnipresent social customs, living our lives in a passive manner.

As a student of sociology, I started to scrutinize society objectively and constantly pried into the reasons for conventionally accepted values and social phenomena, hoping to discover a universal law underlying them all. Take for example the terms of address used by children for their parents. Why may Westerners call their parents by their given names, whereas Chinese children would never

think of doing so? The easiest answer might be that they live in two different societies. But how did the differences between the two societies originate? When did the whole process start? I was more and more convinced that questions like those are not mere coincidence, but problems concerning sociology. Things change and develop in accordance with their respective laws. Each nation has its own social customs and norms which appear natural and commonplace to its own people, which are in fact the inevitable results of its specific social conditions. In them we can trace the general pattern of social development.

The first person to take a given people's kinship terminology as a subject for academic research was Mr. Lewis Henry Morgan, the 19th century American anthropologist. He discovered after living among the American Indians for many years that Indian children invariably called all their male elders "father" and their female elders "mother." Linking these terms of address with their marriage system, he worked out his theory of social change and a system of social evolution. Inspired by Morgan's discoveries, Engels wrote his famous book *The Origins of Private Ownership, Family and State*, one of the Marxist classics. My intention here is not to elaborate their theories. I merely point out that we must not belittle the significance of even so small a thing as terms of address.

In our social life, once we begin to perceive ourselves as objective beings and start to study our lives in a detached manner, our understanding of many things will become much deeper and we ourselves may become more tolerant and open-minded. Many of my friends have wondered how I could possibly have borne all the political and personal slanders I suffered previously. It is true that no one could have enjoyed the groundless, vicious slander to which one was subjected. But I

found in the painful experience an opportunity to study human behavior and society. Indeed could you ever penetrate more deeply into the human soul than under the circumstances in which a person one day treats you with great respect and civility, and the next day with hatred and contempt? In fact such behavior will not only open our eyes to that person's innermost being but will also shed light as well on a variety of human activities.

The chaotic years of the "cultural revolution" gave us the opportunity to see many phenomena appear in so blatant a manner that we would otherwise have never had the chance to witness. Therefore, rather than passively being criticized, I regarded it as an stage from which to observe society.

Man evolved from a state of unconsciousness to the state of consciousness, from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom. This process was a process of man's self-realization. Man was at first a part of nature itself. The evolution of Peking man to modern man could never have been projected by the primitive Peking men themselves. Nor could they have ever foreseen the construction of a metropolis not far from their caves. Their evolution resulted from the effects of their physical environment and natural forces. They themselves lacked both the ability and occasion to make their own choice. But little by little man was separated from nature, and he began to attempt to make use of nature for his own ends. That is to say, man simultaneously comes from nature and manipulates and utilizes nature for his own benefit. It is this conscious manipulation of nature that distinguishes man from animal. With regard to man's self-realization, it occurred only much later. In Europe this did not took place until the Renaissance. Till that time man was not freed from the shackles of religion. The objective study of his own life happened even more recently, when sociology came into being.

My motivation in taking up sociology fifty years ago was the urge to live a meaningful life rather than idle it away in a passive manner. But I soon found the courses and the materials covered very disappointing and unsatisfactory. We were taught about the gangsters of Chicago, whom we had never personally encountered. Therefore, though interesting, it hardly made any sense to us. We were given much foreign material that was neither applicable to China, nor could it help us to understand our own society better. For this reason, I and several other students put forth the slogan "to make China's sociology Chinese," that is to say, to study our own society by ourselves. But we did not have any definite ideas as to how to conduct this study. Some of our teachers conducted social investigations which were not to our taste, for most of their work involved dry and abstract statistics without sufficient illustration and analysis. For instance, their findings in Qinghe, a Beijing suburban county, showed that most of the families there had four or five members. But what does this figure tell us? It was believed that families with dozens of members were quite common in China. Why were small families the rule in Qinghe? Was the popular belief true? If so, where were the big families to be found? The bare figures did not provide the answers to these questions. Therefore several of us young students decided to go into society and conduct our own investigations.

At the time we had not read any Marxist theory. But our decision to immerse ourselves in society and carry out our own investigations was certainly in line with Marxist ideas, as the essence of Marxism is to seek truth from facts. Although it was obviously a serious disadvantage for us not to utilize Marxism in our research, our aspiration to study Chinese society was certainly commendable. This aspiration had indeed made our later acceptance of Marxism more willing and natural.

My First Visit to Kaixian'gong — 1936

After graduating from Beijing University, I entered Qinghua University for graduate study, at the completion of which I was awarded a scholarship to study in Britain. Knowing that I was to go abroad, my adviser, the well-known Professor Shirokogorv, advised me not to go empty-handed, but rather to take along some solid data to work on. He also suggested that I first go to one of China's minority areas and carry out social investigation. Subsequently I did go to the Jinxiu Autonomous County of the Yao nationality in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

Unfortunately, an accident occurred in which I was seriously injured in the waist and legs and my first wife was killed. Returning from the Yao mountains, I went first to Guangzhou for medical treatment and then joined my sister at Kaixian'gong Village, where she was helping the local peasants run a cooperative silk factory. There I stayed for a whole month.

According to the common proverb, "Above is heaven, below are Suzhou and Hangzhou." Kaixian'gong is located in the same region as these two cities, one of the most prosperous in China. Apart from its highly developed agriculture, it was also the center of the China's silk industry as well. The customary division of labor in the region had been for men to work in the fields and women to take responsibility for the silk industry. But this traditional economic balance was upset in modern times. Equipped with modern science and technology, the Japanese silk industry developed rapidly. Their high-quality, low-cost products soon crowded Chinese products out of the international market. The decline of the silk industry increased the peasants' burden enormously. The drop in the price for silk threw many of them into the abyss of poverty and forced them to borrow money to make ends meet. But interest rates were so exorbitant

that once a person borrowed money he could hardly ever expect to pay it back. Even if he succeeded in repaying the loan, he would hardly be any better off than before. He would therefore have to borrow again to buy food. In the face of this vicious cycle and with the traditional economic structure completely destroyed, what were the peasants to do?

A group of intellectuals were at that time actively following the situation and trying to offer assistance. These were students and teachers from the Female Sericulture School, which had been established in the 1920's. My sister was an enthusiastic proponent of helping the peasants in backward rural areas raise silkworms scientifically so as to regain their lost international markets, thus alleviating their misery. For lack of the necessary scientific knowledge, the peasants' silkworms were dying in large numbers; thus assistance was indeed badly needed.

Kaixian'gong was the first village to which my sister was sent. But she and the others were not at first warmly welcomed. The peasants did not have sufficient confidence in them and their mysterious methods. The traditional method, however, was each year wiping out a few households' silkworms. As the silkworms were raised on borrowed money, their death sometimes even resulted in the suicide of the disappointed owners. Therefore, the peasants reluctantly allowed the small group of intellectuals to step in. The students and teachers were thus able to popularize a method for disinfecting the silkworms to check the spread of disease and also to introduce improved strains in order to raise the quality of the cocoons and silk. The success of the initial experiments gained for them both the trust and confidence of the peasants.

Though the peasants now had healthy silkworms and high-quality cocoons, the existing market system obstructed further efforts to raise the peasants' living standards. They had to sell their cocoons to middlemen who exploit-

ed the peasants by buying at a low price and selling at a high rate. To avoid this, the villagers in cooperation with their outside helpers first tried to dry the cocoons themselves, thus enabling them to preserve them as long as they wished and to sell when the price was right. Then they decided to do away with the exploitation of the middlemen completely by taking the process of silk-reeling into their own hands. With the help of the Sericulture School, they formed the local silk factory in 1935.

I was deeply impressed by the justice of their cause. I admired the way in which they united as one against the system in order to improve their own lot. I felt it my duty to reveal this to the world. During the month I stayed in the village, I asked whatever questions came into my mind; armed with this valuable data, I left for the London School of Economics. When I told my teacher, Professor Malinowski, about the village, he encouraged me to make it the subject of my Ph. D dissertation. Prior to my book, anthropological research had always been conducted by scholars from developed countries, that is to say, by white people from the mother country studying the underdeveloped countries and people under colonial rule. As a Chinese writing about Chinese society, and furthermore as one with sympathy for the peasants writing about their life, my book offered much information that could not be found in other sources.

This then is how *Peasant Life in China* came about. The book reveals the situation of the village under semi-colonial and semi-feudal rule prior to the War of Resistance. I learned later that the first thing the Japanese troops did after occupying the area was to destroy the silk factory, which was an outstanding example of peasants and intellectuals together striving to change their fate. The failure of their efforts shows that without the Communist-led New Democratic Revolution, which overthrew the rule of both imperialism and feudalism and established socialism, China could get nowhere. Their ef-

forts of course were not totally fruitless. They helped set the precedent of intellectuals identifying with the peasants and helping the peasants solve their practical problems. This experience is still useful today. But their aspiration to improve the lot of the peasants and build a strong and prosperous motherland could never have been fulfilled without a thorough revolution. The failure of their efforts taught me a profound lesson: previously I was only aware of China's backwardness in science and technology and a variety of other social problems. This lesson taught me that the political precondition of solving these problems was to overthrow the imperialist and feudal rule and to bring about a fundamental change in the social system.

Kaixian'gong Revisited — 1957

My former London classmate Professor Geddes, then dean of the anthropology department of Sydney University, came to China in 1956 as a member of a New Zealand cultural delegation. I was present when the late Premier Zhou Enlai received the delegation. Professor Geddes asked the Premier if he could go and have a look at the village where I conducted my field study; the Premier gave his approval right on the spot and encouraged him to make a comparison between its present and past. Thereafter Professor Geddes went to the village for about a week. He later wrote a book entitled *Peasant Life in Communist China* on the basis of his visit, which came just at the time when nation-wide agricultural collectivization had been completed.

Professor Geddes' visit stimulated my desire to revisit Kaixian'gong. With the support of the Economics Institute of the Academy of Social Sciences, I led a research group there the following year. We stayed for more than one month and gathered a great deal of information. No

sooner had I returned to Beijing than the editors of *The New Observer* approached me for some articles based on my findings. The result was *Kaixian'gong Revisited*, presented as section III in this book.

During my stay in the village, the great achievements of the rural socialist transformation and especially the more recent rural collectivization had left a deep and positive impression on me. I saw with my own eyes that the former landless tenants had become masters of the country and the land they had tilled for generations. Grain production increased tremendously. At the same time I also discovered that the traditional sideline production and industries of the area had not received enough attention. I discovered that instead of reviving the silk industry which had been destroyed by Japanese troops, people had cut down many mulberry trees in order to make rooms for the one-sided grain production. This resulted in a seeming contradiction — though grain production almost tripled, the peasants' income not only did not increase, but even declined somewhat.

The experience of generations has shown clearly that in an area like Kaixian'gong, where there is an enormously high population density and insufficient arable land, grain production alone can not bring about drastic improvement in the peasants' livelihood. The key lies in the comprehensive and simultaneous development of agriculture, sideline production, and rural industry, a point which I made in my article. I thus concluded that agricultural mechanization and rural industrialization were closely interrelated, so that each could not do without the other. This position ran counter to the then prevailing policy of "taking grain as the key link." As a result, only two of three sections of my article had the fortune to meet its readers before I was labeled a "rightist" later that year.*

* The third section of the article has unfortunately been lost in the ensuing years.

My Third Visit to Kaixian'gong — 1980

Though the second visit proved to be personally disastrous, I was not discouraged. To begin with, I had never thought myself a hundred per cent correct. On the contrary, I have always had the opinion that no one is immune to mistakes or above criticism; therefore we should listen to criticism attentively and give it our careful consideration.

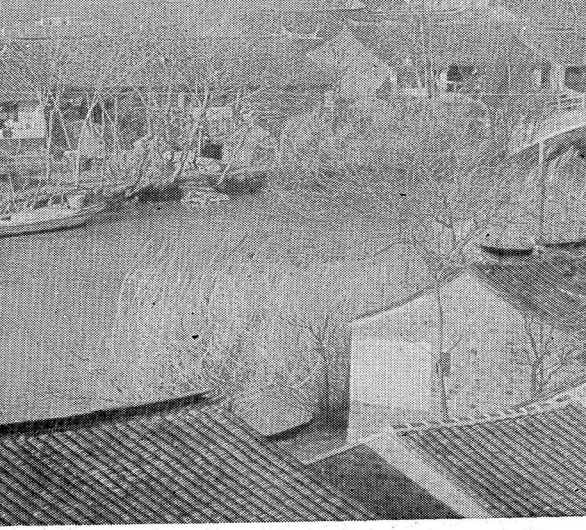
The downfall of the "gang of four" brought an end to the "cultural revolution" and the ten years of chaos in China. The Third Plenum held in 1978 had corrected many things which had been distorted during the previous years. Shortly thereafter I was assigned to work in the Academy of Social Sciences. My task was to restore and organize the teaching of sociology, which had been suspended more than twenty years earlier in Chinese universities. I was very excited about my new assignment despite its difficulty, for it gave me an opportunity to fulfil my youthful aspiration of developing a truly Chinese sociology. It is high time that China had a socialist sociology capable of reflecting concrete national conditions and also serving the cause of socialism. In the present period, its task will be to serve the modernization program and help ensure that the policies to be adopted are realistic. Chinese leaders have reiterated that our understanding of national conditions has been far from adequate, resulting in the previous inconstancy of our policies and social instability.

The new Chinese sociology must proceed from China's social reality and discover through objective observation and analysis the underlying laws of social development. Everybody is now aware of the importance of managing the national economy efficiently. But not all of us realize that its development is determined by many factors apart from economic ones. A daughter-in-law, for example, could not put her heart into her work if she is on bad

terms with her in-laws. By the same token, one cannot concentrate on one's work if one has a family member ill at home. Economic activities are actually linked in a thousand and one ways to non-economic social factors. One of the tasks of Chinese sociology will be to trace the ways in which these social factors influence one another. To accomplish these tasks we must assimilate the available knowledge from all fields, both Chinese and foreign, modern and ancient, whatever is conducive to our socialist construction.

Our first task is to train enough qualified specialists who not only are realistic and modest, but also will go among the people and serve their interests. We must train specialists who are like my sister in identifying themselves with the well-being of the peasants and who will devote their modern scientific knowledge to rural improvement, as over eighty per cent of China's population are in the rural areas. With such a body of trained personnel we can further establish bases in the field so as to carry out systematic and continuous field research, the results of which will throw light on the complicated relations of the multifarious social factors and form the basis for policy making.

The first village which came into my mind as a suitable site for such a research base was Kaixian'gong. The findings of my 1936 and 1957 visits as well as Professor Geddes' 1956 visit provide a wealth of information for comparison. If we continue uninterrupted field studies in the village, Kaixian'gong can serve as a portal through which the outside world can view the changes, achievements, new developments, and new problems in one part of rural China. Therefore we established in 1981 a permanent research group of sociologists from the Sociology Research Institute of the Academy of Social Sciences, with a brief to undertake just this kind of in-depth research. The final three short papers of the present book are a part of this group's initial findings.



A full view of Kaixian'gong village

The house the author lived in during his 1935 v

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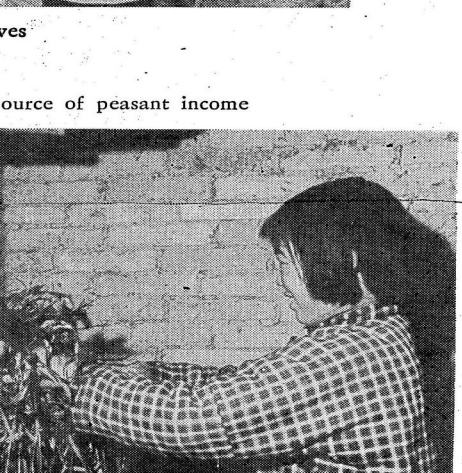

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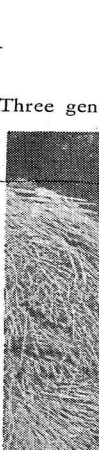

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I also wanted to personally revisit the village to see for myself what changes had taken place; and furthermore, when I was notified of my election as the 1981 Huxley Memorial Lecturer of the Royal Anthropological Institute, my friends asked me to talk about recent changes taking place in the village. To get first hand information, I decided to personally visit the village.

I could feel the changes brought about in the village by the new economic policies immediately. These changes were shown not only in the abstract figures of a threefold increase in average income, from 100 *yuan* to over 300, but also in the smiling faces and optimistic words of the local people. Formerly, when I went to various basic-level units, I would hear diplomatic and official statements from strangers and complaints from friends. But things were quite different this time. When I talked to people, they asked me either to help them obtain raw materials and fuel for their sideline production and industrial enterprises or to find new markets for their products.

Such great achievements within so short a period of time are unprecedented in Kaixian'gong's history. The villagers gave full credit to recent policy changes which rectified the former one-sided emphasis on grain production, advocating instead the simultaneous development of agriculture, sideline production, and rural industry. Historical realities have demonstrated that in an area such as Kaixian'gong, the greatest potential for substantial improvement lies in the development of sideline production and rural industry.

Before the Communist Party's Third Plenum in 1978, the village had very little sideline production or industry. But soon after this crucial meeting, at which new and flexible economic policies were adopted, the village's sideline production developed rapidly. And this was followed by the swift growth of its industrial enterprises. These changes altered the previous economic structure of the village, in which 90 per cent of the population engaged in

farming and contributed most of the village's revenues. In 1980 the proportions had changed to such an extent that over 50 per cent of the population were working in sideline production or rural industries. Their achievements encouraged me to think that they were paving the way for the future development of rural China and providing a means of rationalizing China's economic structure through rural industrialization.

In the West industrialization was characterized by the disproportionate expansion of the cities and the bankruptcy of farmers; it also resulted in the large-scale monopolization of both land and capital. Obviously China must not follow this path. Large-scale migration into the already overcrowded cities would be impossible. Kaixian'gong's success shows that China can avoid the serious urban problems facing Western countries by energetically developing its rural industry, thus alleviating the differences between urban and rural areas and utilizing the surplus agricultural population.

Many people believe that in the case of industry, the bigger the scale the better. This might have been so in the age of steam engines, but it certainly is not now. During those times, the power source had to be situated very close to the manufacturing plant, and industry therefore became geographically highly concentrated. But in the modern world, in which electricity is the primary source of power, the manufacturing plant can be moved miles or even hundreds of miles away. This change has made possible the decentralization of industry. Many urban industries could contract with industrial units in the rural areas for the manufacture of parts, with the final assembly taking place in the urban factories. For instance, industrial enterprises in Kaixian'gong could manufacture parts for large factories in Shanghai. In this way we can not only improve the peasants' livelihood but also resolve certain potential urban problems.

The foregoing are some random thoughts inspired by

my third visit to Kaixian'gong Village. A thorough exploration into the recent changes occurring in the village and a careful systemization of my earlier findings will have to await the results of the Kaixian'gong Research Group's efforts over an extended period of time. What is certain is that their findings will have far-reaching significance for future rural development in China. I hope that my work has served to point out some of the ways in which we can fully realize the economic and social potential of the Chinese people.

PEASANT LIFE IN CHINA
(ABRIDGEMENT, 1936)

CHAPTER I

THE FIELD

1. DELIMITATION OF FIELD

To carry out intensive study of the life of the people, it is necessary to confine oneself to the investigation of a small social unit. This is due to practical considerations. The people under investigation must be within easy reach of the investigator in order that the latter can observe personally and intimately. The unit of study, on the other hand, should not be too small. It should provide a fair cross-section of the social life of the people. A village fulfils these requirements.

To take the village as the unit of study at the present stage of investigation does not mean that it is a self-contained unit. The inter-dependence of territorial groups, especially in economic life, is very close in China. It can even be said that the Chinese people have during the last half century entered into the world community. Western goods as well as ideas have reached very remote villages. The economic and political pressure of the Western powers is the prime factor in the present change of Chinese culture. In this connection, one can ask what understanding of these changes and of the external forces causing them can be gained by a field investigation in a small area, such as a village.

It is obvious that the investigator in the village cannot analyse the outside forces in their wide perspective. For instance, the decline of the price of native silk in the world market as a result of the world economic depression and of the technical improvement of the silk industry in general has produced such effects in the village as deficiency in the family budget, shortage of food, postponement of marriage and the partial break-down of the domestic industry. The field investigator in this case must record as fully as possible the forces that affect village life but he will of course leave the further analysis of these forces themselves to other sciences. He will take these facts for granted and limit himself to tracing the effects which can be directly observed in the life of the village.

Generalizations made from such an intensive study of a small social unit may not be applicable to other units. But they can be used as hypotheses and as comparative material for further investigation in other fields. This is the soundest way to obtain really scientific generalizations.

The village chosen for my investigation is called Kaixian'gong. locally pronounced *kejiug'on*. It is situated on the south-east bank of Lake Tai, in the lower course of the Yangtze (Changjiang) River and about eighty miles west of Shanghai. It is in the geographical region of the Yangtze Plain. Climate conditions are favorable for agriculture during most of the year so that the growing season lasts for about 300 days.

The commanding position of this region in Chinese economy is due partly to its superior natural environment and partly to its favorable position in the system of communications. It is located at the crossing point of the two main water routes: namely, the Yangtze River and the Grand Canal. They connect this region with the immense territory of western and northern China. Being a coastal region, it has become more and more important

since the development of international trade by ocean transport. Shanghai, the seaport of this region, has developed into the biggest metropolis in the Far East. The railway system in this region is also well developed. Motor roads have been built for the intra-regional communication; and besides there is an extensive use of the canals and canalized streams.

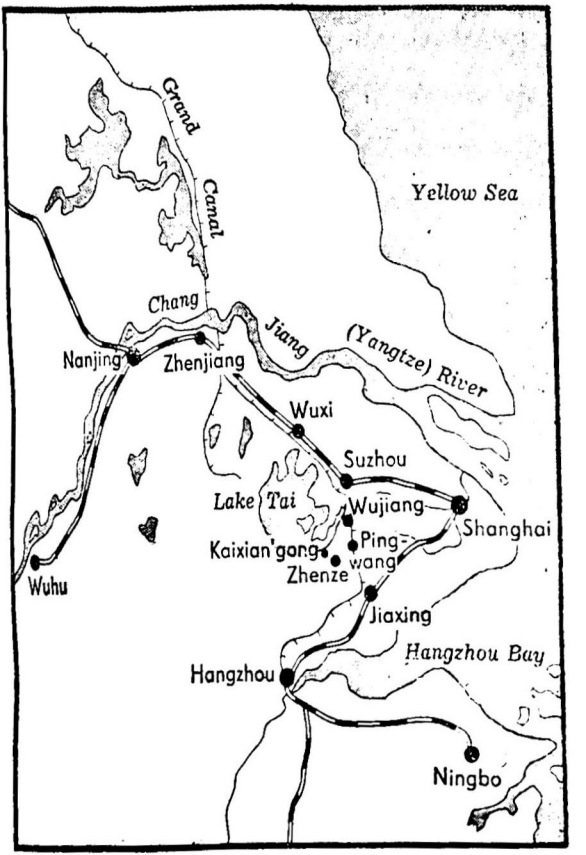
This region has supported a very dense population, most of which is resident in villages. A bird's-eye view shows a cluster of villages. Each village is separated from its neighbor by only a walking distance of, on an average, twenty minutes. Kaixian'gong is but one of these thousands of villages crowding on this land.

In the center of several tens of villages there is a town. The town is the collecting center of the basic produce from the surrounding villages and the distributing point for manufactured goods brought from the outside cities. The town on which Kaixian'gong depends is called Zhenze, about four miles south of the village. It takes about two and a half hours for a single trip by boat.

2. ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

The total area of Kaixian'gong is 3.065 *mu* or 461 acres. According to estimates, more than ninety per cent of the land is used for rice cultivation. This single village produces, on the average, 900,000 *jin* of rice every year. Only a little more than half of the produce is consumed by the people themselves. Very few households in the village are entirely free from agricultural work. About seventy-six per cent of the total number of households are engaged in agriculture as their main occupation. The time spent in cultivating rice amounts to six months in the year. From this crop the people earn more than half of their income. Thus from any angle, rice is of primary importance.

But rice is not the only produce of the land. Wheat, rapeseeds and various vegetables are grown too, although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Hangzhou Bay
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Ningbo

they are insignificant as compared with the chief crop. Moreover, the water provides fish, shrimps, crabs, and different kinds of water plants which are all used locally as food.

The mulberry tree plays an important part in the economic life of the villagers. It enables them to develop their silk industry, in common with the whole region; but it is specially well developed in the villages around Lake Tai. This specialization is due, according to the local people, to the good quality of the water. During its prosperous period, this area not only contributed a large part of China's silk export but also supplied the demand for raw material for the domestic weaving industry of the neighboring town Shangze.

The rural silk industry began to decline when the modern factory for silk manufacturing with its improved technique of production was introduced both into Japan and China. This industrial revolution changed the fortunes of the domestic rural industry. The internal market for silk has shrunk at the same time due to the same forces affecting the weaving industry. The consequence of the shrinkage of the market is the break-down of the traditional domestic silk industry in the rural district. The traditional specialization in the silk industry and its recent decline form the background of the economic life of the village in the present analysis.

3. THE VILLAGE SITE

In this region, boats are extensively used for heavy and long-distance traffic. The land routes connecting different villages and towns are mainly used for pulling the boats against unfavorable currents and winds. People usually come to the village by boats, except a few pedlars. Nearly every household possesses at least one boat. The importance of the boat in communication means that the houses must be near the water and consequently determines the plan of the village. Villages

grow up along the streams; at the junction of several streams, bigger villages are found. In the village plan, there is no special place where the public life of the people is concentrated. Except for the informal gatherings in the summer evenings around the bridges which cross the streams dividing the village, there has been no organized public gathering for more than ten years, since the annual opera performance was suspended.

Two temples are found on the outskirts of the residential area; one at the west end and the other at the north end. But the position of the temples does not mean that the religious life of the people is concentrated on the outskirts. In fact, their religious life is largely carried on in their own houses. It would be more correct to regard the temples as the residences of priests and gods, who are not only segregated some distance apart from the ordinary people but are also separated from everyday community life except on special ceremonial occasions.

The public school is at the south end. The building was originally used as the office of the silk reform bureau. It was given to the school when the factory was established.

The residential area is surrounded by farming land, which is low owing to the irrigation system. The area suitable for buildings has been covered by houses and for a long time has not expanded. The newly introduced public institutions such as the school and the silk factory could only find their location at the outskirt of the old residential area. Their location is an expression of the process of change in the community life.

4. THE PEOPLE

A census of the village was taken in 1935. 1,458 people reside in the village, of which 771 are male and 648 are female. The distinction is made locally between natives and outsiders. This is not a legal distinction; from the legal point of view those who reside in a district for

more than three years become members of the local community. But this does not constitute, in the people's eyes, real membership of the village.

Common characteristics of outsiders are (1) that they are immigrants and (2) that they are engaged in special professions, such as craftsmen or merchants. But I have no information about the necessary period of residence in order to attain the status of being a native villager. I have, however, known cases of children of the "outsiders" born in the village being treated like their parents. It appears that the distinction is not made solely on the consideration of period of residence.

On the other hand, the fact that none of the outsiders are farmers is significant. Although not all special professions are filled by them, they constitute one-third of the whole group. It prevents them from quick assimilation.

The villagers as a group possess certain cultural peculiarities. One of my informants mentioned three outstanding items to me: (1) that the villagers tend to palatalize the words such as *gon*, *jeu*, etc., in speech, (2) their women do not work on the farm, and (3) their women always wear skirts even in the hot summer. In these respects, they differ even from the people from the nearest town, Zhenze. Those who are regarded as outsiders have not been culturally assimilated. The distinction of natives and outsiders is significant because it has been translated into social relations. The fact that outsiders are all engaged in special professions and possess no land is alone sufficient to indicate that the distinction has far-reaching economic consequences.

5. VILLAGE GOVERNMENT

For various social functions, households are associated together to form larger local groups. The village synthesizes various social functions and also takes up special functions that cannot be fulfilled by smaller units — all

these are performed through the village government by the village headmen.

Village heads are always accessible, because they are known to every villager, and a stranger will be received by them immediately. The visitor will be impressed by their heavy burden of work. They help the people to read and to write letters and other documents, to make the calculations required in the local credit system, to manage marriage ceremonies, to arbitrate in social disputes and to look after public property. They are responsible for the system of self-defence, for the management of public funds, and for the transmission and execution of administrative orders from the higher government. They take an active part in introducing beneficial measures such as industrial reform into the village.

The position of headman is not hereditary and has no direct economic reward, though headmen enjoy prestige and presents from the persons who have received services from them. For example, they are respected by the people, and can call the generation senior to them, except their own near kin, by their personal names without adding any relationship terms. This cannot be done by an ordinary person. Their leading position in the village also helps them to hold privileged jobs such as schoolmaster and manager of the silk factory.

Headmenship is not connected with any privileged "class." Even seniority in age is not an essential qualification. But the sex disqualification has not yet been entirely overcome; women are excluded from public affairs. Only recently women have acquired the same position as men in the silk co-operative society, and a woman teacher has been appointed at the school; but the latter has very little influence in the community except among boys and girls.

6. REASONS FOR SELECTING THE FIELD

The village as described is of interest in the following respects.

(1) It has been one of the important centers of domestic silk industry in China. The village can therefore be taken as a representative case of the process of change in Chinese industry; the change has been chiefly concerned with the substitution of the factory for the domestic system and the social problems rising therefrom. This is a general process, still going on in China, and also has parallels in different parts of the world. The problem of industrial development in China has its practical significance, but has never been studied intensively with a full knowledge of the social organization of the village. Moreover, in this village an experiment at industrial reform has been made during the past ten years.

(2) Kaixian'gong located in an area where, owing to superb natural resources, agriculture has been developed to a very high degree. The institution of land tenure also has here peculiar elaborations. The village would provide a good field for the study of land problems in China.

(3) The extensive use of water communication in that region, with its net-like distribution of waterways, has led to a special relation between town and village, which is different from that found in North China. We are thus able to study a typical case of a marketing system based on water transport.

Besides these considerations, Kaixian'gong was chosen because it belongs to the district of Wujiang of which I am a native. I thus started with certain linguistic advantages. Differences in Chinese dialect are one of the practical difficulties in carrying out field investigation. The people in villages usually cannot understand any other dialect beside their own. Being a native of the district, it was not necessary for me to spend time in learning the local dialect. The community feeling of being a native of the same district also enabled me to penetrate into more intimate life without arousing suspicion.

Above all, in this village I could fully utilize the per-

sonal connections of my sister, who, being responsible for the silk reform, had gained the confidence of practically every person in the village. I could without any difficulty secure the best possible co-operation of the villagers in general and the village heads in particular. My investigation covered the two months of July to August, 1936. These two months are particularly significant in villagers' economic life. They cover the last part of the silk industry and the first part of the agricultural work. Supplemented by oral information and my past experiences, the material so far gathered concerning their economic life and the related social institutions is enough for a preliminary analysis.

CHAPTER II

THE *JIA*

The basic social group in the village is the *Jia*, an expanded family. The members of this group possess a common property, keep a common budget and cooperate together to pursue a common living through division of labor. It is also in this group that children are born and brought up and material objects, knowledge, and social positions are inherited.

Larger social groups in the village are formed by combining a number of *Jia* for various purposes and along kinship or territorial principles. Associations based on individual membership are few and secondary.

1. *JIA* AS AN EXPANDED FAMILY

The term family, as commonly used by anthropologists, refers to the procreative unit consisting of parents and immature children. A *Jia* is essentially a family but it

sometimes includes children even when they have grown and married. Sometimes it also includes some relatively remote patrilineal kinsmen. We can call it an expanded family, because it is an expansion of a family due to the reluctance of the sons to separate from their parents after marriage.

Jia emphasizes the inter-dependence of parents and children. It gives security to the old who are no longer able to work. It tends to ensure social continuity and co-operation among the members.

In a given economy, the indefinite expansion of the group may not be advantageous. In the process of expansion social friction among the members increases. The *Jia* will divide whenever the division proves to be advisable. The size of the group is, therefore, maintained by the balance of the opposing forces working for integration on the one hand and for disintegration on the other.

Some quantitative data about the size of the *Jia* in the village may be helpful for our further discussion. In spite of the fact that most studies of China have stressed the importance of the large-family system in China, curiously enough, in this village a large-family is rare. In less than ten per cent of the total number of *Jia* do we find more than one married couple.

The most common type is that which consists of a nucleus of a married couple and several dependent patrilineal relatives. In fact, more than half, or 58 per cent of the total, are of this type. But there is not a married couple in every *Jia*. Sometimes, for instance, after the death of her husband, a woman lives with her children without joining another unit. It may also be the case that a father lives with his son without a woman in the house. These are cases resulting from social disorganization, mainly due to the death of working members of the group; they are consequently unstable. Either the widower will remarry or the child will marry

in the earliest possible future so that a normal functioning of the group can be restored. This type of unstable *Jia* amounts to 27 per cent of the total.

An average *Jia* in the village consists of four persons. This is by no means an exception, and indicates the smallness of the group. Evidences from other rural districts in China give a similar conclusion. The variation lies between six to four persons per family. The so-called large-family is chiefly found in towns and evidently has a different economic basis. For the present material, it can be said that in the village here described, the *Jia* is a small kinship group consisting of a family as its nucleus and several dependent relatives.

2. "CONTINUITY OF INCENSE AND FIRE"

The parent-child and the husband-wife relations are two fundamental axes in the family organization. But in the *Jia* the former seems more important. The essential character of the *Jia* is that married sons do not always leave their parents, especially when either father or mother is dead. Furthermore, to find a bride for a young man is regarded as part of the parental obligation. Mates are selected and ceremonies arranged by the parents. On the other hand, the legal act of marriage, although preceding the birth of the child, always anticipates the realization of parenthood. The main purpose of marriage, in the village, is to secure the continuity of descent. To ensure posterity is the chief consideration in the selection of a daughter-in-law and this is explicitly expressed in the consultations which are held with the fortune-tellers. The incapacity of a daughter-in-law to fulfil her obligations may be taken as a strong ground for her repudiation without compensation. Again, the full status of a woman is acquired after the birth of her child. Similarly, the affinal relation remains impotent unless a child is born. It is, therefore, justifiable to start our de-

scription of the organization of *Jia* from the parent-child relation.

The importance of the posterity is conceived in religious and ethical terms. The local term for the continuity of descent is "continuity of incense and fire"; this means a continuity of ancestor worship. Beliefs connected with the relation of living descendents to the spirits of their ancestors are not clearly and systematically formulated among the people. The general view is that the spirits live in a world very similar to ours, but that economically they are partially dependent on the contributions of their descendents which are made by periodically burning paper money, paper clothes, and paper articles. Therefore it is essential to have someone to look after one's well-being in the after-world.

Some explain the importance of having children on purely ethical grounds. They conceive it to be their duty because it is through their children that they can pay back their debt to their own parents. Thus the desire to have children is backed up by a two-fold motive: it ensures, in the first place, the continuity of the line of descent; and, in the second place, it is a concrete expression of filial piety by the future father towards his ancestors.

These beliefs, while undoubtedly connected with religious and ethical ideas, have also practical value. The child stabilizes the relations in the domestic circle. The economic value of the child is also important. A child starts contributing very early to the family welfare, often before he is ten years of age, in such tasks as collecting grass to feed sheep. A girl is specially useful in the daily house work and in the silk industry. Moreover, when a boy grows up and gets married, his parents are relieved by the young couple of the full burden of work on the land and in the house. When the parents are old and unable to work, they are supported by their sons. Children in this sense are insurance for old age.

Social continuity in kinship is complicated by the unilateral emphasis of affiliation. Membership and property of a person is not transmitted equally to the son and daughter. Emphasis is on the male side. During childhood both male and female children are cared for by their parents. Both assume their father's surname, but when they grow up, and get married, the son will continuously live in the parents' house before division while the daughter will leave her parents and live with her husband. She will add her husband's surname to her own. She has no claim on the property of her parents except what she gets as dowry. She also has no obligation to support them except by offering periodical gifts and occasional financial help as their affinal relations. Property is inherited by the son whose obligation it is to support the old. In the third generation, only the children of the son carry on the continuous line of affiliation. The children of the daughter are regarded as affinal relatives, and assume their father's surname. Therefore, in the village, the principle of descent is patrilineal.

This principle, however, can be modified in case of need. By agreement, a daughter's husband may add his wife's surname to his own and their children will carry their mother's line. Sometimes the husband and wife may carry both lines of their parents. These however are minor obliterations of the general principle and appear only in specific circumstances.

3. POPULATION CONTROL

In spite of the fact that the villagers recognize the importance of posterity, there is a limiting factor for population. It is true that children can contribute labor to the domestic economy, but there must be enough work on which it can be utilized. With land holdings of limited size, and with limits to the extent of silkworm raising, surplus members of a *Jia* will be merely a burden to the

unit. This brings us to an examination of the average size of a land holding in the village.

The total area of cultivated land is 3,065 *mu* or 461 acres, as we have seen. If this area were equally allotted to the 360 households, it would mean that each household could only occupy a piece of land about 9.5 *mu* or 1.2 acres in size. Each *mu* of land can produce in a normal year 300 *jin* of rice. About 1,350 *jin* of rice is needed for the consumption of one man, one woman, and one child. In other words, to obtain sufficient food a family group needs a piece of land of about five *mu*. The present size of land holdings is hardly sufficient to provide an average household with a normal livelihood which requires sufficient food and other necessities. The pressure of population on the land is thus a strong limiting factor on the number of children. For example, a family, with a small holding of nine *mu*, will face a serious problem if a second boy is born. According to local custom, the children when grown up will divide the estate. This will mean poverty for both sons. The usual solution is infanticide or abortion. The people do not attempt to justify these practices and admit that they are bad. But there is no alternative except poverty and "crime." The result can be seen in the figures of the total number of children in the village: there are only 470 children under sixteen years of age, 1:3 per *Jia*.

The practice of infanticide is more often for the female children. The patrilineal descent and the patrilocal marriage have effected the social status of women. A girl is of less value in the eyes of the parents because she cannot continue the "incense and fire" and because as soon as she is mature, she will leave her parents. In consequences, the ratio of females in the age group 0-5 is unusually low. There are only 100 girls to 135 boys.

Since population control is considered as a precaution against poverty, families with comparatively large estates are free to have more children. They are proud of their

numerous children, and these are taken as a sign of their wealth in the eyes of the people. The desire for posterity, the dislike of infanticide and abortion, and economic pressure — these factors work together to equalize land holdings.

4. PARENTS AND CHILDREN

Before the birth of a child, the mother has already definite obligations towards it. During pregnancy, the mother must abstain from violent emotion, from looking at abhorrent things, and from eating certain types of food. There is an idea that the foetus needs education. Good behavior by the mother is expected to affect the future personality of the child. No special obligations are, however, incurred by the father, except perhaps abstaining from sex relations with his wife, since this is considered unfavorable to the physiological development of the child and may lead to its early death.

Expectation and fear cause a general tension in the house. The pregnant woman is recognized to be in a special position and is exempted from her various household duties. The exemption is associated with the sense of uncleanliness of sex matters. Her own parents share the tension. Shortly before the child is delivered, they will offer a kind of medical soup to their daughter. Her mother will stay in her room for several days to look after her. It is also the duty of her own mother to clean all the soiled clothes and wait on her daughter after delivery.

It is not customary for the mother to take a long period of rest after the child is born. She resumes her work in the household within a week. This practice was regarded by my informant as the cause of the high death rate of women after childbirth. The actual death rate is not known. But in the population statistics, there is an apparent fall in numbers in the age group of females of 26-30 and 41-45; this indicates the fact.

Infantile mortality is also high. If we compare the

number of individuals in the age group 0-5 with that in the age group 6-10, a big decrease is observed. The difference between the groups is 73 individuals, or 33 per cent of the group. The people believe that the lives of the children, particularly those who are specially regarded by their parents, are sought by devil spirits. A way of protecting the child is to show the spirits that there is no one interested in it; the theory is that spirits, being sadists, will then discontinue their intervention. This is sometimes carried so far that children are nominally given for protection to somebody who is considered to have greater influence, or even to gods. The parents' outward expression of love of their children is thus carefully concealed.

The attitude of the parents and elder relatives towards children must be understood in relation to these factors —the need for population control due to economic pressure, the small number of children, the high infant mortality, the belief in spirit sadism, the desire for posterity and the connected religious and ethical ideas. As a result of these factors, we can see that the children who survive are highly valued, even though there is an outward show of indifference.

The children in the village cling to their mothers all the day long. The cradle is little used if there are arms available for nursing the babies. The period of suckling lasts three or more years. The time of feeding is not fixed. Whenever the child cries, the mother will at once put her nipple into the child's mouth to keep the child quiet. Moreover, women in the village do not go to the farm, but work almost all the day in the house. Contact between mother and child is thus in ordinary circumstances almost uninterrupted.

The relation between the father and the child is slightly different. The husband has no special duties during his wife's pregnancy and child delivery. For more than half the year, men are at work outside the house. They go

out in the early morning and come back in the evening, the chance of contact between them and the children is relatively less. During the child's infancy, so far as the child is concerned, its father is only an assistant of its mother and sometimes an occasional playmate. The husband will take over a part of his wife's work, even in the kitchen, to relieve his wife when she is nursing the child. I have seen young husbands holding their babies awkwardly in their arms in the evening when enjoying their leisure after hard work in the daytime.

As the child grows, the father's influence over the child increases. In the case of boys, the father is the source of discipline; less so in the case of girls. The mother is more or less indulgent; when a child is mischievous the mother often will not punish him directly but threaten to tell his father. The method adopted by the father is usually beating. Very often in the evening a big storm will burst out in a house and show that a child is being beaten by a bad-tempered father. As a rule this is ended by the mediation of the mother. Sometimes, the result is a dispute between husband and wife.

Children more than six years old are usually engaged in collecting grass to feed the sheep. This job is congenial to them because it permits a free run in the wild with their companions without any interference from the elders. Girls above twelve generally stay at home with their mothers and are engaged in household work and silk reeling, keeping apart from the children's group.

It is only through a gradual process that a dependent child becomes a full member of the community and it is also by a gradual process that the old retire to a dependent position. These two processes are actually two phases of a general process, that is, the transmission of social functions from one generation to the other.

5 EDUCATION

Children receive their education from their families.

Boys of fourteen begin to learn the technique of agriculture from their fathers by practical instruction and participation in the farm work. They become full workers before they are twenty. Girls learn the technique of the silk industry, sewing and other household work from their mothers.

A few words may be added on the school education in the village. The public school is conducted according to general prescriptions of the Minister of Education. The total term for attendance is six years. Instruction is exclusively literary. If a child starts his school days at six, he will still have enough time to learn his main occupations, in agriculture and the silk industry, after twelve. But in the past ten years, sheep raising has become an important domestic industry. These sheep are kept in huts and their food must be collected for them. This has become the children's job. Thus the village economy comes into conflict with the school curriculum.

Furthermore, literary training has not been proved to be very useful in community life. Illiterate parents do not take school education very seriously. Without the help of the parents, primary school education is not very successful. The enrollment is more than a hundred but the actual attendance, as some students told me, rarely exceeds twenty, except when the inspector visits the school. Vacations are long and the school terms are not adjusted to the calendar of work in the village.

6. MARRIAGE

The problems of inheritance and filial obligation do not arise in normal conditions until the children grow up and get married. Therefore, we can come to the problem of marriage first.

Strictly the village is neither an exogamous nor an endogamous unit. But, marriage is more frequently arranged among people of different villages even though this

tendency is not formulated. Among the villages, no special preference is made of one as against another.

In the village, sons and daughters give their parents a free hand in arranging their marriage affairs and will obey accordingly. It is considered as improper and shameful to talk about one's own marriage. Therefore there is no such thing as courtship. The parties to this transaction are not acquainted with one another; and after the engagement is fixed, must avoid each other.

Arrangements for marriage are made early in the child's life, usually when it is six or seven years of age. This is necessary if there is to be a large range for selection, because children of good families are usually promised very early. My informants repeatedly observed that if a girl is engaged too late, she will not be able to make a good match. But it is improper for a girl's mother to initiate a proposal. Moreover, as mentioned, the relation between mother and daughter is very strong. Marriage means the separation of a girl from her parents, and the mother is therefore usually reluctant to contemplate it. Indeed the girl cannot be retained too long in her parents' house. Under the patrilineal system, a woman has no rights of inheritance to the property of her parents. Her future, even a proper livelihood, can only be received through marriage. A third party is thus needed for making arrangements for the marriage. The villagers state that match-making is a good job, because the service is well paid.

The first step by the match-maker is to ascertain the time of birth of the girl. This is written on a red paper with eight characters defining the year, month, date, and hour of the birth. The parents will not object to anyone to whom these papers are sent by the match-maker—at least so they pretend. The match-maker carries the paper to the family of an eligible boy and lays it before the kitchen god. She then explains her mission. A boy of an ordinary family usually receives more than one such

red paper at a time. Thus his parents are able to make a choice.

The next step is for the boy's mother to bring the red papers to a professional fortune-teller, who will answer questions (according to a special system of calculation based on the eight characters) as to the compatibility of the girls in question and the members of the boy's *Jia*. He will suggest the relative merits of each girl, tactfully leaving his client to express her real attitude, and give a decision accordingly. Even if the fortune-teller gives a judgment against his client's wishes, which are usually uncertain, the latter is not bound to take this as final. She can seek a further consultation with the same fortune-teller or with another.

A rational selection of a daughter-in-law is a very difficult matter. No girl is perfect, but everyone seeks the best. It is easy to be mistaken. If no other reason for error can be found, the selector will be blamed. The fortune-teller thus serves not only as a means of reaching a decision, but also for shifting responsibility for human error to the supernatural will. If the marriage turns out to be an unhappy one, it is fate. This attitude is a very practical aid in the adjustment of husband and wife. But it must be clearly understood that the real factor in the selection is the personal preference of the boy's parents, although this is disguised under the cover of a supernatural judgment.

The chief considerations in the selection are two: physical health that insures posterity, and skill in the silk industry. These represent the two main functions that are expected from a daughter-in-law: the continuity of the family, and the economic contribution to the household.

When in the manner described a candidate has been selected, the match-maker will go to persuade the girl's parents to accept the match. The custom is first to refuse the proposal. But a diplomatic match-maker will not find very much difficulty in obtaining consent if there is no

competition. Lengthy negotiation is needed to determine the marriage settlement. The negotiation between the parties involved is carried out through the third party — the match-maker — and the villagers remarked that at this period the principals behave to each other like enemies. The girl's parents will make exorbitant demands for gifts; the boy's parents will bargain; and the match-maker goes between them. The marriage gift, including money, dress, and ornaments, will be sent on three ceremonial occasions. The total amount of a proper marriage gift varies from two to four hundred *yuan*.

It is far from correct to regard the bargaining as a kind of economic transaction. It is not a compensation to the girl's parents. All the gifts, except that offered to the girl's relatives, will be returned to the boy's *Jia* as the dowry, to which the girl's parents will add nearly as much as the marriage gift. How much the girl's parents will add it is difficult to estimate, but according to the rule generally accepted, they will be disgraced if they cannot match at least the marriage gift, and the girl's position in her new *Jia* will be an embarrassing one.

The keen bargaining, hotly carried on, has a twofold meaning. It is a psychological expression of the conflict between mother-love and patrilineal descent. As the people put it, "We cannot let them have our girls without making a fuss." On the sociological side, it is important because the marriage gifts and dowry are, in fact, the contribution of the parents on both sides to provide the material basis for the new family, and a periodic renewing of the material basis of the household for each generation.

The point must be made clear that from the economic point of view the marriage is disadvantageous to the girl's parents. The girl, as soon as she is mature and can assume her full share of work, is taken from her own parents, who have had all the expense of her upbringing. The marriage gifts do not belong to them, but are returned to

the daughter in the form of a dowry with an addition which nominally is at least equal in amount. Since the bride will live and work at her husband's house, this means a net loss to her parents. Furthermore, when the girl is married, her parents and brothers assume a new series of obligations towards their relatives, especially to the children of their girls. In actual life, interest is taken in a child by relatives both on the father's and mother's side. But descent is unilateral, and the child has fewer obligations to its relatives on the mother's side. The immediate reaction on the side of the girl's parents towards their disadvantages in their girl's marriage is reflected in the whole process of arrangement and wedding ceremony and also in the high rate of female infanticide and its resulting unbalanced sexual ratio.

The wedding ceremony takes as a rule the following forms. The bridegroom goes in person to meet his bride, travelling by a special "meeting-boat" used for this purpose. He puts on a humble and self-deprecating air, and he must face a crowd of the bride's relatives whose attitude to him is usually by no means friendly. He must behave strictly according to custom, and there are experts in this who direct him. A mistake will lead to the suspension of the proceedings. Sometimes the ceremony lasts for a whole night. The culminating scene is when the bride makes a final effort at resistance and buries herself in tears before leaving her father's house. This is ended by the ritual of "throwing the bride" by her father, or, if she has no father, by her nearest male relative on her father's side, into the sedan chair. As soon as the bride enters the chair, the bridegroom's party leaves very quickly and quietly, and no music is played until they are clear of the village. The symbolic expression of antagonism on the part of the girl's relatives often causes unpleasant feelings between the newly established affinal relatives, especially if they have not a sense of humor.

The next stages of the procedure are the transporting of the bride by the "meeting-boat," the act of union, the ritual recommendation of the bride to her husband's relatives, and the worshipping of her husband's ancestors. A big feast is prepared by the bridegroom's parents for their relatives and friends. This is one of the occasions for the kinship group to assemble, and the ties of relationship between them are thus reinforced. Each relative or friend offers a gift in cash, the amount of which is determined by the proximity of kinship and friendship. The expenses of the ceremony amount to two to four hundred *yuan.*

7. THE DAUGHTER-IN-LAW IN THE *JIA*

The girl has now entered her husband's house. She finds herself among strangers, but in the most intimate relations with them. Her position is dictated by custom. At night, she sleeps with her husband and she must respond submissively to him. With him alone she can have sexual relations. By day, she shares in the housework under the supervision of her mother-in-law, who has authority over her. She must treat her father-in-law with respect but not with intimacy. She must deal tactfully with her husband's sisters and brothers or they will intrigue against her. She will undertake the cooking and at meals will take the lowest place at table—or even not appear at the table at all.

It must be remembered that in her own family, she enjoyed a rather free life, and one can then imagine what a new world she has now entered. This is her time for discipline. Occasionally, she is allowed to go back to her mother and sob for comfort, as every newly married girl will do. But as the traditional verse runs, "Spilled water cannot be gathered up"; so no one can help her. She accepts her position. This is facilitated by religious beliefs. Human marriage is believed to be held together by the old man in the moon, *yuelao*, with

invisible red and green threads. This knitting together is symbolically performed in the wedding ceremony. The paper inscription of the god is in evidence in every marriage ceremony. Human helplessness breeds such religious beliefs and they help to relieve the situation. At least in this case they mitigate the tendency of the bride to rebel.

The process of adjusting herself in her husband's house does not in ordinary conditions last very long. She is useful in the house especially in the silk industry, which is of great importance in domestic economy. In the first spring after marriage, a new daughter-in-law must pass a kind of test. Her mother sends her a sheet of specially selected good silkworm eggs. She will raise these worms entirely by herself. If as a result she proves her skill, she will, so to speak, win the favor of her mother-in-law. This is considered an important event in the life of a girl and on it depends her position in her husband's house.

Similarly her position will be strengthened if she bears a child, especially a boy. Before the birth of the child, her husband, at least overtly, is indifferent to her. He will not mention her in conversation. Even in the house, in anyone's presence, if he shows any intimate feeling for his wife it will be considered improper and consequently will become a topic for gossiping. Husband and wife do not sit near each other and very seldom talk to each other in that situation. Rather they talk through a third party and they have no special terms for addressing one another. But when a child is born, the husband can refer to his wife as the mother of his child. Thereafter, they can converse freely and behave naturally towards each other. It is the same with other relatives. It is the child that actually admits a woman to her husband's household. The care of the child is an integrative force in the domestic circle.

Domestic conflicts are frequently found between the

daughter-in-law and her mother-in-law. It comes to be taken more or less for granted that the mother-in-law is a potential enemy of the daughter-in-law. Friction between them is taken as usual and harmony as worth special praise. Anyone who has listened to gossips among the elder women will confirm this statement. They are never tired of cursing their daughters-in-law. The potential conflict between them can be understood considering the daily life of the household. The husband and father-in-law do not spend their whole time in the house, but work outside. But the mother-in-law is always there. The daughter-in-law starts with no affection for her. When she comes into the house, she finds herself being watched by her, criticized and constantly scolded. She must obey her, otherwise she may be beaten by her husband on behalf of her mother-in-law. The mother-in law represents authority.

Similarly from the point of view of the old woman, the daughter-in-law is not always pleasant. I have pointed out in the above section that the tie between parent and child is strong. The relation between husband and wife is in a certain sense a disturbing factor in the parent-child relation. If there is any conflict between the daughter-in-law and the mother-in-law, the husband cannot keep entirely aloof. If he takes side with his mother, as is usually the case at the beginning of married life, the quarrel becomes one between husband and wife. If he takes side with his wife, the conflict becomes one between mother and son. I witnessed a case where the son became so furious with his mother, owing to a conflict between her and his wife, that he beat his mother. With this triangular relation in the house it is often very difficult to maintain harmony.

If the conflict becomes intolerable, the daughter-in-law may be repudiated. Repudiation is usually on the initiation of the mother-in-law even against the will of her son. If she could find any recognized ground of such ac-

tion, such as adultery or sterility of the daughter-in-law, no compensation would be asked; otherwise, sixty to seventy *yuan* must be given to the repudiated party. The daughter-in-law has no right of redress against such action, but she may be able to persuade her husband to stand firm for her. In the latter case, a division of *Jia* will result.

The daughter-in-law has no right to request a divorce. The positive action open to her is desertion of the home. She may run away to the town, where she can find a job to maintain herself until a compromise becomes possible. If her husband supports his mother too firmly and there is no hope of reconciliation, she may take a more desperate course: committing suicide. According to popular belief she then becomes a spirit and is able to revenge herself; furthermore her own parents and brothers will seek redress, sometimes even destroying part of her husband's house. Therefore the mere threat of suicide is enough for practical purposes to effect a reunion. Moreover, since the mother-in-law has to face this possibility, she will usually not drive the daughter-in-law so far as to provoke the result she so much fears.

Disharmony in the *Jia* should not be exaggerated. In the group, co-operation is essential. It is true that the mother-in-law has a privileged position, so long as she is supported by her husband and her son, but the educational value of her discipline should also be taken into consideration. The discipline which a boy receives from his father, a girl gets from her mother-in-law. And, as the people themselves say, in the long run justice is done; for when the girl's own son takes a wife, the mother will enjoy the same privilege as her own mother-in-law. The economic value of a daughter-in-law, and the common interest in the child, make for a harmonious give and take.

8. CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE AND *SIAOSIV*

Late marriage is due to both the phenomenon of in-

fanticide and the high expense of the ceremony. Though I could not discover a definite figure for such expenses, a rough estimate is about five hundred *yuan*. This amount is equivalent to the total yearly family expenditure. During the past few years of depression, marriage has been entirely suspended. The depression of rural industry has fundamentally challenged the existing marriage proceedings. But since marriage cannot be postponed indefinitely, another type of marriage is found. This is the so-called *siaosiv* system: (or *xiaoxifu* in the standard Chinese language) meaning small daughter-in-law or more precisely the foster daughter-in-law.

The parents of the boy will take a girl as foster-child at a very early age, the future mother-in-law even feeding her at her breast, and will take care of her up to marriage. All the elaborate proceedings such as matchmaking, marriage gifts, the sending of the meeting-boat and sedan chair, will not be needed, if the daughter-in-law has been brought up in her husband's house. Some of the *siaosiv* even do not know their own parents. Those who have still maintained contact with their own parents, owing to early separation, will not be of special interest to them. The wedding ceremony can be curtailed to cost less than one hundred *yuan*.

The relations among the members of the *Jia* and between the affinal relatives are greatly modified by the new institution. The girl brought up from an early age by her future mother-in-law, becomes, as I have observed in many cases, very closely attached to the latter and feels towards her just like a daughter, especially in the frequent cases where there is no real daughter. Even those who are badly treated by the future mother-in-law become used to their position and do not thus experience a crisis after marriage. Thus the conflict between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law is often not so acute, even if not entirely avoided. Affinal relation is very loose, and in many cases is entirely eliminated.

The number of *siaosiv* has increased during the last decade. Among the married women, 74 out of 439, or 17 per cent, had been *siaosiv* before marriage. But among the unmarried girls, there are 95 *siaosiv* against 149 non-*siaosiv*. This amounts to 39 per cent. But it is too early to predict the further development of the institution. Traditional marriage is still the predominant institution, both in frequency of occurrence and in the regard of the people. The *siaosiv* system is despised, since it develops at times of economic depression and is usually practiced by poorer families. Moreover, its effect in loosening ties of affinal relationship affects the normal working of kinship organization. It is also unfavorable to the status of women and to the possibility of the young couple forming an independent family, since they lack the contribution of their parents in marriage gifts and dowry. It is significant that, according to my informants, this type of marriage had in rather similar circumstances become very popular after the Taiping Rebellion (1848-1865), which was followed by a general economic depression. But it had given way to the traditional type as soon as normal conditions had been recovered.

CHAPTER III

PROPERTY AND INHERITANCE

1. OWNERSHIP

Ownership is a certain relation between an object and an individual or a group of individuals. The owner can use, enjoy the benefits of, and dispose of the object under the prescription of custom and law. From the villagers, we can get a classification of property based on the nature of the owner.

(1) "No man's property." Everyone without discrimination has free access to such property — air, road, waterways, etc. But free access is qualified by the essential fact that one individual should not deprive another of its use. Take the example of water routes: everyone can use the village streams, but they are not allowed to use the route to the detriment of the villagers. The streams are closed during the night. No one can then pass unless he gets permission from the night guards. Again, even in daytime, boats are not allowed to block the passage. When a boat stops, it must be close to the bank and must leave room for others to pass.

(2) Village property. The inhabitants of the village have equal rights to use and to be benefited by such property — the water products in the surrounding lakes and streams, the grass on the public roads and on the "tomb-land." But the right of disposing of such property is in some cases in the hands of the village heads.

(3) Property of extended kinship group. Among brothers, after the process of division of *Jia*, they may still use the same front room of the house. The ancestral tombs do not come under property in the real sense because they cannot be used for any benefit of the descendents, but the descendents are on the contrary obliged to keep them in repair. The obligation is shared among the sibling *Jia*.

(4) *Jia* property. This category will be the main subject of the next section.

These four categories have exhausted those about which a villager will inform you, and with them all the objects in the village can be classified accordingly. It may be surprising to note the essential omission of individual ownership. The fact is that individual ownership is always included under the name of *Jia* ownership. For instance, when you ask a person whether his pipe belongs to him or to his *Jia*, he will answer that it belongs to both. When he says the pipe belongs to his *Jia* he is trying to

exclude members of other *Jia* from using it; and when he says it is his personal belonging, he is trying to indicate that his fellow members in the *Jia* do not use it. These two types of ownership do not seem to him mutually exclusive. Everything owned by an individual is recognized as a part of the property of his *Jia*. Members of a *Jia* are under an obligation to protect any article belonging to any particular member in the group. This does not mean that there is no discrimination in the rights over the object of the different members of the group. What it really indicates is only a title under which there is a wide range of intermediary gradations between property jointly owned by the group and individually owned by each member.

Objects may be classified again by types of use.

(1) Those used as a means of production, such as the land, the house so far as it is used for the silk industry, the hut used for raising sheep, the implement, the kitchen, etc.

(2) Those used for consumption.

(a) Those not destroyed or exhausted after being used, such as rooms, clothes, furniture, ornaments, etc.

(b) Those destroyed and exhausted after being used, such as food, etc.

(3) Those immaterial objects, such as purchasing power (as represented by money), credit, services, and, on the negative side, liabilities and debts.

2. PROPERTY OF THE *JIA*

Among the property-owning groups, the *Jia* is the fundamental one. It is the basic social unit of production and consumption and thus becomes the basis of the collective aspect of ownership. But, as mentioned, the collective aspect of ownership of the *Jia* does not entirely rule out the group. It is therefore necessary to analyse how different kinds of objects are owned by different

members and how different types of ownership are diffused among them.

Land is cultivated by all or some of the male adult members of the household. Boys assist occasionally and women only in irrigation. The produce is partly stored for the consumption of the household and partly sold to pay taxes, rent, and wages and to buy other goods for consumption. The right of using the land as well as the right to a share of the produce is sometimes extended to the employees by definite contract. The right of the tax and rent collectors is limited to that of deriving benefits from the land. In the village, with exceptions, the right of using and right of disposing are generally reserved by the cultivator. He may be regarded as a full owner if he does not pay rent to any one, but pays taxes to the government. If he has lost his legal title of his holding, he must pay rent to the title holder who will pay the taxes out of the rent. In any case the cultivators are protected by law and custom from alienation of the land and from interference by the title holders. In other words, the cultivator owns the land with an attached liability to share a part of the produce with the person who holds the title.

The right of disposing of the land is in the hands of the head of the *Jia.* But in daily management—such as the determining of the crop to be sown, date of sowing, etc. — the head, especially if it is a woman, does not exercise the right but leaves the decision to persons competent in the technique. But in selling or leasing the land, no one except the head can make a decision. Indeed, in practice, his action may be compelled by other members or he may act on their advice, but the responsibility is his own. In the ownership of land, we can see how the right of use, the right of enjoying the benefit and the right of disposal have been diffused among the members of the group.

The house is used for the silk industry, for threshing

rice, for cooking, and for other productive work. It is also used for shelter, for sleeping and for comfort. These different functions derive from quite different types of ownership. In case of silk raising, much space is needed specially during the last two weeks of the raising period. In that period, all the rooms except the kitchen may be used for sheltering silkworms. All the members of the household will crowd in one bedroom. The individual allotment of bedrooms disappears temporarily. In threshing rice, the central hall is used in common and even sometimes shared with the newly divided siblings. The kitchen is chiefly used by women. But the food prepared is shared by all members of the household, except occasionally for special members.

Individual ownership, as meaning the exclusive use of certain objects by certain individuals, is found mostly in goods for consumption. It is clear that those goods which will be exhausted after use are necessarily owned by individuals. But those articles that can be repeatedly used may be shared by several persons successively. The clothes are shared among brothers or among sisters, and between parents and children in different periods, but during certain periods they are used more or less exclusively by one person. Valuable ornaments are exclusive to individual members. They belong mostly to women and are a part of the dowry. Dowry is considered as the "private" property of the woman and shared with her husband and children. It is the family property within the *Jia*. But at a financial crisis, the family property may be mortgaged for common relief of the *Jia*. In this case, the willingness of the woman must be secured. Selling a wife's ornaments without her consent will cause domestic disputes.

The room allotted for individual use is more or less exclusive to the family group. The furniture is partly supplied by the wife's parents. The door can be locked by the daughter-in-law although this is not considered as

very polite to the mother-in-law. The keys to the boxes and drawers in the room are kept by the daughter-in-law which marks the exclusiveness of family property in the *Jia*.

The private use of the bedroom by the family does not undermine the final right of disposal of the house to the head of the *Jia*. The junior members cannot sell or exchange their rooms with anyone. As in the case of land, the head of the *Jia* has the final decision in any transaction concerning immovable property. It is also true for the produce of the land and the industry. Raw silk may be sold by the woman. If she is not the head, she must hand the money to the head. In this sense, the head of the *Jia* possesses a superior right to the property over that of anyone in the group. The rights over immaterial goods, which includes money as purchasing power, are more complicated. The main source of income derived from rice, silk, and sheep is controlled by the head. Thus money is largely in his hand. It is he who determines the buying of implements and fertilizer, or the acquisition of new land or a new house. Theoretically, according to the ideal system, other members, whenever they get money from other sources, must hand it to the head; and when they need things must ask the head to buy them. It is a very centralized economy. But in practice the earner usually reserves the whole or a part of his or her earnings. For instance, a girl who works in the factory usually gives her wage not to her grandfather but to her mother to save for her own future use. A daughter-in-law will consider her wage as her own. If a daughter-in-law does not earn money directly, she will ask for more than the real cost of the daily commodities and save the surplus.

The daily expenditure of the household is paid from the common source. But individual members may have a sum each month as their pocket money for free disposal. The main items such as taxes, wages, food, clothes, and

other services are controlled by the head. Permission is necessary before any individual member can execute any transactions of these kinds. They are not allowed to secure loans. If a son, a bad one indeed in the eyes of the villagers, is in debt to somebody secretly, his father may refuse to repay as long as he is living. The son can only pay back the loan when he gets a share in inheritance. Therefore the interest is usually very high.

From his economic position, the head of the *Jia* derives the actual authority in the group. The right over objects enjoyed by a person who is not the head of a *Jia* is limited and incomplete.

3. TRANSMISSION OF PROPERTY

Inheritance in its wide sense is the entire process of transmission of property according to kinship affiliation. But it is limited in legal usage to referring the claim of an heir to the property of his deceased progenitor. As studied by anthropologists, the problem is usually that of the disposal of the property of a deceased person.

But to limit the study in this way is to leave out various facts, such as the transmission of property during the parents' lifetime and the economic obligation of the descendents towards their deceased ancestors. Ownership is a composite concept of various rights over an object. The process of transmission usually takes place bit by bit. It is not completed even when the progenitor is dead. The fear of displeasing the spirits of the ancestors or the ethical consideration of filial piety indicate the lingering influence of the dead on the free disposal of the inheritance by the heir. Therefore for the present analysis, I shall use the term inheritance in its wider sense.

A child is born into the world without possessing anything. Owing to his physical incapacity to acquire objects the infant is solely dependent upon other's provision. It is the function of the family to bring up a dependent in-

fant to become a full member of the community. The parental obligation towards the child is the basis for the universal principle of transmission of property according to the kinship affiliation.

The relation between a child and the objects that satisfy his need is through his parents. At the beginning, he cannot use anything without the consent of his parents. When the child knows how to take care of itself and learns the proper use of objects the control diminishes. As technical knowledge increases and he participates in productive work, the child gradually acquires the right of use over objects that belong to the *Jia*. But there are very few objects exclusively and freely used by him. The type and amount of goods he consumes are also always under the control of his elders.

An important step in the process of transmission of property takes place at marriage. In the marriage, the parents of both bride and bridegroom contribute to the new couple, in terms of marriage gifts and dowry, a set of objects, consisting of personal belongings, as a nucleus of family property. The new couple now have a room, more or less, for themselves. But from the point of view of the bride, she has at the same time lost at least a considerable amount of her right over the objects in her own parents' house. When she goes back after marriage, she is a guest, the more so if her parents are dead and the house is owned by her brother. She is admitted into her husband's house. But she cannot behave there freely as in her own parents' house. Her right to use objects is in practice very limited. She has no share in the personal objects of other members in the *Jia* except those of her husband. It is she who starts the disintegrative tendency in the collective economy of the *Jia*.

The centralized system in the domestic economy, as described in the above section, reduces the independence of the young couple. The parental control is necessary for the development of a child, but the persist-

ence of such control over him after his marriage is a different matter. A full member of the community needs a certain amount of property under his own disposal and a normal functioning of a family requires a larger material basis; but these are precluded by the centralized system of the *Jia* economy. The demand for economic independence of the young then becomes one of the disorganizing forces, and finally leads to the division of the group.

The process of division is one of the most important steps in the transmission of property from the parents to the child. Through the process the young acquire a legal title over a part of the property formerly belonging to the father and enjoy a more exclusive right to it.

Let us take an example of a *Jia*, consisting of a father, a mother, two sons. and a daughter. When the first son gets married and demands a division, the land will be divided into four parts. The first part is that reserved for the parents. The second share is the extra share for the first son. The rest is equally divided between the two brothers.

The share reserved for the parents will be sufficient to provide for their daily life as well as the marriage expenses of the second son and the daughter; its size will therefore depend on the number of unmarried children and the living expenses of the parents.

The eldest son receives two shares, the extra share being a small one. The size of the extra share depends on the economic contribution that he has made to the collective unit. The first son, being older, will undoubtedly have made more contributions than his younger brother. Moreover, in the view of the villagers, he has also a greater ceremonial obligation towards the dead parents.

The share for the unmarried son is nominal. He will live with his parents and has no independent status. But he can demand the share when he is married. If one of

the parents dies before his marriage, further division will be ruled out. The younger son who has not yet separated from his parents will support the remaining parent, who will hand over most of his or her economic authority to the married son even without division. When both parents are dead, the reserved share will go to the younger son, in consideration of the support he has given them. Thus he will also in the end inherit two shares. But if the elder brother shares in the support of their parents, he will have a claim on the reserved share. The final division will not necessarily be equal.

The house is divided in several ways. If the parents are living, the eldest son will have a house outside. If the division of *Jia* occurs after the death of the father, the elder son will occupy the old house and the younger son moves out with the mother. To build or to find a new house is difficult. Thus in most cases the old house is simply divided into two parts; the elder takes the east part and the younger the west. (The orientation of the house is always to the south.) The front room is occupied in common.

If there is one son only, he will demand separation from his parents only in case of serious conflict. In this case it means no more than a demand for economic independence. The amount of the son's share is not important because it is only a temporary allotment. In the end all the property will be handed over to him; when the parents are old and unable to work, they will be re-incorporated into their son's *Jia*. The process of re-incorporation does not undermine the rights acquired by the son, but, on the contrary, conveys to him the rights to the rest of the property.

Both the land and house are unilaterally inherited. The daughter has no share in them. When she is married her parents will give her a dowry, consisting of furniture, ornaments, clothes, and sometimes a sum of

money; but never land or house. Even the poorest parents furnish the coverlet of the bed for their daughter.

The son, after the process of division, has a separate house or a part of the house. He has a separate kitchen in which his wife will cook food for the family. He has a separate piece of land. The produce of the land is at his own disposal. But, in fact, his right over these allotments is still not complete. His father, as long as he is living, can strongly influence his use of the land and house. The son cannot sell them against the will of his father. He will send food to his parents in case of need. When the parents are old or one of them is dead, he is obliged to support them. Therefore the process of division does not completely end the economic relation between the parents and the child.

Moreover, the property divided in this way is limited to that used for production and a part of that used for consumption. Personal belongings of the parents will be reserved for them. The son usually gets a sum of money to start his new economic unit, but debts and liabilities, except his own secret loans, will be kept back until the death of the father.

The reserved part of the immovable property will be transmitted to the son when the parents are too old to work. The final transmission occurs at the death of the parents, specially of the father. A part of the personal belongings will be buried with the dead and a part will be burnt—to be used, as it is believed, by the spirits. The remainder will be divided not only between the sons but also between other relations who have served the deceased. The daughter will have a considerable share of her mother's leavings, including clothes and ornaments. This suggests, in some degree, the matrilineal inheritance; but since the daughter-in-law also has her share, the rule is not absolute. The division of these types of property is subject more or less to the personal

will of the deceased or her husband (or his wife) who has the right to decide the disposal of what is left.

In case a family has no sons, an accepted solution is to bring an adopted son-in-law into the family, usually from a very poor family or one with several sons. Once the agreement has been made between the two families, the wedding ceremony will take place in the girl's house and the husband will live in his wife's house with the wife's parents. In addition to the general wedding ceremony, the girl's parents will sign a contract with the boy's parents, similar to that of adoption of a son and witnessed by their clansmen. The child of their daughter will take their surname and continue their descent. There are twelve such cases in this village. This number is significant if we take into consideration that there are relatively few cases of sonless parents and that the practice of late engagement is rare. When there is still hope for the parents to get a boy themselves, they will not arrange such a marriage. But if after the marriage, they got a boy, as seen in one case, the accomplished fact will continue to be valid. It is a generally accepted institution and has been legalized in the civil code.

In the above-mentioned cases, the patrilineal principle of descent is obliterated and the marriage institution is modified. It shows that the problem of inheritance and descent should be viewed as a part of the reciprocal relation between the two generations: the transmission of property on the one hand and the obligation of supporting the old on the other. The obligation of the young to support the old is maintained not by legal force alone but by human affection. Owing to the tie of affection and economic security of the old, they prefer an adopted son from outside to an appointed heir among the kindred, and modify the patrilineal principle to adopt a son-in-law. The obligation of the young does not end when the old are dead. The care of the tomb and offering sacrifice to ancestor spirits are a part of this reciprocal relation.

Furthermore, the right of free disposal of inherited property is again strongly conditioned by the religious and ethical belief of ancestor worship. Thus we must study the obligation of the young towards their parents in connection with the problem of inheritance.

4. OBLIGATION OF THE YOUNG

To begin with, in a childless family, the adults themselves will collect grass for the sheep. But when a child is born and able to work, they are relieved of this work. In rice growing, a boy will assist first in transplanting young shoots and in irrigation. As the boy grows older, he works side by side with his father and eventually undertakes more work than his father, even before he gets married. A girl will assist her mother in the daily household work and in the silk industry. When their contribution to the family exceeds their own consumption, they begin to support their parents, although their share is *not* apparent owing to the collective economy.

However, a sense of equality between parents and children is not altogether ruled out. When a young couple undertakes the greater part of the work in the household but still is without an independent status owing to the economic power being centralized in the hands of the older generation, there will be much dissatisfaction. It will eventually force the parents to relinquish their power along with their withdrawal from work.

The obligation to support becomes apparent when the son has secured his independence. If the parents have in their old age still a share of the land, and are not able to work it themselves, the son will cultivate it for them. This means in fact that the son must set apart a share of his labor for his parents. Another form common when one of the parents is dead, is that the remaining one will re-incorporate into the son's *Jia* and live there. The amount of support is then not fixed. If there are

two sons, they may support their parent alternately. In any case, the authority of the parents is reduced in proportion to the degree of their dependence. From the point of view of types of ownership the general line of retreat of the parents is from the right to use to the right of disposal of the produce and finally to the right of disposal of the objects itself. From the point of view of types of objects, the retreat takes place from the means of production to goods for consumption and finally to immaterial privileges and liabilities. These steps of retreat correlated with the increase of obligation of the young from entire dependence to taking a co-operative rôle and finally to bearing responsibility for the whole livelihood of the parents.

The immediate control over objects and persons ceases at the time of death. But the belief in the existence of spirits even after death prolongs the influence of the deceased over property. Misfortunes and sickness are sometimes, not always, explained as the warning of ancestor spirits for some action that they do not approve, such as non-observance of the periodic sacrifice, damage to the coffin shelter, selling of land or house, etc. Pure ethical consideration is strong enough to prevent the person from selling his inheritance freely. The continuity of land holding is an expression of one's filial piety. Any act against it will be criticized by the community as bad. This is of considerable importance to the problem of land tenure.

CHAPTER IV

THE HOUSEHOLD AND VILLAGE

Beside kinship bonds, another fundamental social tie is that of territorial bonds. Those who live near each

other find it easy to co-operate in matters of common interest demanding concerted action. In this chapter, we shall review various territorial groups.

1. HOUSEHOLD

The *Jia*, held together by kinship ties, is not necessarily an efficient working unit in economic life. Members of a *Jia* may be temporarily absent or removed by death. The introduction of new working members, through kinship ties such as birth, marriage and adoption, is not always easy to effect and sometimes is not advisable owing to questions of inheritance. On the other hand, members of a *Jia*, which has broken up may wish to be temporarily incorporated into another working unit without assuming new kinship relations. Therefore, those who live in the same house and participate in most of the economic pursuits may not be necessarily considered as members of *Jia*. Here we may use the term household to refer to this basic territorial group.

In the village I found that in twenty-eight cases individuals have been introduced into the economic unit, living, eating, and working as members of the household but clearly distinguished from the members of the *Jia*. They were not connected with the *Jia* by the necessary kinship ties and did not permanently pool their property without discrimination into the *Jia* but usually joined the unit upon definite terms. The relation of such members to the group varies from that of a long-term guest to having practically no distinction from the members of the *Jia* except over the legal rights of property.

There are three ways in which non-*Jia* members may be introduced into a household. The member may be a guest of a certain family and have made a definite annual or monthly payment over a rather long period of residence. The institution of apprenticeship also provides a way of introducing a working member from outside. There were four cases of this kind. An apprentice

is provided with food and shelter by the master without tuition and in return is bound to work for his master for a certain period of years without wages, except in the last year when he can demand a small amount for "renewing his shoes and stockings."

The commonest way, however, is through employment. A person may be introduced into a household as an employee under a definite contract to work on the farm or at the silk industry. The employee receives accommodation in his employer's house. He participates in the household work, is entitled to use all the implements, and is provided with food and shelter. He has also a fixed amount of wage each year.

2. NEIGHBORHOOD

A number of *Jia* combined together to form larger territorial groups. The formation of larger groups depends on the common interests of those who live in a wider territory. For instance, there are natural menaces such as flood and drought and also the threat of invasion by an alien people, which do not affect single individuals but all those living in a locality. They must take concerted actions to defend themselves — as by building dikes, relief measures, magical and religious activities. Moreover, the satisfactory exploitation of his land by an individual requires co-operation with others: similarly with the distribution of the produce and with trade and industry. The need of relaxation and amusement is another factor which will bring together individuals in games and other forms of group recreation. Thus the fact of living together and near to each other produces the need of political, economic, religious, and recreative organizations. Conventionally people take the five households on each side of their residence as being their neighbors.

In daily life when one needs extra labor in household work, such as removing heavy articles, neighbors will come to help. In case of economic stress, money can be

borrowed from them in small sums without interest. Such relations of mutual help are not rigidly confined to ten households, they depend more on personal intimacy than formal prescriptions.

CHAPTER V

LIVELIHOOD

Having made a general survey of the geographical and social background of the village, we are now in a position to study the economic life of the people. I shall begin my description with the system of consumption and attempt to assess the general level of livelihood in the village. This level gives us some idea of the necessary requirements for ordinary living. To satisfy these requirements is the ultimate incentive to production and the impetus to industrial change.

From the point of view of consumption, there is no essential difference among the villagers, but in production, occupational differentiation is found. The present study is mainly limited to the farmers who form the majority. They are engaged in tilling land and in raising silkworms. These are two main sources of their income. Selling sheep and making periodic trading ventures are subsidiary sources.

The most urgent economic problem, from the point of view of the villagers, is industrial reform. The decline of the price of silk is the immediate cause of financial insolvency in the village. During the past ten years, a series of reforms have been introduced and as a result of these efforts both the technology and social organization of the silk industry have been radically changed. Therefore, we are able to analyse the process found in

this village as a case study of industrial change in rural economy. As a result of the decline of domestic industry and the burden of high rent, the villagers are facing an unprecedented economic depression. The difficulty in securing credit and the danger of becoming a victim of usury place the villagers in a dilemma.

1. CULTURAL CONTROL ON CONSUMPTION

Culture provides means to procure materials for satisfying human needs but at the same time defines and delimits human wants. It recognizes a range of wants as proper and necessary and those lying outside the range as extravagant and luxurious. A standard is thus set up to control the amount and type of consumption. This standard is a measurement for plenty and deficiency by the people themselves. It enables saving when there is plenty, and causes dissatisfaction when there is a deficiency.

To be content with simple living is a part of early education. Extravagance is prevented by sanctions. A child making preferences in food or clothes will be scorned and beaten. Thrift is encouraged. Throwing away anything which has not been properly used will offend heaven, whose representative is the kitchen god.

In a rural community where production may be threatened by natural disasters, content and thrift have practical value. If a man spends all his income, when he fails to have a good harvest, he will be forced to raise loans which may cause him to lose a part of his right over his land. To lose one's inherited estate is against filial obligations and thus will be condemned. Moreover, in the village there are few inducements to extravagance. Display of wealth in daily consumption does not lead to prestige. On the contrary, it may attract kidnappers.

But the idea of thrift is absent on ceremonial occasions. Expenses in funeral and marriage ceremonies are not considered as individual consumption but as fulfilment of so-

cial obligations. A good son must provide the best possible coffin and grave for his parent. In the marriage ceremony the parents on both sides will try to provide the best marriage gift and dowry, and offer the richest feasts, as their ability permits.

2 HOUSING

A house, in general, consists of three rooms. The front room is the largest. It is used for working, such as raising silkworms, manufacturing silk, threshing rice, etc.; for sitting, for dining when the weather is cold or wet, for receiving guests and for storing implements and products. It is also the place where the ancestral shrine is kept.

Behind the front room is the kitchen. It is only about one-fourth the size of the front room. One-third of it is occupied by the stove and the chimney. A small pavilion and a platform is constructed leaning upon the chimney for the kitchen god.

Next is the bedroom. It is sometimes divided by wooden partitions into two rooms if there are two family units in the *Jia*. Each room contains one or two beds. The married couple and their young child up to seven or eight years old share one bed. When the child grows up, he or she will have a separate bed first in the parents' room. An older but unmarried boy will sleep in the front room, as the employees do. A girl may remain until her marriage in her parents' room or may move to her grandmother's room, but never to the front room because women are not permitted to sleep in the room where the ancestral shrine is kept.

Human manure, being the most important fertilizer in the farm, is preserved in the pits made of earthenware, half buried in the ground at the back of the building. The public road is also lined up with these manure pits. The government have ordered the villagers to remove these

pits for hygienic reasons but nothing has been done about it.

Houses are built by special craftsmen from the town. During the period of raising silkworms, building is suspended, otherwise, according to the local belief, the industry of the whole village will be ruined. Breaking soil is considered as a dangerous action which might provoke supernatural interference. Thus it is necessary to perform certain magical rites which are done by Taoist priests. An ordinary house costs at least five hundred *yuan* for the total expenses.

3. TRANSPORTATION

Boats are extensively used for heavy and long-distance traffic. But the villages do not build their boats. They buy them from outside. Each boat costs, on the average, about eighty to a hundred *yuan*. Nearly every household possesses one or more boats except those who are not engaged in agricultural or fishing work. Both men and women can handle the boat. The art of rowing is acquired in childhood.

No animal labor is used in transport. On land, the men have to carry the load themselves.

4. CLOTHING

The domestic industry of weaving in the village has been practically ruined. Although nearly every house has a wooden weaving machine, at the time when I was there, there were only two of them still working. The material for clothing thus largely comes from the outside, mainly linen and cotton. The silk industry works not for self-consumption but mainly for export. Only a few people wear silk dresses on formal occasions.

Owing to the wide variations of climate during the year, the villagers keep at least three sets of clothes: for the hot summer, for the mild spring and autumn, and for the cold winter. Clothing is not only for pro-

tecting the body but also for making social distinctions. Sex differentiation is clear. Age difference is also expressed; for instance, girls before maturity will not put on the skirt. Social status is directly indicated in the style. The long gown, for instance, is indispensable for persons of distinction.

Sewing is women's work, except for tailors. Most of the women have skill enough to make ordinary clothes for their husbands and children, because this is a necessary qualification for a bride. At the end of the first month of her wedding, the bride will send an article of her own sewing to each near relative of her husband, whose approval is her pride and a support of her position in the new social group. But for preparing dowries, marriage gifts, and dresses of higher quality for formal use, professional tailors are as a rule called in.

The total expenses for buying clothing materials for an average *Jia* is estimated as about thirty *yuan* a year, excluding ceremonial dresses.

5. NUTRITION

Food is the main item of household expenditure. It amounts to 40 per cent of the total annual current expenses. Furthermore, it is different from the above-mentioned items. Housing does not involve expense every day, and clothing usually is not so urgent as food. The amount of food that is necessary in order to maintain a normal living is more or less constant and consequently represents a relatively constant item in the domestic livelihood.

The staple food is rice. For an average household, including an old woman, two adults, and a child, the total consumption will amount to 1,600 *jin*. This estimate is fairly exact because the people must know the amount they need before they store the rice.

In vegetables, including cabbages, fruits, mushrooms, nuts, potatoes, turnips, etc., the village is only partially self-supporting. The people have only very small gar-

dens adjacent to the houses and limited space under the mulberry trees for growing vegetables. They are largely dependent on the supply of the neighboring villages along Lake Tai where vegetable cultivation has become a specialization; and the produce has become one of the important sources of supply for the people in this region.

Oil is produced by villagers themselves from the rapeseeds which are planted in spring before the rice. But owing to the low level of the farms in this part, the crop is very limited and the produce is enough only for domestic use. Fish is supplied by the fishing households in the village. The only kind of meat eaten is pork, which is supplied by the town through retailers in the village. Sugar, salt, and other necessities for cooking are bought daily from the town chiefly through the agent boat.

There are three meals a day: morning, noon, and evening. They are cooked separately. But during the period when men are busy on the farm they will prepare their lunch in the morning with the breakfast. Lunch is the big meal of the day, but during the time when men have to work on the farm, they carry with them their prepared lunch. They do not come back until evening. Women and children who are left in the house also take the prepared lunch which is rather light.

In the evening when the men come back, the whole household take dinner together, in the front room. But in the hot weather the table is arranged in the front of the house; it is very impressive to walk in the street on a summer evening. The street is lined by a row of tables. Neighbors talk with each other while they are eating at their own table. All the members of the household sit around the same table, except the woman who is busy in the kitchen and serves the table.

The commensalism of the evening meal is important in domestic life, especially for the father and child to see each other. The father is absent the whole day and the child may not be able to see him until that time. At

the table they are together. The disciplinary function of the father operates at this time. Relevant to this context is the manner of eating. The child must not complain about the food or show special preference for certain dishes. If he does so, he will be at once scorned and sometimes beaten by his father. At the table the child is usually silent and obedient.

During the period of agricultural work, the dinner is comparatively rich. They have meat and fish. But in ordinary times meat is not very often served. Pure vegetarianism is rare except for a few widows. Ordinary women take vegetarian meals twice a month, the first and the fifteenth day: this is because of the religious teaching that heavenly gods do not like killing animate creatures. Thus vegetarian practice will help one to have a better after-life.

6. RECREATION

In the household the period for domestic gatherings is in the evening when the daily work is over. In this gathering the family bonds are strengthened and an intimate feeling develops.

Work in agriculture and in the silk industry affords periodical intervals. The people after having been busy for a week or ten days may have a pause. During the intervals, rich dinners are prepared and visits among relatives take place.

Festivals come always in between periods of industrial activity. The "New Year," celebrated in February by fifteen days for rejoicing and obligatory visiting of relatives, comes at a time of few agricultural activities. Wedding ceremonies also come in that period, which is regarded as a proper time for marriage. Shortly before the active period in the silk industry, is the festival of Qing Ming for ancestral worship and visiting tombs. At the third exuviae of silkworms, a rejoicing feast is prepared at Li Xia, the Beginning of Summer according to

the traditional calendar. After the silk reeling work and before the transplantation of young shoots of the rice to the main field, the festival of Duan Yang comes in. Full moon in the eighth month, Zhong Qiu is celebrated at the time when the rice bears fruit and in the middle of the first long interval of agricultural work. At the end of that interval another festival of Chong Yang is on the schedule. When the agricultural work is completed it is the festival of Dong Zhi, the Winter Solstice. All these festivals are obligatory and usually connected with religious worship of ancestors and of the kitchen god. Celebration of such festivals is limited to domestic groups and intimate relatives.

7. CEREMONIAL EXPENSES

Ceremonial expenses connected with the crises of life — birth, marriage, and death — looked at from the economic point of view are indispensable items of liability to the domestic economy. When the ceremonial procedures have been generally accepted, one cannot pass these crises except through this costly channel.

The economic depression has, however, affected the ceremonies. For instance, the institution of *siaosiv* has been adopted to modify the expensive marriage procedure. It is adopted for economic expedience but has far-reaching consequences in kinship organization. The total or partial reduction of affinal relationships has influenced the social position of women and children. The cancelling of marriage gifts and dowry prolongs the economic dependence of the young. All these illustrate the fact that the ceremonial expenses are not altogether waste or luxury. They perform essential functions in social life.

In view of the importance of ceremonial occasions in the life of the people, it is not surprising to find the high percentage of ceremonial expenses in the domestic budget. For an average family of four members, assuming

the average length of life to be fifty years, there will be one ceremonial occasion every five years. The minimum expenses for these ceremonies are estimated as follows: birth 30 *yuan*, marriage 500 *yuan*, and funeral 250 *yuan*. The average annual expense will be 50 *yuan*. It amounts to one-seventh of the whole annual expenditure.

These periodical expenses demand saving during the interval. It may take the form of payment of loans, but usually, of subscriptions to a financial aid society, which is a local institution of saving. Thus we can check the estimate of ceremonial expenses with the average annual amount of subscription per *Jia*. In general, as I found, each *Jia* joins two societies at the same time with a total annual subscription of 40 *yuan*. It tends to support the reliability of these estimates.

8. MINIMUM EXPENDITURE

The following table gives the money value of those items that the villagers have to buy from the market, and the obligatory payment of tax and rent. It is useful as an estimate of the minimum amount of money needed for the livelihood of the villagers. Those goods produced by the consumers themselves include the foodstuffs, such as rice, oil, wheat, and vegetable, and a part of the clothing materials. The most important part of the self-sufficient economy is labor and service.

I. Things bought from the market:			
Foodstuffs		47	
Vegetables and miscellaneous	30		
Sugar	5		
Salt	12		
Clothing materials		30	
Presents		10	
Fuel, light, etc.		36	
House and boat oiling		20	
Tools and fertilizer		10	
Expenses in silk industry		50	203
II. Land tax			10
III. Periodic expenses (expressed in saving)			50
TOTAL			263 *yuan*

CHAPTER VI

OCCUPATIONAL DIFFERENTIATION

1. AGRICULTURE AS THE BASIC OCCUPATION

In the process of consumption there are no essential classifications into which the villagers must be divided, but in the process of production occupational differentiation is found. According to the census, occupations are classified under four headings: (1) agriculture, (2) special occupations, (3) fishing, and (4) non-occupied.

These classes are not mutually exclusive. Persons not classified as agricultural may nevertheless be partly engaged in agricultural activities. Agriculture is the fundamental occupation common to nearly all the villagers except among the landless outsiders. The difference is only a matter of emphasis. Those who are classified under the heading of agriculture do not depend on land exclusively but are also engaged in raising silkworms and sheep, and in trade ventures. The fourth category includes households whose adult male members have died and where the widows or the children are living on the rent of the leased land but not through their own productive effort.

The occupation of a *Jia* is recorded in the census according to the occupation of its head. Members of the *Jia* may be engaged in different occupations — for example, the children of the store-keeper may be engaged in agriculture and the farmer's daughter engaged in industrial work in the town. This, however, is not indicated. The number of *Jia* in each category is given in the following table:

I.	Agricultural	274
II.	Special occupations	59
III.	Fishing	14
IV.	Non-occupied	13
	TOTAL	360

2. SPECIAL OCCUPATIONS

A further analysis of the second category is given in the following table:

The first heading includes only those *Jia* whose heads are living in the town engaged in trade or in other occupations. The girls working in the silk factories outside are not included.

Silk spinners represent a special occupation. They work for the silk houses in the town, which collect the native raw silk from the villagers. The quality of the silk is irregular, and it must be sorted out by means of spinning before it can be exported or sold to the weaving factories. This sorting work is done by the villagers. The collectors distribute the raw material to the spinner and collect the silk again. Wages are paid according to the amount of work done.

I. Engaged in special occupations in town		14
II. Silk spinners		6
III. Retail traders		10
IV. Agent boats		4
V. Crafts and professional services		25
Carpenters	4	
Tailors	3	
Staff members of the co-operative factory	3	
Basket makers	2	
Barbers	2	
Millers	2	
Operators of modern pumping machines	2	
Mason	1	
Midwife	1	
Priest	1	
Shoemaker	1	
Silversmith	1	
Weaver	1	
TOTAL		59

A description of the retail traders and of the agent boats is given in the chapter on marketing.

The whole group of craftsmen and professional men includes only 7 per cent of the total households in the village. This low percentage is striking. It is due firstly to the fact that such work is not exclusively specialized.

Tailoring, shoemaking, and milling are common work in all households. Wood, bamboo, and mason's work of a crude type requires very little knowledge and skill and the necessary tools are found in most houses.

All the outsiders living in the village are traders and craftsmen and form, in fact, one-third of the total number of that group.

Since technical knowledge is usually transmitted through the kinship line, it is often not easily assimilated by the indigenous population. Moreover, even when the crafts are open for apprenticeship, parents who are able to provide their children with the opportunity of tilling land like to keep them on the farm. Land in the village is insufficient to support an increase of population. It is, therefore, difficult for an outsider to acquire land, and land in any case seldom comes into the market. Thus, as mentioned above, at present all the outsiders are landless and the only means for them to find a living is to engage in certain new crafts or in trades.

3. FISHING

There are two groups of fishing households, differing in methods of fishing and in their residential areas. The first group, living at the west end of the village only follow fishing as a supplementary occupation. Their method is by nets and hooks. Their heavy work is in the winter when agricultural work is at a pause.

Shrimps are collected from the lake by a kind of trap, made of basketry. Shrimp trapping is a common occupation of those households which live near the lake. According to reports I gathered in the summer of 1935, there were forty-three boats engaged in this work. The average income is one *yuan* per boat per day worked by two persons.

The other group of fishing households raise fishing birds, which will dive into water to catch fish. Raising and training these birds requires special knowledge which

is transmitted in the family, and thus this occupation is hereditary. These families form a special group and co-operate with their fellow professional men even in other villages. Since they may need to go very far from the home village and the birds must be carefully sheltered at night, they form a super-residential group based on their common professional interest. All the fishermen engaged in the same profession are obliged to extend their hospitality to their fellows.

CHAPTER VII

AGRICULTURE

The importance of agriculture in the village economy has been shown in the above pages. More than two-thirds of the households are engaged mainly in this occupation. Nearly eight months are spent in work on the land. And for foodstuffs the people are entirely dependent on the produce of their own farms. Thus in a study of the problem of production, agriculture must come first in view. The term agriculture is used here only in a narrow sense, and refers to the use of the land for cultivating desirable crops.

To start our analysis from the material substratum we will first attempt a description of the farm. The lay-out of the farm, based on technical considerations, has far-reaching effects on the organization of labor, on land tenure, and on the kinship organization. The study of it will be the best introduction to these more intricate aspects of the relation between man and land.

1. LAY-OUT OF THE FARM

The lay-out of the farm depends on what kind of crop the people select for cultivation. In this village the chief

crops cultivated are rice, rapeseeds and wheat. Rice starts in June and ends at the beginning of December. It is the main crop. After this crop a part of the higher land can be used for cultivating wheat and rapeseeds. But these two crops are only supplementary. The produce is only enough for domestic consumption.

More than 90 per cent of the land is used for these crops. Along the margin of each *yu*, which are tiny pieces of land divided up by the streams running through the village and its surrounding land, ten to thirty meters of land is left for plantation of mulberry trees and a wider space for house building. This land on the margin is higher. It also serves as a dyke for the farm.

The land used for the growing of crops is divided into farms. Rice cultivation requires a regular supply of water. Thus the lay-out of the farm depends on the measures for water regulation.

My informant said: "Water is the most important thing in the farm. The rice will die if the soil begins to break due to dryness and it will also die if water covers its 'eye'." The "eye" of the rice is the upper joint of the leaf with the stalk. The water level must be adjusted to the growth of the rice and effort must be made to irrigate the farm when the level is too low and to drain it when the level is too high. Water regulation is one of the main tasks in agriculture and dictates the topography of the farm.

Each *yu* is surrounded by water. The accessibility to water of each particular farm depends on its location in the *yu*. The farther one goes into the center of the *yu*, the more difficult is it to get supplies of water from the stream. In order to make it possible for the center part to obtain water, the levels of the *yu* must be graded like a dish. But this dish-shaped surface creates a difficulty in the storage of water. The water tends to find its level and, instead of there being an equal distribution of water over the farm, there will be a pool in the center with the

marginal land left dry. Dykes, therefore, have to be constructed, parallel to the margin. Another difficulty is that water must be brought in from the lower level of the stream. Pumps must be used to carry the water up to the higher level. To fix the pump, a spot must be selected along the bank and a ditch is dug out leading to the interior parts. Each strip of land, depending on water supplies from the same pumping spot, is marked out by dykes perpendicular to the margin. These two kinds of dykes, crossing each other, divide the farm into small pieces which are called *be* or plots.

Within each plot, the level must be even in order that there should be an equal distribution of water. This is a frequent cause of dispute among cultivators of the same plot when it is not owned by the same *Jia*.

The difficulty involved in the problem of drainage, purely from the technical point of view, is the size of the *yu*. The size is determined by the natural distribution of streams. It varies enormously. For instance. in the village we are describing there are eleven *yu* which vary from eight *mu* to more than nine hundred *mu*. The bigger the size, the more difficult it becomes to fit it into the process of collective drainage. To meet the need of urgent and efficient work, the big *yu* must be divided into smaller drainage units, which are called *cien*. Larger dykes are constructed to separate *cien* from one another. These dykes are also used as the main roads in the farm.

2. RICE CULTIVATION

The land is mainly, not exclusively, used for the cultivation of rice. The present study will be restricted to this aspect.

Rice cultivation starts in June. A small piece of ground is prepared as a nursery for the young shoots. Seeds are sown in the nursery. In about one month the rice has grown to about thirty centimeters in length. During this period the young shoots do not need much space but

require more care in water regulation. It is thus convenient and economical to keep them in a small space while the main field is under preparation.

Before the young shoots can be transplanted into the main field, the soil must be prepared. Preparation consists of breaking, refining and levelling the soil, and then of irrigation. All the work is done by human labor. One characteristic of the agricultural work in this region is the absence of animal labor. As we shall see later, the size of the farm is small and the holding of each household is scattered in such widely separated places, that animal labor cannot be used. The farmers use only the implement called *tid'a*, which is an iron hoe with four teeth, fixed on a wooden stick about a man's height. It takes about four days for the preliminary preparation of each *mu* of land by one man.

At this stage water is introduced onto the land. Dykes and ditches must be first examined and repaired if necessary. The water is introduced from the stream by a pump. A pump consists of a long, rectangular, box-like three-sided wooden tube in which there is a series of valves, made of small wooden plates connected by a chain of movable sections and forming a circle. The water is brought up to the pool not through the differential air pressure but through the movement of the valves.

The implement is not very efficient in carrying water to the upper level. It takes about one day to fill one *mu* with ten or more centimeters above the land surface. The length of time spent in waiting for irrigation and for drainage depends on the efficiency of the pump. The unsatisfactory system of irrigation and drainage is certainly a factor in reducing the amount of produce. It is also responsible for a difference in land value. The difference between the marginal plot and the central plot sometimes amounts to ten *yuan* or one-fifth of the average value of the land.

In the past two years, two air pumps, run by motor

engines, have been introduced into the village. One is owned by an individual and the other by the co-operative factory. A fee is charged per *mu* for the regulation of water during the whole year. This collectivizes the irrigation process and specializes the work. However, these machines have not yet been widely used, mainly because the labor saved by the machine has not yet found any productive use.

After water has been brought onto the land, it takes another day for each *mu* of land to be levelled. The total amount of time spent on the land for preparation can thus now be estimated. If there are seven *mu* for one person to work, it will take about thirty-five days, approximately equal to the amount of time needed for the growth of the rice in the nursery.

There is no ritual ceremony at the beginning of the agricultural work and every household is free to determine its own time for starting. The difference in time covers a range of two weeks.

Transplantation of the young shoots from the nursery farm to the main field is a major part of rice cultivation. The people describe this period as "busy in farm." The farmers start in the early morning for the nursery, which sometimes is far from the main field; they must transport the young shoots by boat. Children are brought to help in the work, but not women. The young shoots are planted in the main field in bunches of six or seven stalks. Children make themselves useful by handing the young shoots to the leaders while they are planting.

Each person can plant about half a *mu* a day. To plant seven *mu* well thus takes about two weeks.

In July it is already summer. In hot weather (80° F.) rice grows very fast. During this period rain is plentiful (5.5 inches); heaven helps people to supply water to the young rice shoot. But nature cannot always be relied on. If there are two or three days without rain, the delicate young shoots will need to be watered by pumping, which

calls for human labor. If it rains for three or four days continuously, the people will, on the other hand, be busy in pumping out the surplus water.

The wild grass mixed in the rice grows sometimes still faster. Only one week after the people have finished their work of transplantation, they must again be busy in weeding. A special instrument is used. This is a plate which has many nails on one side and is fixed to a long bamboo pole. The workman handles the pole by drawing the nails through the mud to uproot the wild grass.

When the field is weeded, the next task is to supply fertilizer for the soil. Fertilizer consists of human and animal manures and bean cakes. Bean cakes are made of the sediment of the soya beans after the oil has been pressed out. The cake is minced into small pieces and is evenly distributed over the farm.

Human manure is preserved in special pits behind the house. Sheep manure is collected from the hut. After long exposure in the air, and after being mixed with grasses, it is distributed over the field. Fresh manure is not used.

When the rice has reached a considerable height, and before it blossoms, the farmer must weed it thoroughly. This time the nailed plate cannot be used, because it might damage the root of the rice. The farmer has therefore to use his hands. To avoid damaging the rice, a saddle-like bamboo basket is attached to the upper leg. This brushes the rice away as the farmer walks in the mud.

Weeding and watering take all the farmer's time from July to September with several short intervals. The amount of work varies according to the amount of rain. In the early part of September the rice blossoms, and at the end of that month it bears fruit. No special work is necessary during that period. This is the long interval in agricultural work. During the latter part of October some of the early rice can be reaped. The instrument for reaping is a long curved sickle. The rice is cut near the

root of the stalk, and is carried in bundles to the open space in front of the house. Threshing is done in the open space or in the front room, by striking the ears of the grain against the side of a big box. Grains are thus separated from the stalk and collected at the bottom of the box. Threshed stalks are heaped on the ground beside the public road.

Grains are hulled in a wooden mill. Husks are separated from the seeds by a whirling machine. The hulled seeds of rice can be sold but cannot be cooked without another process of refined husking. The last process has been entirely taken over by the modern machines. The old instruments of mortar and pestle are not used any more.

3. SCIENCE AND MAGIC

The knowledge embodied in the lay-out of the farm, in irrigation, in drainage, in breaking the soil, in transplantation, in weeding, etc., is accumulated from the long experience of the population, transmitted from generation to generation and learned by practical demonstration. It is an empirical knowledge that enables the people to control the natural forces in order to attain human ends. A detailed investigation would show how highly developed is the science of agriculture in this region. The above account has already indicated that the people understood definite general principles of biology concerning the process of growth of the rice, the quantity of water needed during different periods, the function of leaves and roots in plant physiology, and of physics concerning the level of surface and the movement of water.

Their empirical approach to their enterprise is again seen in the way in which they adopt new technique and implements. The selection of implements is solely based on the principle of efficiency and economy. For instance, the air pump is used when there is urgent need of water regulation, but not when it proves to be expensive.

Science, however, only rules in so far that the natural factors can be successfully controlled by human effort. There are uncontrollable factors in nature. For instance, the primary need of a water supply can only be partially controlled by human means through irrigation, drainage, and the construction of dykes and ditches. It still largely depends on the rainfall. If there is too much or too little rainfall, rice will die regardless of how hard the people work on their pumps. Locusts may come unexpectedly. In this fateful sphere, and in this only, we find magical beliefs and practices.

It does not mean that the people conceive rain and locusts as supernatural manifestations. They have scientific meteorological knowledge. "When it is too hot, the lake will evaporate too much and when the temperature changes there will be rain." But these natural phenomena are beyond human control. They might be a great menace in practical life and turn all effort to nothing. At this vital point, the people say, "We depend on heaven." The recognition of human limitations gives birth to magic. But magic is not a substitute for science. It is only one means for combatting natural disasters. It does not rule out other means. Science and magic go hand-in-hand to attain a practical end.*

Magic is not a spontaneous and individual action. It is an organized institution. There is a definite person who is charged with the function and possesses magical powers. Secondly, there is a traditional ritual to call in the supernatural intervention. Lastly, there are myths to justify the ritual and the ability of the magician.

The occasions for magical performances are threats of flood, drought and locust plagues. Whenever the occasion arises, the people go to the district government and appeal for magical help. By ancient tradition the district magistrate was the magician of the people. In case of

* Theory of magic and science: see Professor B. Malinowski, "Culture," *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences.*

flood, he would go to the river or lake to demand the receding of the water by throwing his official belongings into the water. In case of drought he would issue an order to stop killing pigs and would organize a parade with all the paraphernalia suggesting rain, such as umbrellas and long boots. In case of locust plagues he would parade with the idol of *luiwan*, a local deity.

The magical function of the magistrate runs counter to the modern concept of civil office. Various orders have been issued for the prohibition of magical performances of any sort. The present magistrate, therefore, not only denies his traditional function to be the people's magician, but is supposed to enforce the law against magic. But the natural menaces of flood, drought, and locusts continue to threaten the people. Their scientific knowledge and equipment are still not sufficient to control many of the disasters of nature, and the need for magic remains unchanged.

An ex-magistrate told me how the problem was solved. "Under the pressure of popular demand to do something against the drought, I had to issue an order to stop killing pigs. I considered it to be very useful since epidemics always go together with drought, and vegetable food helps to check an epidemic. This is the real function of the belief. The parade was organized in my absence. It was no good to force the people to do nothing against the drought."

Magic exists in spite of government orders and various justifications, so long as it plays a useful part in the life of the people. A change in theory from conceiving magic as a kind of pseudo-science and obstacle to technological development to recognizing its practical function will throw light on practical measures for dealing with this problem. It is not a thing to be prohibited by order, but to be eliminated by providing more effective human control over nature. Since complete control is inconceivable

at present, it is difficult to rule out magic in human culture.

4. ORGANIZATION OF LABOR

Who are working on the land? On what occasions do the farmers need to co-operate? Who will co-operate? What kind of organization has resulted? Let us examine these questions — still from the technical point of view and leaving the legal problem to the next chapter.

I have said that the household is the basic economic unit. But the members of a household do not all participate in agricultural work; children go to the farm only occasionally and women are entirely free from it. Agriculture is chiefly men's occupation. This division of labor between men and women is a characteristic of the silk-producing area. It suggests that the development of the silk industry is a factor responsible for the practice. During the period when domestic reeling was prosperous, women were busy in reeling while men were busy in preparing the soil. On the other hand, the income secured from the silk industry was comparable to the income secured from agriculture. It enabled the people to live on small farms. The size of farms therefore remains limited and the amount of labor required in agriculture is correspondingly restricted.

To show how well adjusted are labor and land in the village, some statistics may be cited. The total number of adult men, the real or potential workers on the land, between 15 to 55, is 450. The total area of land, including a small percentage of non-cultivated land, is 3,065 *mu*. If the land is equally distributed among the workers, each will get 6.6 *mu*. The amount of land that can be cultivated by a single man is about seven *mu*. From the point of view of technology, the use of the hoe in cultivation has made most of the work very individualistic. Group work yields no more than the sum total of individual efforts. It also does not increase the efficiency very much. Pres-

ent technology has fixed the amount of labor required by the size of the land. Thus we have approximately identical figures for the amount of land which can be cultivated by each worker. This fact has far-reaching influence on land tenure, on the scattered system of farms, on the frequency of family division, and on the small size of the household.

The present decline of the silk industry has dislocated the traditional adjustment of economic activities. The size of farms has remained the same while the silk industry has been taken over by modern factories. The small farm cannot absorb the female labor that has been set free by the industrial change. The maladjustment is seen in the leisure enjoyed by the women in the village and the higher mobility of female population from the village to the town. In the neighboring villages where farms are comparatively large, in the process of adaptation to the new situation female labor has been introduced into agriculture. This shows that the traditional division of labor, originating as a part of economic adjustment, is a practical arrangement and is not due to any non-empirical cause. So far as men work by themselves and so long as the farm cannot be extended, female labor is not needed in agriculture. The only occasion for female labor is during the urgent period of irrigation and drainage. Water regulation sometimes requires prompt action. Women will not hesitate to work on the pump when they are needed.

The need of co-operative work is in water regulation. In the process of irrigation, the members of the household, including women and children, always work on the same pump. In the process of drainage, the water is pumped out from the common trench of a *čien*. The people who work in the same *čien* share a common fate. Hence develops a well organized system of collective drainage. This system has made the introduction of the modern pumping machine difficult, because it requires the unani-

mous consent of the whole *čien*. It still remains to be seen how this type of organization will adjust itself to the technological change.

CHAPTER VIII

LAND TENURE

Land tenure is commonly conceived as the customary or legal system of titles over land. "But," as Professor Malinowski has pointed out, "this system grows out of the uses to which the soil is put, out of the economic values which surround it. Therefore land tenure is an economic fact as well as a legal system.

"We could lay down at once the rule that any attempt to study land tenure merely from the legal point of view must lead to unsatisfactory results. Land tenure cannot be defined or described without an exhaustive knowledge of the economic life of the natives."*

"The maxim that you cannot understand the rules of the game without a knowledge of the game itself describes the essence of this method. You must know first how man used his soil, how he waves round it his traditional legends, his beliefs and mystical values, how he fights for it and defends it; then and then only will you be able to grasp the system of legal and customary rights which define the relationship between man and soil."**

We have, in the last chapter, studied how the villagers use their land and water. We are now prepared to go into the problem of land tenure.

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* *Coral Gardens and Their Magic*, 1935, p. 318.

** *Ibid.*, p. 320.

I. LAKES, STREAMS, AND ROADS

In so far as the water is used for communications, it is not exclusively for anybody. But when one enters the village, one sees rails constructed at the entrance of the stream. These are closed during the night. In this way the use of the stream as a means of communication is restricted. The reason is to prevent the communication route being used in such a way as to threaten the life or property of the villagers.

On the other hand, since the communication route is not the exclusive right of anyone, nobody is allowed to interfere with the general convenience by stopping boats in the middle of the stream. The same restriction is found in the use of water for drinking and cleaning. The silk factory had to be built at the lower course of the stream, otherwise the sewage would have dirtied the water and prevented others from using it for drinking purposes.

Regulation of water for irrigation is much more complicated. People are not allowed to build dykes in the stream in order to monopolize the water supply. This is a common issue of dispute between villagers especially during drought. The water introduced onto the farm by human effort belongs exclusively to the person who has effected this by labor. The dykes are not allowed to be opened in order to "steal" water from the higher plot. But a single plot may be owned by several persons. Each has a part in it. Since there is no dyke to separate the parts owned by different persons, the water is shared by all. In such a case, the labor spent in irrigation is equally distributed between the owners according to the size of the land in the plot. Most important of all, the level of the plot is maintained evenly in order that there should be a fair distribution of water. This is another cause of dispute, because, as I witnessed on several occasions, each farmer tries to lower his own part in order to receive a favorable reserve of water.

The natural products of water — consisting of fish, shrimps, and weeds which are used for fertilizing the farm — are the common property of the village. This means that the inhabitants of the village have equal rights to these products, and that people from other villages are excluded. Those fish and weeds that have been collected are the exclusive property of the collectors.

The public road and dykes on the farm, so far as they are used for communications, are not the exclusive property of anyone, like the water route. No one can stop any other person walking on the public roads or dykes. But the roads and dykes are also used for growing vegetables. The right to use them for this purpose is exclusive to a group which have special claims — the *Jia*. The problem is complicated because the public road passes across the open space in front of houses, which is used for heaping straws, for fixing silk machines and manure pits, for arranging dining-tables, and for drying laundries. Each house has the exclusive right to the use of the road for these purposes.

2. OWNERSHIP OF FARM-LAND

All the farms are divided between *Jia* for cultivation. Before we come to the owners, the idea of ownership of the farm-land must be clearly defined.

According to the native theory of land tenure, land is divided into two layers: namely, the surface and the subsoil. The possessor of the subsoil is the title holder of the land. His name will be registered with the government because he pays the taxes on the land. But he may possess only the subsoil without the surface, that is, he has no right to use the land directly for cultivation. Such a person is called an absentee landlord. The person possessing both the surface and the subsoil is termed the full owner. The one possessing only the surface without the subsoil is termed tenant. I shall use these terms only in the meanings defined above.

The owners of the surface, whether full owners or tenants, can cultivate the land themselves; this distinguishes them from absentee landlords. They also can lease the land to others, or employ laborers to work for them. The lessee who possesses the right of using the land temporarily can also employ laborers. In these cases, the person who owns the surface rights, may not be the actual cultivator of the land. Thus we must distinguish between the actual cultivator, the surface owners, and the owner of the subsoil. They may be the same persons and they may be different persons with reference to the same piece of land.

All of them have definite claims on the produce of the land. The owner of the subsoil can demand rent from the tenant. The surface owner can demand rent from the lessee. The employee can, in return for labor, obtain wage from the employer. The absentee landlord, the lessor, the employee receive fixed shares in terms of rent and wage irrespective of the actual return from the land. Therefore the risk involved is born by the full-owner, the tenant, and the lessee. The latter, except sometimes the employees, are also the owners of the implements used in cultivation.

3. FARM LABORERS AND LAND LEASING

Ownership of the land surface is always held by the *Jia* group, which supplies male members to work on the farm. But sometimes the group may not be able to supply enough labor and the institution of farm laborers comes into being. The persons thus introduced are long-term employees. They live in the house and are provided with food and shelter. They are paid a yearly wage of eighty *yuan* with two months' holidays at the new year when agricultural activities are suspended. Short-term employees are taken on when there is a short-period need for labor. They live in their own houses and provide their own food. They usually have their own land and are

employed only when they have completed their own work.

The long-term employees sell their labor and do not possess means of production except sometimes the hoe. They come from those *Jia* whose land holding is too small to absorb their labor. The total number of employees in this village is only seventeen. This shows that this institution does not play an important part in the village economy, and if we examine the population statistics this phenomenon can be explained. Any *Jia* which has a land holding above the average is likely to raise more children. When the children grow up, the estate is divided. In other words, the chance of labor in the *Jia* proving insufficient is considerably reduced by the population pressure and the ideology of kinship. Moreover, there is no sign of people leaving their land in search of other occupations and meanwhile employing laborers to cultivate the land. This is due, first to the low degree of occupational differentiation, secondly to the special value attached to land, and lastly to the under-development of industry in the town.

The institution of land leasing is also very limited. It occurs in most cases when the male members of a *Jia* are dead and the widows and children are unable to work on the land. Leasing of land is quite different from tenancy. The lessor preserves the right of ownership. There is a definite period for the contract. He is free to choose his lessee and to make changes when the contract expires.

4. ABSENTEE LANDLORDSHIP

To study the institution of absentee landlordship, it is necessary to examine first the values attached to land. The primary function of land is to yield a food supply. But land is not only a means for producing food.

The productivity of land fluctuates according to the amount of attention and labor devoted to it. Furthermore, it is only partially controllable. There are unexpected

risks. Thus land acquires its individuality through its variability in reacting to human expectation. Fear, anxiety, expectation, comfort, and love complicate the relation between man and land. People can never be certain what will come from the land. Land provides the means for self-assertion, for conquering the unknown and for the pleasures of accomplishment.

Although the productivity of the land can be only partially controlled, this partial control supplies an empirical measurement of workmanship. Honor, ambition, devotion, social approval are all thus linked up with the land. The villagers judge a person as good or bad according to his industry in working on the land. A badly weeded farm, for instance, will give a bad reputation to the owner. The incentive to work is thus deeper than the fear of hunger.

The relative inexhaustibility of the land gives the people a relative security. Although there are bad years, the land never disillusions the people completely, since hope for plenty in the future always remains and is not infrequently realized. If we take the other kinds of productive work, we shall see that the risks involved in them are much greater. The sense of security is expressed in the following statement made to me by one of the villagers:

> Land is there. You can see it every day. Robbers cannot take it away. Thieves cannot steal it. Men die but land remains.

The incentive to hold land is directly related to the sense of security. The farmer says, "The best thing to give to one's son is land. It is living property. Money will be used up but land never."

It is true that there are many ways of getting food. But the people will not exchange their land for other means, even if more productive. They do take up other occupations, such as the silk industry and fishing, but agriculture remains the principal occupation in the village.

The deeper we analyse the situation, the more it appears, not only that land in general has a particular value to the people, but that the property inherited by a *Jia* has for it a particular value. Land is transmitted according to fixed rules. People inherit their land from their fathers. The sentiment originating in the kinship relation and reinforced by ancestor worship is manifested also in this personal attachment to the particular plots of land. Religious belief in the importance of the continuity of descendents finds its concrete expression in the continuous holding of land. To sell a piece of land inherited from one's father offends the ethical sense. "No good son will do that. It is against filial piety." This comment sums up the traditional outlook.

Personal familiarity with a particular piece of land as the result of continuous work on it is also a cause of personal attachment to the land. It is very common for people to work on the same piece of land from early adulthood to death. To say that their land is an integral part of their personality is scarcely an exaggeration.

The sentimental and ethical reactions to the selling of land do not rule out completely the possibility of land transactions. Economic strain compels them to treat the land as an economic commodity.

A person needing money urgently, either for taxes or rent payment, is forced to borrow from the money-lender. After a definite period, if the borrower cannot pay back the capital as well as the interest, he is forced to transfer his title over the land, limited to the subsoil, to the lender. This transaction in practice means very little to the borrower, since the borrower under the ever-increasing burden of interest can hardly hope to repay his debt. To pay high interest is more unbearable than to pay a definite rent.

According to the native theory of land tenure, the tenant preserves his title to the land surface. This right cannot be interfered with by the owner of the subsoil. By

this custom the tenant is protected from any direct intervention by the owner of the subsoil. His only obligation is to pay the rent. According to law, if the tenant is unable to pay his rent for two years, the landlord can give him notice to quit, but the law does not apply to those places where custom is paramount. The practical difficulty of ejecting a tenant is to find a substitute. Absentee landlords do not cultivate the land themselves. Outsiders from the villages will not be welcomed into the community if they come at the expense of old members. Villagers are not willing to cut the throat of their fellow members who for any good reason cannot pay their rent. In these circumstances it is in the interest of the landlord to tolerate the default in the hope of getting rent in the future. This situation does not really challenge the status of the landlord, since there are positive sanctions to enforce payment of rent whenever this is possible.

By this analysis several important points in the problem of land tenure are cleared up. The actual cultivators of the land in the village — except laborers — continue unchanged even in the event of a change of ownership of the subsoil. Since the practice of usury is regarded as morally wrong, it is not possible for neighbors to squeeze each other. The institution of absentee landlord arises only in the relation between village and town. The ownership of the land surface remains in the hands of the villagers; even the outsiders who live in the village do not find it easy to become owners of land surface, *i.e.* cultivators of the soil.

Rent payment, an important consideration for the absentee landlord, leads to an examination of the method of rent collection and the attitude of tenants towards this obligation. Owing to the free market for land (*i.e.* the subsoil) in the town, the personal relation between the owners and the land they own has been reduced to the minimum. Most of the absentee landlords know nothing about the location of the land, the crop raised upon it,

and even the men who pay the rent. Their sole interest is the rent itself.

Rent is collected in various ways. The simplest system is the direct one; the landlord comes in person to the village. But this is not a very efficient way. Most of the landlords are unwilling to visit each tenant in different villages. Moreover, direct and personal contact sometimes handicaps the process of collecting. The majority collect their rent through agents.

Landlords of big estates establish their own rent-collecting bureaux and petty landlords pool their claims with them. The bureau is called *Jü*. The tenants do not know and do not care who is their landlord, and know only to which bureau they belong.

Names of the tenants and the amount of land held by each are kept in the bureau records. At the end of October, the bureau will inform each tenant of the amount of rent that should be paid that year. The information is forwarded by special agents. These agents are employed by the bureau and have been entrusted with police power by the district government. The bureau is thus in fact a semi-political organ.

Before deciding the amount of rent to be collected the landlords will hold a meeting in their union to decide what exemptions are to be made on account of flood or drought and also to decide the rate of exchange for converting rice rent to money. (The rent is regulated in terms of quantity of rice but payment is made in money.) The rate of exchange is not the market one, but is arbitrarily determined by the union of landlords. The peasants must sell their rice in order to get money for the payment of rent, and at the time when this is due the market price is usually low. Thus the combination of rent in kind and rent in money considerably increases the burden of the rent payer.

In the village, rent is paid into the hands of agents of the bureau. This is a peculiar practice different from

hat of other parts of the same district. The actual amount of payment is not necessarily equal to the amount written on the demand notice. As an old agent told me, "The villagers are illiterate. They don't know how to calculate from rice to money. There is no receipt or anything like that." If the tenant refuses to pay, the agent has power to arrest him and put him into the prison of the district government. But if the tenant is really unable to pay, he will be released at the end of the year. It is no use keeping him in prison and leaving the farms uncultivated.

A more detailed description of the system of rent collecting would be beyond the scope of the present study. But it is interesting to notice the different attitudes of the tenants towards their obligations.

By the old people, rent payment is regarded as a moral duty. As some of them said: "We are good people. We never refuse to pay our rent. We cannot steal even when we are poor. How then can we refuse to pay rent?" — "Why do you pay your rent?" — "The landlord owns the land. We cultivate his land. We only have the land surface. The surface cannot exist without the subsoil." These positive sanctions are adequate to maintain the institution. It is not only the fear of imprisonment that makes the tenants discharge their obligation. Where the tenant does not pay the rent, it is on account of distress for which he has no responsibility such as famine, illness, etc.

Recently the situation has been changing. The economic depression in the rural district has made rent a heavy burden on the peasant, and the income derived from the rent much more vulnerable for the landlord. The peasants are more susceptible to new ideas offered to the institution. "Those who till the land should have the land" is a principle laid down by the late Dr. Sun Yat-sen. A more extreme view is spreading among the communists and other left groups. All these ideas have affected the sanctions described above. Peasants unable to pay rent

now feel justified in neglecting to do so, and those who are able to pay will wait and see if they are compelled to do so. On the side of the landlords, strong measures must be taken to maintain their privileges, and their available capital tends to be no longer in agricultural land. The result is an intensification of conflict between tenants and landlords, and a financial crisis in rural economy. The district jail has been repeatedly crowded with default cases. Organized action of the peasants in refusing rent payment has provoked serious conflict with the landlords who are backed by government force. In this part of China, a peasant revolt took place in 1935 and led to the death of many peasants in villages near Suzhou. The value of land has depreciated rapidly, and the whole financial organization of the village is at stake. This situation is general in China. The gravest part is found in central China, where the issue has taken the form of a political struggle between Chinese Soviets and the Central government.

5. FULL-OWNERSHIP

Absentee landlordship is only found when there is close financial relation between village and town. Corresponding to the investment of town capital in the countryside, the ownership of the subsoil of the farm land passes into the hands of the townspeople. At the present time, about two-thirds of the subsoil of the village is owned by absentee landlords. The other third is still in the hands of the villagers. The villagers themselves may lease their land, may employ laborers, but never acquire the title to the subsoil only.

The full-owners, lessees and tenants do not form clear-cut or water-tight classes. The same *Jia* may possess all rights to some part of its land, may lease another part from or to others, and a part may belong to absentee landlords. The amount of land actually cultivated by each *Jia* is determined by the amount of labor available. Since

the number of male adult members of each *Jia* does not vary much, the amount of land cultivated by each is much the same. But if we inquire how far a *Jia* is cultivating its own land, or how much land is fully owned by each *Jia* we find a considerable variation. The administration office of the village gave me the following estimate:

Amount of land (*mu*)	Percentage of *Jia*
50—70	0.6
30—49	0.7
15—29	0.9
10—14	4.0
5—9	18.0
0—4	75.8

According to this estimate, about 90 per cent of the population in the village have less than ten *mu* or 1.5 acres of their own land. They have surplus labor but not enough land. Therefore they become lessees and tenants.

4. INHERITANCE AND AGRICULTURE

In this section, I intend to link the land tenure and agriculture with kinship. Let us take the example of the division of a *Jia* among a father and two sons. The land is divided in this case into three unequal parts. Let us suppose that before division the *Jia* possesses a strip of farms consisting of four successive plots: A, B, C, and D. These four plots are different in value because their distances from the streams are different. In principle the father can choose his own share. Suppose he takes plot A and half plot B, which may be divided parallel to the margin. The rest of plot B is assigned to the first son as his extra portion. The remaining two plots are equally divided among the two brothers. To ensure equality of division, they must be divided perpendicularly to the margin. Each son takes one belt. If, on the death of the father, the share reserved to him is divided again, it would

be divided in the same way. The narrow belt and the scattered holdings hamper the use of animal labor or other collective methods of farming. They are the chief causes of the technical backwardness of farming in China.

Moreover, in a single plot there may be several owners, each of whom is responsible for his own belt. We have seen how this gives rise frequently to disputes on water regulations.

The small size of holding of the *Jia* limits the number of children who can be raised. On the other hand, the relatively large landholders will raise more children and consequently the size of their holding will be reduced within a few generations. Under these conditions, the ratio between land and population is adjusted.

CHAPTER IX

THE SILK INDUSTRY

The silk industry is the second main source of income of the villagers. This is characteristic of the villagers around Lake Tai. The domestic silk industry has been carried on by the people for more than a thousand years.

1. CONDITIONS WORKING FOR INDUSTRIAL CHANGE

A proper estimate must first be made of the relative importance of agriculture in the domestic economy. The average holding of land is about 8½ *mu*. The total produce will be 2,550 *jin* for that average holding of land. The amount of rice needed for direct consumption by members of the household is 2,100 *jin*. Therefore there is a surplus of 450 *jin*. At the time when the new rice comes to market the price of rice is about 2½ *yuan* per 50 *jin*. If the surplus is sold the return will be about 22 *yuan*.

But for current expenses alone a *Jia* needs at least 200 *yuan*. It is thus evident that life cannot be supported by agriculture alone. The deficiency amounts to 175 *yuan* a year. The situation is much worse with the tenants, and these are the majority of the villagers. Tenant farmers with an average holding have to pay 1,000 *jin* of rice as rent to the landlord. This amounts to 40 per cent of the total produce. The remaining 1,500 *jin* are barely enough for the consumption of the household.

Thus it becomes clear that a supplementary industry is indispensable for maintaining a normal livelihood, which must be sufficient to cover daily necessities, ceremonial expenses, tax and rent and capital for future production. When the silk industry was prosperous, the villagers had then sufficient money to finance the various recreative and ceremonial activities.

The fall of income of the villagers is not due to a deterioration of quality or decrease of quantity of their production. Villagers produce the same type and the same amount of silk but it does not command the same amount of money from the market. The factors affecting price lie, of course, outside the village, and here I will only note two of the most important of them; namely, the post-war depression of world economy and the uneven quality of the domestic silk which renders it unsuitable to the highly mechanized weaving industry.

2. AGENTS OF CHANGE AND THEIR INTENTIONS

The relation between the decline of silk prices and the increase of poverty was clear to the people. At first they tried to discover what changes in the industry were necessary in order to restore the former conditions. But with their limited knowledge they were by themselves not able to take any definite action. Initiative and direction in the process of change come from outside.

The initiating party in this case was the Sericulture School for Girls, in Houshukuan, near Suzhou. This has

had a profound influence on subsequent development but has of course been a factor outside the village.

A technical school in China is one of the centers for spreading modern technique in industry. Modern technique has been chiefly introduced from foreign countries, in the case of the silk industry chiefly from Japan. The difficulty of the technical school in fulfilling its function is that unless the new technique is accepted by the people, it cannot by itself serve progress. A failure in this respect is reflected in unemployment of the trained students. The situation there is most acute in the silk industry. The silk industry, especially the process of raising silkworms, is a kind of domestic work in the villages. In order to make the improved technique acceptable to the people and to find jobs for the students, industrial reform in villages has become an urgent problem for the technical schools. They cannot remain as purely educational institutions. Therefore, the Sericulture School has established a special department responsible for spreading in rural districts a knowledge of the new methods.

The person responsible for initiating the reform program in the village gave me the following account.

> In the worst years, by means of the traditional method only about 30 per cent of the total silkworms reached the final stage and produced cocoons. The amount of silk given by the worms was small. This unsatisfactory state of affairs was due to the lack of preventive measures against the spread of disease among the worms. In addition, the temperature and humidity, which are very important conditions in the process of the growth of the worms, were left unregulated. Even those worms unaffected by disease were unhealthy and not able to produce good cocoons.

Silk is the raw material for the weaving industry. Since the silk produced in the village is mostly exported, it must be adjusted to the technical development in

the weaving industry in Western countries. However, the silk produced by the villagers is unsuitable for the improved weaving industry. The decline of demand for such crude silk leads to a decline of price. That is the reason why we must introduce the scientific method to the village.

But technical change cannot be produced without corresponding changes in social organization. Introduction of the steam engine for technical purposes leads to a change from individual domestic work to collective factory work. Under a system of collective enterprise, the relation between the means of production and labor also become more complicated. To introduce new social organizations for production, the agent must also teach new social principles. The selection of the social principle in organizing the new industry is also related to the interest of the agent. The technical school is not interested in making a profit for itself because it is not an economic institution. Who would therefore gain from industrial reform? The agent's answer is the people. The organization of the new industry is on the principle of "co-operation." The agent justified this change as follows:

To me, the most important thing is that men should not be the slaves of machines. In other words, machines should be owned by those who use them as a means of production. That is why I insist on the principle of co-operation. It would be much easier to organize the new factory on capitalistic lines, but why should I do it? Should I work for the interests of the capitalists and intensify the sufferings of the people? The profit secured from the improved technique should go to the people who share in the production.

My other conviction is that the silk industry has been, and should remain, a rural industry. My reason is that if we attract the industry away from the village, as has

been done by many industrialists and is so easy to accomplish, the villagers will in fact starve. On the other hand, I know very well how the workers are living in the cities. Village girls have been attracted by the opportunity to work in the city factories for a small wage, on which they can hardly support themselves. They have left their own homes. This process has ruined both the city workers and the village families. If Chinese industry can only develop at the expense of the poor villagers, I personally think we have paid too much for it.

The aim of my work is to rehabilitate the rural economy through the introduction of scientific methods of production and the organization of the new industry on the principle of co-operation.

The socialistic ideas of the reformers represent a part of the current ideology of the present literate class in China. In their new version they are introduced from the West, side by side with the modern technology and capitalistic system of industry. The position of the Chinese people in the world economy and the repeated struggle with the Western powers have created a situation favorable for the spreading of socialist ideas. A reaction against capitalism, as understood by the Chinese people, prevails among the general public. Even those who stand for capitalism do not dare openly to justify its principles

3. LOCAL SUPPORT FOR CHANGE

The Sericulture School, being outside the village, was only a potential agent. To turn the potential agent into an active one there was needed another factor. There was no direct social relationship between the School and the villagers. The group which possessed the new knowledge had no direct use for it and the group which needed the knowledge had no opportunity of acquiring it. A bridge by which the agent of change could be made to

function in the village was essential. It was found in the local leaders.

I have mentioned that the village headmanship is not a hereditary office. He has no other ground for his authority than the usefulness of his services to the community. One of his most important functions is to interpret local needs and to assume leadership in taking necessary measures. The village head receives no economic reward for his position. But through introducing special work in the village, he can derive economic benefit from it. These were the intentions of the village heads of Kaixian'gong in supporting the program of industrial reform. This analysis is important in explaining why there was no active resistance against the reform at the initial stage. There was promise of improved condition on the side of the Sericulture School, and hope on the side of the people.

The rapid fall in prices had forced the people to accept certain changes in the traditional industry. But they lacked sufficient knowledge to define the situation or to formulate a definite program of change. They were also not properly equipped to judge the desirability of the proposed program. The suspicion of novelty went hand-in-hand with the readiness to accept reforms when, by demonstration, the new technique could be proved useful. That is why at the beginning there were only twenty-one households in the program which had suffered from hopeless failure when working by traditional methods. But it took only two years to draw the whole village under the supervision of the teaching center.

4. THE CO-OPERATIVE FACTORY

To improve the quality of the silk thread produced by the villagers according to the traditional method, the reformers have tried several methods. The following statement made by the agent will explain the situation.

The domestic system of production could not be retained if we were to improve the quality of the product. We decided therefore to test out what is the smallest size of silk factory in which all the advantages of applying modern technique of production can be realized but which at the same time is not too large to be maintained in the village and to use local labor and local supplies of raw material. This experiment has a wider significance. If we can produce, with lower labor costs, silk equal in quality to that of the larger scale factories, we can extend this system without fearing competition from factories in the cities. Through this small scale factory, rural industry can get a firm basis and the rural economy can be rehabilitated. We started the experiment in 1929. Our experiment proved to be successful only after the re-equipment in 1935, with the new machine which is a modified form of the latest Japanese type. With this we are able to produce the best silk in China. In 1935 the produce of this factory was ranked by the export bureau as of the highest grade.

From this account it is very clear that the substitution of the collective factory for the domestic system was dictated by technical considerations. The steam engine which makes possible a controlled and smooth movement of the wheel, and consequently speed and evenness in drawing the fibers from the cocoons, leads inevitably to a centralized system. Whether the introduction of electric power might again change the centralized system is a matter for future experiment.

Ownership of the factory is vested in the group of people who are members of the co-operative society. Their liability towards the factory is limited to the share they contribute. Membership is voluntary and is not limited to the people of this village. Anyone who observes the obligations of membership can be admitted as a member of the society. The obligation of a member is to hold a

share in the factory and to supply a definite amount of raw material, cocoons, every year. There are 429 members of the society, including practically all the households in the village, and more than fifty members from neighboring villages.

Final control of the factory is, according to the regulation, vested in the general meeting of the members. At the general meeting an executive council is elected, which is in theory responsible to the general meeting. In practice, it works the other way round. The people work according to the instructions of the local leaders, the executive council, and the local leaders work according to the instruction of the reformers, the School. The members have nothing to say, since the whole work is under the direction of the reformers, and the people have not sufficient knowledge to run the factory by themselves. A high percentage of illiteracy and the lack of educational opportunity on the part of the villagers have made it very difficult for the reformers to carry out their plan of training the villagers, the real masters of the factory. There has been no attempt by the members to exercise their right of vote to control the factory, since the ballot system is entirely new to them. The members do not understand more of the factory than that its practical benefit in terms of profit are distributed among them. They do not know on what basis they have a claim to the profit, just as they do not know on what basis they should pay rent to the landlord. Ownership then actually means to them only a grant for the distribution of profit.

5. GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

In the very beginning, the local government in the town, the town council, co-operated with the School to start the reform program. But at that time, 1923, the Provincial government was in the hands of a warlord who had no interest in any measure of that kind. Only after

the establishment of the Nationalist Government in Nanjing in 1927 had rural reconstruction gradually become one of the main policies of the government. Special attention has been paid to the rural silk industry as well as to the co-operative movement. The co-operative factory in this village was therefore able to secure its financial support from the government in the form of a long-term loan from the Provincial Peasant Bank. Moreover, the experiment in the village was the forerunner of the big program of change in this rural industry in China.

6. DIFFICULTIES IN CHANGE

The intention of the people to accept the reform is due to its practical benefit as expressed in the increase of family income. Now we can examine how far the reform program has met this expectation.

The disinfection of silkworm eggs, the organization of a common room for raising young worms and the supervision given by visiting instructors in the later stages have reduced the cost and increased the production of cocoons. This part of the reform has enabled the people to get an income roughly twice as much as they had before. The result of the reform in reeling is not so promising. In 1929, the members received as dividend about ten *yuan* per share. But ever since that year, they have got nothing of that sort from the factory. On the other hand, they were under obligation to supply raw materials with a delayed payment of 30 per cent. Up to the present, those whose income has actually been increased by the introduction of this factory are the laborers and the staff in the form of wages and salaries. They are the minority of the community.

The inability of the factory to distribute yearly profit among the members is due to two fundamental factors. First of all, the reformers are not able to control the price level. It is true that better silk can be sold at a higher

price, but the price of silk in general fluctuates at different times. So long as the reformers cannot control the market, mere improvement in the quality of production cannot necessarily bring back higher returns and is not able to increase the income of the villagers.

A more immediate factor responsible for the present state of affairs is the financial problem. It is not true that the factory has not made profit during the years 1930 to 1936, because the total amount of loans has been reduced every year. In other words, the factory saved from its own profit in production so as to buy over the means of production which was so far borrowed.

7. EFFECTS ON KINSHIP RELATIONS

Wage-earning is now regarded as a privilege, because it makes an immediate contribution to the domestic budget. Those who have no adult daughters begin to regret it. The woman's position in society has undergone a gradual change. The traditional economic status of a girl is subordinate to her father or to her husband. She has no opportunity to possess any large amount of money. The financial power of the *Jia* is in the hands of the head. The people do not account for this. They only know the concrete income of the family. As soon as their expectations could not be realized they began to be disillusioned. The direct reaction was discontinuance of further payments of their subscriptions. Up to the present time, only about one-half of the amount subscribed has been paid in.

Introduction of modern machinery into the village economy, as we have seen in the case of water pumping in agriculture, has created a new labor problem under the domestic system where every household had its own reeling machine. There were at least three hundred and fifty women in this village engaged in the work of reeling silk. Now under the factory system, the same amount of

work can be done easily by less than seventy persons. The amount of labor needed in production has been reduced. For instance, by the present reeling machines, each worker can look after twenty spindles at the same time while with the older machines one could only handle four or five. From the technical point of view it is a great improvement. But what does this improvement mean to the rural economy? Nearly three hundred women have lost their opportunities to work. The problem of "unemployment" has its wider repercussions — the traditional division of work according to sex remains unchanged, but the size of the farm is so small that introduction of female labor to the land is impossible; and no new industry has been introduced to absorb the surplus of female labor.

The reformers have tried to solve the problem by the system of distribution of profit. But it has not been successful, as we have shown above. The results are (1) for those who cannot go to town for various reasons, survival, or, to a certain extent, revival of the traditional domestic industry which becomes a kind of resistance of the reform program through competition in securing raw material, (2) movement of the female population to the towns, which is contradictory to the original intention of the reformers, and (3) creation of a special wage-earning class in the village.

Wage-earning is essentially individualistic. The earner feels that the wage is the result of her own effort. This sense is shared by both parties, the owner herself and the head of the *Jia*. Furthermore, the wage is paid by the factory to the earner herself. At least during that moment, she is able to spend a part of her earnings in accordance with her own wishes. Therefore, the economic relation in the *Jia* is gradually modified. For instance, if the girl spends her wage within reasonable limits and for proper purposes such as buying clothes, it will be accepted without interference. But she is not allowed to spend

all her wage; a large portion of it must be handed over to the head to go into the common budget. To maintain the collective and centralized system of economy under the new situation, the head of the *Jia*, even at the expense of his authority, will be forced to be considerate towards fellow members of the *Jia*. Complications come again in the problem of to whom she will hand over her earnings. When the girl is not married and has a mother, but when the head of the *Jia* is her grandfather, her mother may hold up a part of her earning for future use in her marriage. If the economic condition is not favorable for saving, the amount will be absorbed in the general budget. A married woman will keep a part of her earnings as her own savings. These facts show the increasing differentiation of the individual family from the compound group *Jia*.

The physical separation of the wage-earner from the members of her family may also produce essential changes in the kinship relations. The separation of a daughter-in-law from her mother-in-law will reduce the possibility of daily conflict. But the separation of wife from husband will loosen the marital tie.

The separation of the child from its mother rearranges the intimate relation in the *Jia*. The suckling period is shortened. The grandmother will take up the mother's obligation in further nursing and care of the child. This also establishes new relations between the daughter-in-law and mother-in-law. Similarly, with those women who work in the village factory and cannot bring their children with them, the same situation is found.

All these facts point to the re-organization of the kinship relations in a new pattern which will find adjustment with the industrial changes. My present material is only sufficient to suggest the problem for further investigations.

CHAPTER X

SHEEP RAISING

The reform of the silk industry is only one of the attempts being made in the village to increase income and thus to counteract the decline in silk prices. The most important of the new enterprises is sheep raising. This was introduced about ten years ago, but only recently became an important industry. Its development was not due to the initiative of any one agent. People in the village learned from their neighbors that in the town there was a new shop collecting sheep foetus, or newly born sheep. The demand in the market called forth the new industry in the village.

The main difficulty in sheep raising is the problem of feeding. 90 per cent of the land is used for farming. Except for a few plots of ground occupied by tombs belonging to the people of the town, there is practically no pasture land available for sheep. The farms are open; there are no fences to prevent possible damage by wandering animals. In such circumstances it is impossible to raise sheep in the open. Therefore special huts have been built, and the sheep are kept enclosed.

To feed the sheep, grass must be collected; in winter dried mulberry leaves are used. A new division of labor in the household has been developed in this connection. Collecting grass is left to the children. Walking through the village you will see children even below ten scattered everywhere in small groups, collecting grass under the mulberry trees, along the streams, and on the open tomb ground. The children's labor is thus incorporated into the domestic economy. This has created a new problem for the public school. Literary education seems to the people less valuable than the immediate contribution which children can make to the family income. The list of ab-

sentees in the classes is correlated with the number of sheep raised in the village.

Another advantage of keeping the sheep enclosed in the hut, is that the sheep manure can easily be collected. This is a valuable fertilizer.

For starting sheep raising, a certain amount of capital is necessary, at least enough to buy the ewe. Rams can be borrowed from relatives or hired for breeding. Payment for this service is not fixed and is made mostly by means of gifts. If a farmer cannot himself raise the money to buy an ewe, he can raise sheep belonging to other people. The person raising the sheep is responsible for their feeding and gets half the young sheep as well as the manure in the hut.

A mother sheep may bear young ones once or twice a year, while to raise a young sheep to maturity takes more than a year. People therefore prefer to sell young sheep instead of the foetus. The tradition against killing pregnant animals reinforces this preference. On the average a mother sheep produce two to four young ones every year, which will yield the owner an income of twenty to thirty *yuan*.

1. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL MARKETING

More than two-thirds of the total population in the village are engaged in producing rice, silk, and sheep. These do not sell their produce in the village but to the town. Those engaged in fishing sell only a small portion of their produce to their fellow villagers. Those who produce special goods and render special services to the villagers are limited to a small group which is only 7 per cent of the total population. Most of their work is not exclusively specialized but is supplementary to common household work. Carpenters, basket makers, and masons are engaged mostly in repair work. They keep a working place in their own house but they also work in the houses of their clients. Tailors work mostly in clients' houses.

The small degree of occupational differentiation in the community has made the internal market very narrow. People depend on the outside world for the supply of goods and services. This raises a general problem: how do the goods flow into the village? Goods may be bought by the villagers directly in the outside market and brought back to the village. Or they may be carried to the village by different kinds of middlemen. Among these three general types can be distinguished:

(1) Pedlars who visit the village periodically and sell goods at the house of the buyer.
(2) Retail stores which keep a permanent place in the village to store imported goods and attract buyers to their places.
(3) Agent boats which buy goods from the town on behalf of the consumers and transport the goods to the village.

Pedlars may be regular or irregular. This depends on the type of goods they sell. Goods may be produced by the pedlars themselves or may be retailed from the market. Most of the irregular pedlars sell their own produce and do not come from the town but from other villages. This is a type of decentralized inter-village marketing outside the town.

Each pedlar has a customary area which includes several villages, and this area is determined by the distance the pedlar can walk and the profit he can make. The frequency of his visits is also thus determined.

Pedlars do not live in the village. They visit the consumers periodically. Retail stores, on the other hand, are located at permanent places and attract buyers to the stores. This gives rise to a group of people who specialize in trading.

The village stores cannot meet all the daily needs of the villagers. The agent boats offer daily service to purchase necessities from the town and derive their income

from acting as selling agents of the villagers. They play an important function in the village economy. This institution is common in the region round Lake Tai, and it has led to a special development of the neighboring towns.

The existence of the agent boats has put the village stores into a supplementary position. Village stores cannot compete with the agent boats. They are too small to order goods directly from big wholesale stores in the cities, as the town stores do. They buy from the town stores like the agent boats. But the agent boats offer free services in buying while the village traders have to make a profit from retailing.

One important feature of the agent boat is that it does not make any profit as a buying agent of the consumers. Similarly passengers who go on the boats to town do not pay any fare. The agents obtain their reward by acting as the selling agents of the producers in return for a fixed commission.

The process of selling requires much skill and knowledge of the market which the villagers do not necessarily possess. When they sell their produce, for example their silk, they rely on the agents. The agents are constantly in touch with the collectors in the town and know every detail about the different collectors. It is essential for the producers to get in touch with the right collector for his particular produce. Therefore the expert advice of the agent is needed.

Those who have paid commission to the agents on the sale of their produce are entitled to use the boats for communication and to order goods through them. The payment for this service is thus distributed according to the amount of production but not to the amount of consumption of the clients.

2. MARKETING AREAS AND THE TOWN

The size of a marketing area is determined by the system of transport — the cost and time involved in the

movement of persons and goods. At the center of each marketing area is a town, the essential difference of which from the village lies in the fact that the population in the town is mainly occupied in non-agricultural work. The town is for villagers the center of exchange with the outside world. The villagers buy most of their manufactured goods from the middlemen in the town and supply their produce to the collector there. The development of the town depends on the number of customers that can be attracted to it. As we have seen, the institution of the agent boat enables the town in this region to concentrate the primary purchase from its tributary villages and thus reduce the function of the village traders. The size of the marketing area of this type is much larger than that found in North China, where land transport is predominant and the agent system is not developed.

3. MARKETING AND PRODUCTION

Silk and sheep are produced entirely for selling. We have already seen how the price has affected the production in these industries. The low price of native silk stimulated the reform program. As a result of the reform, the amount of the production of native silk was greatly reduced. But in recent years, the amount has not declined in proportion to the decline of price. On the contrary there are signs of an increase. As explained, this is due to the lack of other work to absorb the surplus female labor in the village. Sheep raising was started because of the new demand of the market. But the amount of production cannot be increased while supply of grass is limited as at present. Price is thus not the only factor determining the volume of production.

Rice is produced partly for selling and partly for consumption. The amount of reserve does not necessarily fluctuate according to the price. Each household will try to reserve enough rice for a year's consumption. A high market price of rice will not induce the producer to sell

his reserves, because the future price level is uncertain. But a low price will force people to sell more rice to the market; this is because the amount of money income needed by each household is more or less known at the time of harvest when the tenants are required to pay their rent in terms of money. This fact is important for the rice collectors. They usually try to force down the price in order to increase the volume of trade. The villagers' total reserve is frequently so reduced as to be insufficient for their own consumption. In the following summer the villagers will be dependent on outside supply. This also is to the benefit of the trader.

The fluctuation of price does not affect the total production of rice. The total amount is determined by the size of the land, the technique of production, and last, but not least, the supply of rainfall. These are matters over which the people have little control. Change of occupation is difficult and even change of crop seldom comes to the minds of the villagers. Thus the structure of production is a rigid one and does not react elastically to the demand of the market. When changes take place, they are gradual and far-reaching.

Let us take the silk industry as an example. The adjustment between the new demand of the market and the productive system has taken nearly ten years in spite of a well-planned program and special efforts. From our analysis of the changing process, we have seen that the effectiveness of supply and demand depends on a knowledge of the market which villagers do not always possess. Without some special agents to affect a change, the people would hardly understand the cause of the decline of price and still less define the type of goods that would meet the new demand of the market. To bring about a change in the industry, special knowledge and social organization are needed. All these factors delay an immediate and automatic adjustment of supply and demand in the rural economy.

Change of occupation in the village is more difficult than reform of an existing industry. No serious attempt has yet been made to find out the possibility of introducing new industries to the village besides sheep raising. Even the latter is only a supplement to the existing productive system and not a change of occupation. Villagers can change their occupation only by leaving the village. In other words, occupational mobility under the present situation means a mobility of population from the village to the town. In the village, those who go out to find new occupation are mostly young girls who have not yet entered into a fixed social place in the community. Even in this group, such mobility has already challenged the traditional kinship relation and the stability of the domestic group. The reaction against the disruptive forces in social stability becomes a force to counteract the present mobility. It is difficult to say at the present stage how far the traditional forces will give way in the novel situation. But on the whole the slow mobility of population, especially of the male population, indicates the slow effect of the outside demand for labor and the rigidity of the traditional productive system in the village.

Nevertheless it is clear that the market affects production strongly. It has led to various changes which are not limited to economic life only. The reaction of the productive system to market conditions does not take a simple course but is a long and involved process which requires investigation in a wider perspective than that of a purely economic inquiry.

CHAPTER XI

FINANCE

1. SAVING AND DEFICIENCY

Credit is possible only when there is saving on the one hand and deficiency on the other. Saving is the surplus

of income over expenditure in an economic unit, in the village the *Jia*. Income is the total production of the *Jia*. It may or may not be converted into money. Expenditure includes all the goods, produced by the unit or purchased on the market, used by the members for consumption, for fulfilment of social obligation and for production.

The amount of production of each *Jia* in the village does not vary much because the groups are very similar in size, and in their technique of production. There is also uniformity in the amount of consumption among them. The inequality in the distribution of wealth is, apart from special reasons in individual cases, mainly due to the system of land tenure. A tenant has to bear a heavy burden of rent. Two-thirds of the land in the village is now in the hands of absentee landlords. Each year the villagers pay in total 240,000 *jin* of rice for rent. This burden is not shared equally by the villagers, but is spread over about 70 per cent of the people. Among these again the burden is not equal. The system of land tenure has resulted in an annual outflow of a large quantity of wealth from the village to the town and an unequal distribution of wealth in the village.

The depression of the silk industry has caused a decline of one-third of the average income of the village. On the side of expenditure, consumption and social obligations have remained largely as they were. The only elastic item that can be reduced or suspended is ceremonial expenditure; and according to my estimate, the minimum amount of such expense at present is only one-fifth of the total money expenditure. With the rapid decline of the income level, accompanied by a rigid level of expenditure, deficiency is the result.

Urgent deficiency calls for immediate measures. It is found in such situations as food shortage, lack of capital goods, and inability to pay rent and tax. Unless financial aid in these cases is forthcoming there will be disastrous consequences to the individuals concerned. Owing to the

unequal distribution of rent obligations, deficiences of this urgent kind are confined to a part of the villagers. There is still a small group which, even in present circumstances, is able to save and another group which is able to meet all the minimum requirements of subsistence.

The decline of the ability to save has caused an increasing need for outside financial help. The internal credit system functions only as a means to cope with the unequal distribution of wealth within the community. It cannot meet the situation of general insolvency. Thus external aid has become the urgent financial problem in the village.

2. FINANCIAL AID SOCIETY

As with goods and services, small sums of money can be borrowed from relatives or friends for a short term without interest. This system of mutual allowance is found chiefly in cases of temporary deficiency, and the creditor is confident in the ability of the debtor to repay within a short time.

But when a large sum is needed, it is difficult to borrow from one individual and to repay in a short time. The financial aid society, of which there are three types, is a mechanism for collective saving and lending.

Such a society is organized on the initiative of the person who needs financial help. Members who join the society are considered as having rendered help to the organizer. The usual purpose of organizing such a society is to finance marriage ceremonies. Repayment of a debt incurred for such proper reasons as the financing of a funeral ceremony may also be regarded as acceptable ground. But productive purposes, such as starting a business or buying a piece of land, are not so regarded.

Given a proper purpose, the organizer will approach his relatives; father's brother, brother, sister's husband, mother's brother, wife's father, etc. These have an obligation to join the society. Even when they are unable

to subscribe, they will find some of their relatives to take their place.

The number of members varies from eight to fourteen. In the village the kinship circle, in which intimate relations are maintained, is sometimes smaller. Membership may then be extended to relatives' relative or friends. These are recruited by appealing, not to social obligations but to mutual benefits. If someone needs financial help which does not justify organizing a society by himself he will join a society formed by others. Those who are known in the community to be rich will respond to a justifiable appeal for help in order to show generosity and to avoid public criticism.

3. AGENT BOATS AS CREDIT AGENT

Deficiency of food supply is extraordinary in a village where rice is the staple produce. It is a result of the decline of price of rural produce. To receive the same money income as formerly, the amount of output must be increased. As a result, the rice reserve of the villagers is sometimes exhausted before the new rice is ready. In this connection the agent boat plays an important function in the village economy.

The villagers sell their rice to the town collectors through the agent boat. The collector deals with the agent, not with the real producers. To secure a constant supply, especially against the competition of the town market, the collector must maintain good relations with the agent. On the other hand, the agent is indispensable to the producers. They rely upon him for selling and buying. These relations enable the agent to bring the collector and the villagers into financial relationship in case of need.

The agent will ask the collector on behalf of his clients to lend rice and he will guarantee the return when the new rice comes to market. His guarantee is effective because the rice produced by the debtor will pass through

his hand. Moreover, by extending credit, the collector can not only make a profit, but ensures his future supply.

The rice borrowed from the collector is valued at 12 *yuan* per 150 *jin* which is higher than the market price. The debtor repays an amount of rice equivalent to 12 *yuan* at the market price (which during the winter is about 7 *yuan* per 150 *jin*). The rate of interest works out at about 15 per cent per month if the term is two months. This rate is comparatively low. It is made possible because the creditor does not run much risk owing to the institution of the agent boat and the economic value for the collector of insuring his future supply. The existence of a number of collectors on the market makes the supply of credit more elastic and gives the debtor a better position in negotiation.

This credit system is comparatively a recent one. It has not been developed beyond the sphere of rice-lending. But by the same principle it might be gradually extended to money-lending through rice and silk collectors as a payment in advance for produce which is relatively stable and can be counted on beforehand.

4. USURY

Professional money-lenders in the town advance money to the villagers on very high rates of interest. This traditional institution we may term usury.

A person who finds himself unable to pay land tax, for instance, and is not prepared to spend the whole winter in prison, has to borrow money. The usurer's door is open to him. The money from the usurer is expressed in terms of an amount of mulberry leaves. At the time of the transactions, there are no mulberry leaves at all and a market price does not exist. The price is arbitrarily set at 70 cents per picul (114 lbs.). For instance, a loan of 7 *yuan* will be regarded as a loan of 10 piculs of mulberry leaves. The term of the loan expires at Qing Ming (April 5th), and it must be repaid not later than Gu Yü (April

20th). The debtor has to pay an amount of money according to the market price of mulberry leaves, which at that time is about 3 *yuan* per picul. Thus a loan of 7 *yuan* or 10 piculs of mulberry leaves, concluded in October, yields a return of 30 *yuan* to the creditor in April. During these five months, the debtor is paying an interest of 65 per cent per month. This system of money-lending is called "living money of mulberry leaves."

At the time of Qing Ming the people are just starting their silk industry. This is a financially vulnerable period in the village. Persons who were unable to pay their rent in the winter are not likely to be able to pay the amount back to the creditor. In the previous five months, they have been engaged on no major productive enterprise, except trade ventures. In these circumstances, the debtor may ask the creditor to renew the loan in terms of rice. This process is called "changing to rice." The price of rice is counted, irrespective of the market, at 5 *yuan* per 150 *jin*. The term is extended to next October. Repayment will be made according to the highest market price of the rice, which is about 7 *yuan* per 150 *jin*. The person who borrowed 7 *yuan* in one October will thus repay 48 *yuan* in the next October. The rate of interest is thus about 53 per cent per month on the average.

If the debtor is still unable to clear up his debt, no prolongation of the term will be allowed. The debtor must settle by handing the legal title of his land to the creditor. In other words, he will transfer the right of ownership of the subsoil of the land to the creditor. The price of land is counted as 30 *yuan* per *mu*. From then on, he is no longer a debtor but a permanent tenant. Instead of paying interest, he will pay an annual rent.

The rent is 120 *jin* of rice or about 4.2 *yuan* per *mu*. If we take Professor Buck's estimate of the average rate of interest from the investment in rural land as 8.5 per cent,* we find that a *mu* of land has a money value of 56

* *Chinese Farm Economy*, p. 158.

yuan. Thus a loan of 7 *yuan* will ultimately in one year yield as return to the creditor a piece of land worth 63 *yuan*.

Through the usurer, the ownership of the subsoil is transferred from the hand of the cultivators to the absentee landlords who buy the land titles from the usurer. Upon this financial institution, the system of absentee landlordship is based.

Usury is an extra-legal system. According to law, if the rate of interest agreed upon exceeds 20 per cent per annum, the creditor is not entitled to claim any interest over and above 20 per cent. Therefore, the contract must be enforced by other means than legal force. The usurer employs his own collector to force the debtor to pay when the term has expired. If payment is refused, the collector will use violence and take off or destroy anything at his disposal. In one case, I know, on the death of the debtor, the creditor took off a girl of the deceased to town as his slave. The debtor is usually too ignorant to seek the protection of the law and the community gives him no support. He is actually at the mercy of the usurer.

Usurers live in the town. Each has a nickname. The one connected with the village of our study is Sze, the Skin-tearer. This nickname indicates the public hatred. But he is an important source available to the villagers in case of urgent need. The supply of credit is very limited while the demand is urgent. The consequence of being imprisoned or losing the entire silk crop is more immediate and irreversible. To borrow money from the usurer at least leaves open the possibility of repaying when the time comes.

The existence of the system is due to the lack of a better financial organization between the town and village. Under the present system of land tenure, the villagers supply an increasing amount of produce to the town in terms of rent while there is no means for the villagers to draw back an equivalent amount from the town. Former-

ly when the chief textile industries in China, such as silk and cotton, were developed in rural districts, the villagers were able to offset the outflow of rural wealth by the profit made from the industrial export. The rapid deindustrialization of the rural district has dislocated the financial balance between town and village. The rural problem, broadly speaking, originated in deindustrialization, finds its concrete expression in financial insolvency and is crystallized in the issue of land tenure. In the village, effort for an immediate solution has been directed to the rehabilitation of the silk industry. The partial success of this industrial reform is significant also as a factor relieving the acute land problem.

CHAPTER XII

AGRARIAN PROBLEMS IN CHINA

The above account of the economic life of a Chinese village is the result of a microscopic examination of a specimen. The phenomena observed in this confined area undoubtedly are of a local character. But they also have wider significance because this village shares a common process with most other Chinese villages. Hence we can learn some of the salient features of the agrarian problems in China.

The essential problem in Chinese villages, putting it in the simplest terms, is that the income of the villagers has been reduced to such an extent that it is not sufficient even to meet the expenditure in securing the minimum requirements of livelihood. It is the hunger of the people that is the real issue in China.

In this village, the immediate cause of the present economic depression is the decline of domestic industry. The

present depression is not due to a deterioration of quality nor to a decrease of the quantity of production. Had the villagers produced the same type and the same amount of silk, they could not get the same amount of money from the market as before. The cause of depression lies in the relation between the village industry and the world market. It is the lack of adjustment between production and demand that accounts for the fall in the price of silk.

In view of the decline of domestic industry, the only alternatives open to the peasants are to improve their produce or to give up the industry. To improve the produce, as I have shown, is not only a matter of technical improvement but also a matter of social reorganization. Even this is not enough. A successful reorganization of rural industry depends ultimately on the prospects of industrial development in China. The present analysis is a warning to reformers who tend to underrate the force of international capitalist economy.

If there is no immediate recovery of rural industry, the peasants will be forced to adopt the second alternative. They will in despair give up their traditional source of income, as has already happened in the weaving industry. If the labor released from the doomed domestic industry could be used in other productive activities, the situation would not be so desperate. It must be recognized that in industrial development there are certain industries which it may not be advisable to retain in the village. But in so far as there is no new occupation to take the place of the old, the waste of labor will mean a further reduction in family income.

As their income is diminishing and as there is no hope of immediate recovery, the peasants can naturally only resort to a corresponding reduction of expenditure. In expenditure, as the Chinese peasants are concerned, there are four categories: necessary daily account, periodical ceremonial expenses, capital for production, and interest, rent, and tax. As we have seen, the villagers have already

suspended ceremonies as far as possible, and even sold their rice reserve when necessary. It appears that the most rigid category is the last one. If the people are not able to pay their ever-increasing interest, rent, and tax, they will be threatened by brutal treatment from the usurers, and rent and tax collectors, and by legal enforcement through imprisonment. But when hunger is stronger than the fear of being shot, peasant revolts take place. Perhaps, this is the situation that has resulted in the disturbance of the Red Spear Society in North China and the Communist movement in Central China. If the author of *Red Star Over China* is right, the main force that drove millions of peasants in the heroic Long March was nothing but hunger and its derived hatred of land-owners and tax collectors.

In the present study, I have tried to show that it is incorrect to condemn landowners and even usurers as wicked persons. When the village needs money from outside to finance their production, unless there is a better system to extend credit to the peasants, absentee-landlordism and usury are the natural products. Without them, the situation might be still worse. At present, owing to the insecurity of rent, there is already a tendency for urban capital to move into the treaty-ports instead of into rural districts, as seen in the recurrence of crises in Shanghai speculative enterprises. The scarcity of capital available in rural districts encourages the development of usury in the town. The more depressed is the country, the less capital is available, and the more active is the usury — a vicious circle which saps the life of the peasants.

There was another dilemma in the Chinese land problem. The national government with all its promises and policies on paper was not able to carry out any practical measures owing to the fact that most of the revenue was spent in its anti-communist campaign, while, as I have pointed out, the real nature of the communist movement was a peasant revolt due to their dissatisfaction with the

land system. Despite all kinds of justification on either side, one thing is clear: that the conditions of the peasants are getting worse and worse. So far no permanent land reform has been accomplished in any part of China since the recovery of the Red Area by the government.

It must be realized that a mere land reform in the form of reduction of rent and equalization of ownership does not promise a final solution of agrarian problems in China. Such a reform, however, is necessary and urgent because it is an indispensable step in relieving the peasants. It will give a breathing space for the peasants and by removing the cause leading to "revolt," will unite all forces in finding the way to industrial recovery.

A final solution of agrarian problems in China lies not so much in reduction of expenditure of the peasants but in increasing their income. Therefore, industrial recovery, let me repeat once more, is essential. The traditional industry of China was mainly rural, for example, the entire textile industry was formerly a peasant occupation. At present, China is, in fact, facing a rapid decay of this traditional industry directly due to the industrial expansion of the West. By arresting this process, China comes into conflict with the Western Powers. How this conflict can be solved peacefully is a question I would like to leave to other competent scientists and politicians.

But one point connected with the future industrial development in China must be stressed here. Being a late comer in the modern industrial world, China is in a position to avoid those errors which have been committed by her predecessors. In the village, we have seen how an experiment has been made in developing a small-scale factory on the principle of co-operation. It is designed to prevent the concentration of ownership of means of production in contrast with the capitalist industrial development in the West. In spite of all difficulties and even failures, such an experiment is of great significance in the

problem of the future development of rural industry in China.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that the above-mentioned problems have not disappeared since the present Japanese invasion. The tragedy is unavoidable in building our new China. It is a part of our international adjustment that sooner or later we must face. Only by going through it, can we hope for a real reconstruction of our country. During the struggle, the agrarian problems in fact have become more vital. Our victory against foreign aggression can be insured only by removing internal conflicts through relieving the peasants by a reasonable and effective land reform. Now Japan has offered us an opportunity to break our old vicious circle in the land problem. It is true that thousands of villages have already, like Kaixian'gong, been destroyed by the invaders, but in their ruin our internal conflicts and follies should find their last resting-place. From the ruin, a new China will emerge. The coming generation will, I sincerely hope, credit us with facing the problems of our age in a spirit of understanding and sympathy; our sacrifices and the hardship we are undergoing shall stand vindicated only if we look forward to the future with oneness of purpose and clarity of vision.

AN INTERPRETATION OF CHINESE SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND ITS CHANGES (1946)

The polarization of the rich and the poor gives birth to a social dichotomy common in many advanced communities. Benjamin Disraeli used "The Two Nations" as the alternative title for his *Sybil*, a story describing the social life in nineteenth-century England. That describes our traditional China equally well. Probably more than 80 per cent of the Chinese are peasants. They are poor but they are economically productive. In a country in which industry and commerce are not yet fully developed, the peasants are the sole producers. Those who stay at the peak of the social pyramid are the leisure class — the gentry — a minority who live on rent collected from the peasants. Wealth and poverty create not only an economic difference which separates the rich from the poor but a social gulf between the two classes as well. The people thus separated carry on their lives differently. The upper class live in a more elaborate structure of social relations and are more sophisticated and more articulate. They are usually considered as the cultured group, while the majority of the population, engaged in the hard work of production, leaves little impression on observers and little trace in historical documents. When the historians exalt or condemn the Greeks or the Romans, they have in mind only the warriors and the philosophers. Is it not also true that China has been praised and criticized according to that China which is found in Western museums, exhibited in art galleries, and described by writers

of best-sellers? The China so represented comprises only the minority, the leisured gentry. A fair view of China, however, should include both the poor and the rich and the relation between them.

I

Peasantry, the key towards understanding China, is a way of living, a complex of formal organization, individual behavior, and social attitudes, closely knit together for the purpose of husbanding land with simple tools and human labor. Peasants are settled and sedentary. Growth of population on limited resources puts the law of diminishing returns in effective operation. Cultivation of land tends to be intensified. Minute care of the soil and delicate application of human labor hinder the utilization of improved tools. Standard of living lowers as population increases. Animal labor becomes uneconomical. Highly developed application of human skill in handling soil and crops yields a return only sufficient for a bare existence. When work is mainly done by hands and feet, the advantage of division of work is reduced. Extensive organization in such enterprises gives no appreciable profit but rather complicates human relations. This accounts for the fact that among the peasant society the basic group is usually small.

The smallness of the co-operative group is characteristic of peasantry. Peasants, unlike nomads, live in settled communities. They are non-aggressive because, on the one hand, extension of land beyond the ability of cultivation means little to them, and, on the other, living in a rural environment, they face no immediate threat of innovation or invasion. Security is a matter of course. There seems to be no necessity for any militant organization on a large scale.

This is perhaps one reason why the family is so pre-

dominant in the structure of social organization in a peasant community. The family in a peasant community is a sufficient unit to provide the necessary and minimum social co-operation in everyday economic pursuits. Such co-operation is maintained by, or rather an extension of, another main task of the human race, that of reproduction. The mutual reinforcement of the related functions of life achieves a strong solidarity.

The small size of the basic social unit seems quite contrary to the popular conception of the Chinese social structure. It is often believed that in China the family unit is large. There are big houses in which a large number of kin live together, but this is found only in the gentry. Among Chinese peasants, the basic social unit is numerically small and is mainly composed of parents and children. Evidences from various studies in rural China show no exception. The average varies from four to six persons. However, from the point of view of structure, the basic group among the Chinese peasants is more than a family, as defined by anthropologists. It sometimes includes children who have grown up and married. I have called it the "expanded family." If the principle of expansion carries far, the result will be a clanlike big house, as seen among the gentry; but among peasants such expansion is limited. As a rule, lateral expansion—brothers continuing to live together after marriage—is rare and unstable. The usual practice is that the aged parents stay with one of the married sons. Without any social provision for the old, it seems very natural that the parents should be taken care of by their son.

In a mobile community, nomadic or industrial, an individual has his own locus. He moves about by himself and acquires his social status on his own behalf. But for a settled peasant, it seems that all his activities are bound to the group. The family is a self-sufficient and self-supporting group, in which he maintains his existence and perpetuates his kind. It is the center from which his

relations, kinship, local, and professional, ramify. The singularism in extension of social relations differs in principle from the pluralism in modern society. Individuals in such a structure are counted only as members of a certain family.

The traditional ideology in China suppresses individualism in favor of familism. The meaning, or value, of the individual's existence is defined by its being a link in the chain of social continuity which is concretely conceived in terms of descent. The most important task of a man is to continue the family line. Of the three traditional charges against an undutiful son, the failure in giving offspring comes first. The interest of the group is paramount even in such affairs as in modern society are strictly private. The collective responsibility of family members in social contributions or offenses has only recently been abolished by law, though it still persists in practice. Fathers will be held responsible for the crime committed by their children. Wives and sons are often killed solely because their husbands and fathers are revolutionists. Even now district (county) jails are full of prisoners who have committed no crime other than the fact that some of their family members happen to be deserters from the army. I am not certain whether such imprisonment is lawful, but this is the practice and no legitimate protests have been made. For the present purpose, I am taking it as a living evidence of the collectiveness of the family group and the non-recognition of the individual as such in social responsibility.

The same principle is found in the part played by the family in wider organizations. In community organization the family, not the individual, is the unit. In practice the basic constituents of a local government are families. Local assemblies are represented by family heads; local taxes are collected from families. The family thus is a civic unit. Few have questioned the validity of the family basis of civic society, although democracy in the modern

sense is essentially a recognition of equal rights among individuals. Thus in Western democracies individuals enter the civic society directly and the family has no place in the political structure. It is interesting to note that, when modern civic structure is introduced to China, the traditional form persists. The family still supersedes the individual.

The family is thus the basic unit in the social structure of rural China. From this basis larger organizations are formed, but on the whole these are not strong. The peasants recognize kinship. They gather on ceremonial occasions and help each other when they are in need. But it is rare to find wider kinship organizations of a permanent nature among the peasants, and even mutual obligations among the relatives are not pronounced. In local organizations, neighborhood is universal. But as I have seen in the villages near Lake Tai, each house counts five families on either side of it as its neighbors. In Yunnan, however, neighborhood forms a permanent group and possesses a common temple. The function of the neighborhood is limited to ceremonial assistance and recreation. When we come to the village organization, we find that it is not organized by the peasants alone but by the gentry as well. It is, in fact, a rule of the gentry over the peasants. As far as the peasants are concerned, social organization stops at the loosely organized neighborhood. In the traditional structure, peasants live in small cells, which are the families, without strong ties between the cells. They carry on productive work in this kind of small cooperative group. They maintain their own subsistence and at the same time support the living of those who occupy higher positions in the social structure.

II

The chief occupation of the Chinese people as a nation is agriculture, and they depend on land for their living.

As population increases, less fertile land can be utilized. Gradually there emerges a class of landowners who can afford to live without working on the land while they still enjoy the benefits of the land on account of their privileges as owners. This can be done either by employing farm laborers to work for them or by renting the land to tenants. The rise of a non-laboring rentier class is an important step in the evolution of an agrarian community.

Farm work under primitive technique is drudgery. It is quite conceivable that those who can afford to live without being engaged in hard work will do so even at the expense of their standard of living. It seems that there are two ways of reducing the painful experience in productive pursuits: either to improve tools and utilize animal and natural power or to shift the burden to others. The first is exploitation of nature and the second is exploitation of man. In an agrarian community, when the population has increased to such a huge size as in China, the cost of human labor becomes even lower than animal labor. Under such circumstances, the first way is blockaded. It is small surprise to see that the tools used by the Chinese peasants of today are very much similar to those excavated from ancient archeological sites. Wooden wheels, an old invention, can be seen in their most primitive form on village roads, and even these are not extensively used. Loads are carried on human shoulders with the assistance of a pole. Exploitation of man is the only choice that one can make to avoid physical toil in getting a living.

I venture to think that the indulgence in physical comfort in the form of avoiding any sort of labor, which finds its highest expression in opium-smoking, is a reaction of the peasantry against hardship. Sharp contrasts of this kind are often observed in all cultures. Among the starving mass, the value of food is always exalted; the most extravagant cookery and exotic recipes are always found in poverty-stricken nations; the reckless and lavish ma-

harajas vie with each other in gastronomical display in a famished India. Under the most strict code of sexual relations, periodic license is customary. When a long-suppressed desire becomes realizable, it drives the fortunate few unscrupulous. An unduly heightened value usually arises from the negation of the popular practice and normal discipline. The elevation from the common order becomes the goal of the common people. The hard-working Chinese peasant looks towards leisure and comfort with unusual eagerness. The denial by the laboring class of its own importance is expressed in the generally accepted popular saying, as first epigrammatically pronounced by Mencius: "Those who earn their living by labor are destined to be ruled." The self-abdication of the laboring class as the master of their own destiny is the foundation of a social dichotomy — a leisure class on top of hard-working peasants.

There is a social necessity for the gentry to develop a more elaborate social structure for themselves. The economic basis for their class is rent. It is a privilege which has to be protected by political power. Mencius' dictum has to be read in the sense that, in a community essentially agrarian, unless those who do not earn their living by labor can rule the peasants, their position is not secure. It is because an economically unproductive class living upon privileges is politically vulnerable. For the sake of security, the gentry has to be better organized. Better organization spells power. Gentry as a class differs from peasantry both in kinship and in local organizations.

I have said that among the peasants the basic social cooperative group is small. Among the gentry it is different. Big kinship groups are found. Peasants earn their living mainly by their own efforts. They work and they live. The sense of independence is strong. Although the Chinese peasants usually live with their parents who are too old to work and depend on the younger generation for support, the rule of the old is not deep-rooted. An adult

son who tills the land and brings back necessities for the household is not living under the thumb of his father. But when a person does not earn his living by his own labor but depends on rent, the situation is different. An absentee landowner needs political power for his protection. In holding their privilege, the gentry are militant, as they must be. To be politically powerful and influential, the organization of the gentry has to be big and strong. Division of the household and independence of the young, as very frequently seen among the peasants, are definitely disintegrative forces and will weaken the group solidarity. In the town where I was reared, I was familiar with a number of big houses, each a colony of a number of dependent families, under the rule of a powerful and centralized authority. The head of the house holds the power in financial and social matters, maintaining the discipline of the members and enforcing the family laws. Some of them even have their own law courts. Patriarchy works out in its full strength. The son refers to his father before others as "the terrible old one," which he literally is. He enjoys no intimacy with his father, who seldom laughs in front of his children. A good description of the patriarchal relation is found in the novel *The Dream of the Red Chamber.*

A big house is an empire by itself. The members, like subjects, live under the rule and whim of the patriarch. They know no independence until they themselves are promoted to the position of a ruler. They depend upon their house for their living; their career is determined by the house; for whatever they are worth the house is solely responsible. By such a strong kinship organization, the political power of the house in the larger community is secured. The members, even the servants, of the house enter the power structure of the nation with facility. The position they hold in the government in turn supports the privilege of the house, and their economic basis is thus guaranteed.

As the size of the house grows, generation after generation (the idea being that five generations should live under the same roof), the tension within the organization grows, too. Once an emperor questioned a patriarch by what means he ruled his house successfully. The latter answered by writing three characters: forbearance, forbearance, and forbearance. Yet forbearance has its limits. Houses disperse. But to maintain close relationship among the kin is necessary for the gentry. Then clan appears. A clan is a disintegrated house; the individual family in the clan gains a certain amount of independence, while kinship unity is preserved for the common interest.

I think that both the big-family (or the house) system and the clan are the gentry's organizations. Sometimes among the peasants, the clan is found, but it is of another kind. In Yunnan, for instance, I have seen that in villages local organization is formed in terms of clan which includes even members of different surnames. Functionally these are not strictly kinship groups. I shall leave the question open as to the nature of the so-called clan-village. I rather suspect that such an organization among the peasants is a local organization, not a kinship organization. But I am sure that the clan is not universal in China and the most effective and elaborate clans are found in the gentry. A clan organization among the landless or even petty owners is superfluous. Take my own clan, for instance. When the need for protecting our joint interest in landholding disappeared, our clan faded away. What is left now is only a name.

For a clan to be effective, it must possess some common property — invariably land. A piece of land is usually contributed to the organization by a member who is a government official, the ostensible pretext being that the products of the land may cover the expenses necessary in the keeping-up of the ancestors' tombs and regular sacrifices. But, in fact, this common property is a common security with which the position of the clan may be

maintained in the wider power structure of the community. It finances the education of the young members so that they may be able to enter the scholar class and attain high official positions and protect the interests of their kinsmen. Members of the same clan are under obligation to help each other when help is called for. The clan organization, furthermore, has the authority to set up sanctions against any alienation of land. As is widely observed, individual contract in land transaction is not valid unless it is signed by clan members of the seller. This shows how closely the clan organization is linked up with land rights.

Clan organization, which defines the propinquity among unilateral kin, regulates the inheritance of land in order to prevent any disruption caused by a confusion in the line of descent and to enforce the solidarity of the group. This is known as the *zongfa* in China, the system of descent. It is of little account when no problem of inheriting large estates is involved. In the villages of petty owners, as I have seen in Yunnan, the spirit of the *zongfa* is weak. In other words, the people there do not observe strictly the rule of inheritance according to patrilineal descent. What the peasants in general care for most is the maintenance of the working efficiency of the basic group. It has been the custom that, when a married son dies, a substitute will be found to take the place of the deceased, and, when the substitute becomes a widower, he will take another wife. As a result the family unit is bound by no biological relations at all. However, the basic working group achieves its continuity, and life carries on. This will not happen among the sophisticated gentry. The gentry who live on land rights have reasons to adhere to orderliness and discipline in order to hold the property.

The solidarity of the big house and the clan is only one aspect of the strategy of the propertied class. To be powerful and to achieve security, big houses have to be aligned. This is done through an extension of affinal

relations. Marriage has been regarded as a family affair and has been customarily defined as an alliance of houses. Choice of mate is made on the ground of family status. Through marriage a number of big houses are confederated into a powerful group. But if we turn to the peasants, we shall see that the main consideration in matchmaking is the working ability of the girl.

It is true that in China kinship is the key to social organization, but it would be wrong to think that kinship is itself so dear to the people. Kinship is only a means by which social groups are organized for different purposes. I do not think that kinship possesses any force of extension by itself and is valued as such. Procreation can be carried on without extensive recognition of kinship ties. It is so recognized because such ties can be used to organize social groups for definite purposes. In China it is the gentry who find it necessary, in order to be powerfully organized, to employ the principle of kinship extensively.

III

The peasantry and the gentry can further be contrasted by showing their ecological positions. To understand the rural economy of China, one has to bear in mind the fact that, with a very small farm under cultivation, land is closed to ambition. The average farm in China is only a few acres. (In Yunnan a good-sized farm is only about one acre.) Small farming makes accumulation of capital impossible. Villagers put it neatly: "Land breeds no land." In a community in which industry and commerce are not developed, in which land has already done its best, and in which the pressure of increasing population is felt, ambitious people have to seek their fortune not through ordinary economic enterprises but through acquiring power legally or illegally. Just the same they

must leave their village for good. When they obtain wealth, they may come back to their village to acquire land, but if they retire to live in the village, the pressure of population will be borne upon them and soon wear them out—and after a few generations the big house will break down into a number of petty owners again. Therefore, it is essential for the rich to keep away from the village. The place where they can maintain their power and wealth is the town.

Towns in traditional China are not founded on manufacturing or commerce. In China the chief industries, such as textiles, are mainly peasant occupations. Owing to the smallness of the farm, the peasants cannot live entirely upon the land. It is a matter of necessity to have some additional income. Moreover, since agriculture cannot give full employment to the peasants, they have plenty of time to carry on industrial jobs in their homestead. Peasants live largely in a self-sufficient economy. The amount they buy and sell is small. If their commercial activities are centralized in a fixed locality, say a town, it will take a big area to support it. It is feasible only in those areas where communication is easy and inexpensive, such as in the Lower Yangtze Valley. In most parts of China the periodical market takes the place of the town. It gathers only once in several days. Its size and frequency of gathering can be adjusted to the temporary need from time to time. It seems clear that the permanent town has no place in the traditional rural economy.

The traditional town is the seat of the gentry. The gentry class symbolizes political and financial power. The town in which I was born, and which I know very well, mainly consists of residences of the gentry, rice stores, pawnshops, tea houses, and private gardens. There are also a number of tailors, carpenters, blacksmiths, and goldsmiths and other craftsmen. The rice stores and the pawnshops are financial establishments. The peasants, when pressed by rent or tax or other crises, have to sell

their rice to the stores in town at a low price. At the time when their reserves are eaten up, they come to the stores to buy at a high price. The rice stores are therefore similar in nature to the pawnshops. Tea houses, big gardens, and magnificent residences are also the paraphernalia of the gentry. From morning until nightfall, the leisured gentlemen gather in the tea houses to amuse themselves in sipping tea, in listening to the story-tellers, in talking nonsense, in gambling, and in smoking opium. It would appear to a New Englander that such a town is no better than a concentration camp of voluntary deserters from life. But, to them, leisure means prestige as well as privilege. By displaying the leisure at their disposal, they stand high in the eyes of the lower classes. The professionals who live in the town are dependent on the gentry for their employment. Few of them keep their own shops. They are called to work in the employers' houses. This reminds us of medieval feudalism in western Europe.

Such towns do not lack their charm. If one is prepared to amuse one's self in an artistic expression of life, there are hundreds of small attractions here that win his admiration. I myself have often missed much of the delicious food of my native town and the specialties of all the towns which I used to visit in my boyhood. I will not hesitate to advise a visitor to Soochow to spend at least one day in a tea house, where he will be astonished at finding the cultured eloquence with which the average customer talks and the mellowed and humorous outlook on life he has achieved. But one will be grossly mistaken if one thinks that this represents the ways and manners of the Chinese mass.

The mass of peasants do not live in the town. They look at the seat of the gentry with a mixed feeling of repulsion and admiration. They support the living of the minority by paying taxes, rent, and interests. The annual tribute is their burden. In the Yangtze Valley, with

the social conditions of which I am most familiar, I believe, it will not be exaggerating to say that half of the yield of the peasants goes to the town. If the economic reason is still not sufficient to arouse the ill will of the peasant towards the town, he will no longer remain undisturbed in the village when he finds his unsatisfied wife run away from home to work as a maid in a gentleman's big house which he dare not enter. However, the town remains the ideal, the dream, and the incentive of the peasants. As long as they believe that paradise is not closed to them, they have no desire to deny that that is where their own hopes and wishes lie.

IV

So far we have seen that the gentry is a class which is preeminently parasitic. The question then will be raised as to how such a system of exploitation could persist for a long period. Is the cultural achievement of the gentry, with which the peasants have little to do, sufficient to justify their existence? The rich in the town must make more tangible and concrete contributions before they can win respect and gratitude from the peasants.

It is true that the peasants are the exploited class in the traditional structure and the gentry are their immediate exploiters. But the gentry do so through institutional means and within institutional limits. There is, however, another form of exploitation which is beyond the control of the peasants, and that is the absolute monarchical power unchecked by popular will and unbounded as the whims of the monarch are unbounded. The peasants find in the influence and wealth of the gentry a buffer zone of sorts. To make this point clear, I have to go further into the power structure of traditional China.

The center of the power structure is the absolute mon-

arch. From the monarch, power is intrusted to the hierarchy of officials. On the vast continent, with bad communication systems, power is centralized only in name but not in fact. Officials of every rank enjoy such an amount of authority as their immediate superiors will tolerate. "The monarch is as remote as the heaven itself." That which rules the people is the hierarchy of officials. Since the officials are responsible only to their superiors, with the monarch far at the top, there is no legalized mechanism of popular check upon the power. The rights of the people are not protected by law. The welfare of the people is hung by a thread on the good conscience of the power hierarchy. Good conscience rarely appears in those who personify power. Therefore political power becomes sometimes even "more fearful than tigers." Protection from the encroachment of the power upon one's own rights is thus essential. This is achieved not by organized popular action, which results in Western democracy, but by personal approach to the power hierarchy. Since the low official receives power from the one of a higher rank, he has to yield to the will of his superior. If one can influence the superior through personal means, the lower official has to behave amiably towards one, lest he should get into trouble. The direct way of access to the power hierarchy is to enter officialdom one's self. If a man is himself an official, he can protect his and his relatives' private interests not only by the power intrusted in his hands but also by his relation with his fellow-officials. This kind of political maneuver, traditionally known as face-saving, rises from the absence of the rule of law. When a community is ruled by sheer personal will, court politics is inevitable.

It should now be clear why the gentry, being a class of people living on privileges, are anxious to enter into officialdom. If they are not in alliance with the power hierarchy, their position as landowners is threatened. The wrongs done them can never be redressed. Alienation

of land by powerful persons is not infrequent. It is a recognized necessity for the rich to hold a position in the hierarchy. Clan organization and affinal confederation are sufficient because they are systems of security through the establishment of a relation to the power hierarchy by kinship.

The gentry mediates between the ruler and the ruled. In the history of China the central power is usually in the hands of alien invaders or social outcasts who seize the political power by unscrupulous means. As soon as the monarch is enthroned, the gentry will join hands with him by filling the rank and file of the officialdom. In their official capacity, they are agents of the ruler, but in their private capacity they are, to a certain degree, related to, and share common interests with, the ruled. Herein lies the popular though not thorough check on the absolute and often alien monarch.

In the traditional system of government the tentacles of the central power stop at the *xian* (county). Each *xian* consists of a number of villages which are usually organized locally by the villagers. The local organization possesses common property and regulates common enterprises such as religious ceremonies and irrigation. The executives of such an organization are elected not by all the representatives of the families but by the respected elders of the village. The respected elders are those who possess land and "face," i.e., connection with the officialdom or with the gentry in town. They are the lower rank of the gentry who are not rich enough to leave the village and live in town.

The central power operates on the people in the following way: When the central government orders the magistrate of the *xian* to collect taxes or conscribe services, the latter will send agents to the village to carry out the order. The agents themselves are conscripts from the villages. They enjoy no prestige in their own community. In practice, they are only messengers of the magistrate.

The government order passes unofficially from the hand of the agent to the local headmen who occupy no official position in the government constitution. The order then will be announced and discussed in the village teashops. All those present may participate. No vote will be taken, but the headman will decide according to the public opinion as well as to his own sense of appropriateness whether the order should be followed. The elders of the village may call on the magistrate or ask someone among the town gentry to call on the magistrate for negotiation. Since the gentry have connections with the power hierarchy, the magistrate has to consider their suggestions and modify his order in a way he thinks fit. For a local government official, the gentry are his opposition, although the opposition is usually not frontal and finally appears in the order from his own superior. Although an official, he is in his private capacity one of the gentry. He will write letters to his fellow-officials asking favor for his own kin, relatives, or local people. The gentry-official is the pivot in the traditional Chinese power structure.

Whatever one may say for or against the traditional pattern, it is clear that, as long as the peasants live in the structure, the mere proximity and relative accessibility of the local gentry give them a certain psychological assurance in face of the unpredictable encroachment of the absolute ruler and his officials.

The gentry differ from the aristocracy in the West in that the former do not form a political party with the responsibility of running a government. Never in the history of China have the Chinese gentry organized their own government. As a class, they never reject any monarch who is able to seize the power and who recognizes the right of landowners. They will enter any government with the purpose of protecting their own kin and local people from the encroachment of the absolute power, but not for the sake of political power itself. In fact, even

when he is holding an office in the government, the typical official is at the same time working as a representative of his kin and relatives. The latter function is indeed his main job, but, in order to realize it, he has to take the former. The gentry as a class are outside the government. They take official positions individually. They are moved by social but not by political responsibility. This is why we should not rank them as aristocracy.

It may also be important to point out here that, owing to their pivotal position in the power structure, the gentry have through long history acquired a set of codes of professional ethics. They preach the doctrine of order: every one should behave according to and be satisfied by the position one occupies in the social structure. The task of Confucius was to set down for each social status its canon of correct behavior. Being a privileged class themselves, the gentry are never revolutionary. Order and security are their sole interests.

V

In discussing the ecological differentiation of the peasants and the gentry, I have shown that those who like to hold their privilege as a leisure class have to stay outside the village. This is because in agriculture there is little hope for the accumulation of wealth. It seems that a peasant who works on the land is bound to the land as a peasant. Therefore, we may ask how the gentry emerges. Of course, we must admit that, since there is no social barrier preventing a peasant from entering into the gentry if he can afford to lead a leisurely life, there will be those hard-working peasants who strive to rise from the bottom. But it will take them several generations to climb up the social ladder, each generation promoting itself a little. Despite thrift and endurance, this is not only a long but also a haphazard way, because in the rural community

misfortunes of all kinds are not uncommon. Drought and flood may cause famine. Epidemics may ruin a family. In a period of political disturbance bandits are as bad as locusts in the dry years. It will be most rare for a family to keep up its morale for several generations and to have no misfortune strike at them in the meantime.

Another factor which prevents a hard-working and well-to-do peasant family from rising is the high pressure of population. Among the leisure class the birth rate is low because of their degenerated physical conditions, and among the poor peasants infantile mortality is high because of the lack of good care. But among hard-working, well-to-do peasants, the birth rate is as high as that of the poor peasants and the death rate is comparatively low owing to their better living standard. Such a family grows fast. If it cannot expand its estate at the same rate, its standard of living will sink in the next generation. It already requires fairly strenuous efforts for a peasant family to maintain its footing, but the hope of rising into the leisure class is slight.

It is quite natural that the common tendency among the peasants is not to rise on the social ladder but rather to sink towards the bottom. A petty owner may become a tenant when he sells his land as misfortune befalls him. He may further sink from a tenant to a landless farm laborer. He may in the end die disgracefully or disappear from the village. These outcasts are desperate. They have nothing to lose but their life of drudgery. They leave the village and plunge themselves into banditry or smuggling, or join the army, or seek employment as servants in big gentry houses. These are economically nonproductive jobs, but it is only by taking up such jobs, in addition to good luck, that the outcasts from the rural society can hope to obtain wealth quickly. Of course, hundreds and thousands of such fortune-seekers die in despair and are forgotten by the world. But, once loosened from the soil, they have freed themselves from the

bond of the land. They are the dissatisfied class and thus revolutionary in nature. When the ruling class is strong, they are suppressed. Only a few reach their aim through various kinds of more or less unlawful ways. But if the ruling class is degenerate and weak, they are the uprising group aiming at power. In Chinese history there are several instances where new dynasties were inaugurated by such desperate outcasts.

In peacetime the few successful upstarts when they have obtained wealth will buy land and insinuate themselves into the leisure class. They are looked down upon and looked at with a prejudiced eye by the gentry. Only gradually and especially by means of affinal alliance, are they admitted into the upper layer of the social structure. Not until one of the family members enters into the scholar group and into officialdom is their position in the gentry consolidated.

The gentry are maintained economically by owning land and politically by occupying a position in officialdom. As a landowning class they have the leisure to learn classical literature which is the professional requirement of an official. For nearly a thousand years the monarch has offered regular examinations to recruit officials from the literati. Only a few low classes are excluded from the right to take part in such examinations. Theoretically men from the peasantry are free to enter into the competition. And there are notable cases in which a son of a poor peasant learned the classics on the back of his buffalo while he was working in the field and attained high honor in the examination. But, after all, these are exceptions, for otherwise such stories would not be circulated like legends. It is true that in China there is no such social class system as the caste system, but it is another question as to whether the Chinese class system possesses high mobility. I have no statistical information to prove the case, but from studies on existing rural communities it is clear that a child from a peasant family engaged in

farm work has little chance of receiving a high-school education. I cannot help being cautious in accepting the popular belief that in the good old days everyone had a chance to become an official through equitable examination. The mobility between peasantry and gentry has been rather limited. It is needless to add that the existence of the belief among the peasantry in the possibility of promotion to the gentry is important because it gives an incentive and eventually stabilizes the structure at large.

Conversely we may ask how frequently the members of the gentry return to peasantry. As far as my own knowledge goes, I cannot find a single case where a good-for-nothing gentleman picks up farming work again. It seems impossible that the gentry should return to the farm. Manual labor is highly deplored in the current ideology in China, even today. The gentry are especially conscious of it. A long gown that signifies leisure is the emblem of honor and prestige and is the last thing a gentleman will cast away. It is worth more than one's life. I had an uncle who became destitute by his fortieth year. He lived in a bare room and was penniless. But he carried on his life as usual in the tearooms and wore his long gowns until his death. The scene of his death was most pathetic. He lingered on at his last moment and was unwilling to close his eyes, as a cousin of my clan put it, who visited him on his deathbed. He was worrying that he would not die as a gentleman, dressed in silk and buried in a coffin of good quality. My cousin comforted him by showing him all that he was going to have when he ceased to breathe. He smiled and then passed away in satisfaction. This incident presents in full the inner psychology of the gentry. The question will then arise as to how he could afford to live up to the standard of a gentleman. The answer is that he was helped by his clan members. The clan is a system of mutual security. When I was young, I frequently witnessed the visits of

my clan uncles to my home. They were poor, but they talked and laughed without mentioning any financial need. When they left us, my grandmother used to give them a handsome amount of money as a present. My grandmother was not rich then. I knew very well that she had sent a maid to the pawnshop from our back door in order to get enough money to aid our clan members who were in distress. The same spirit leads an official to offer jobs to his clan members regardless of their ability. The sense of responsibility for mutual aid and collective security among the clan members is stronger than the sense of duty as an official of the government.

The system of clan social security which prevails among the gentry encourages dependence especially when the class has kept away from participating in productive work. A child reared in such an environment is detached from the life of the people. He lives in a big house devoid of sunshine; he grows up in the reverence of the past, in the shadow of his ancestors, from whom his privileges are inherited. From the petty court politics among the family members he learns to put on a feigned obedience, is imbued with a sense of futility of all efforts, and is trivial, resigned, conservative, and cowardly. Physically he is weak, slender, and sometimes sterile. Of the six of my clan uncles, three have no children of their own. A similar state of affairs is found among many of my relatives. It seems that the lack of initiative and aggressiveness lead eventually to physical sterility. The gentry in China, like the city dwellers in the West, are the dying population, by which I mean that they cannot replace themselves. They have to rely upon recruits from the countryside.

Posed on the peak of the social pyramid, the gentry possess prestige and privilege. Prestige and privilege attract the daring and the aggressive individuals from the classes below. The new recruits revitalize the gentry, but, when they are assimilated, they become pacified and

neutralized. The energy that may cause upheavals is channeled into the petty mobility in the social structure and is finally eliminated in the pattern of leisurely life. The gentry class is in fact a safety valve in social change. Conservatism becomes the rule of Chinese society, and China as a culture is singular in the history of human kind in its stability and perpetuation.

VI

Traditional China has not passed. It is present, although in many respects it has been covered by modifications and by novelties. This is why I have consistently used the present tense in the above description. Let no one think that what I have described is only a page of dead history. The essential pattern of the social structure is functioning as ever. That it is changing. I am sure. But the new order will not come all of a sudden and be built all in a twinkling. It will be born from the old through the gradual change of the habitual way of living of the millions. The more one analyzes the present situation, whatever new names it bears, a republic or a utopia, the more one wonders about the persistence of the old. Only by acknowledging the persistence, against the wishes of many patriots, may we acquire a better and more intelligent perspective of the situation. Vexations begin when one loses sight of persistent tradition. The above analysis is a preparation for our further discussion on the changing aspect of the Chinese social structure.

It seems that traditional China achieved a certain equilibrium from which ensued stability. This equilibrium was upset when China came in contact with the Western powers, with their industrial supremacy. Modernization is imposed on the Chinese by the machine age, and China is forced to enter the world community. Hence the change in the Chinese social structure.

It is true that China has never been a totally isolated country. For many centuries China was in constant contact with the West: Chinese silk was well known in the Roman court. Indian monks flowed into China and modified Chinese philosophy and religion, Jesuits stood high in the favor of Chinese emperors. But the Western world never presented such a threat to the traditional Chinese way of living as it does today. This is because the Western world has changed from an agrarian culture to an industrial one since the Industrial Revolution, while China has remained virtually the same as before. The contact of the East and the West is not a matter of geography but a matter of economics. Modern industry gives the West a power unprecedented in history over agrarian communities. Unlike an age of agriculture when people can live harmlessly alone, the industrial age is an age of expansion, a lure to a world community. Seeking raw material and markets, the industrial nations will not let the Eastern Hemisphere alone. To be sure, trade is for mutual benefit, and industry is the best cure for the poverty of the East. But to the Westerner it is still a mystery why the Chinese of the past generation were so stubborn in refusing to let in Western industrial influences. And it certainly seems regrettable that China should be opened by force. Many friends in the West still wonder, too, why the Chinese should be so reluctant in receiving the salvation of their souls by Christianity and of their life by machine. Had this been all due to cultural inertia, the reaction would have faded away when the salvation showed its proofs. To say that the Chinese were prejudiced against new creeds of religion and new ways of production as such is without historical foundation. Buddhism was new to China when it was first introduced, but it was soon incorporated into Chinese religious beliefs and became deeply rooted among the peasants. New crops like the potato and tobacco spread without meeting resistance. To me, the unhappy history

of the first period of contact between the East and the West is mainly caused by social factors which can be seen in the perspective I have outlined above.

When the Industrial Revolution started in Europe, it was the middle class who took the lead. Medieval feudalism was receding. But in China at the time of the contact with the West, the middle class was the conservative gentry. The ideal of the gentry is to enjoy leisure under the protection of officialdom. Production is the occupation of the peasants and is considered low. The initiative of the gentry in economic pursuits has long been suppressed. Industrialism is not like Buddhism. When Buddhism made its first appearance, it caught the spirit of the gentleman of leisure. It fitted neatly into the tradition of retirement. Therefore, it was able to recruit from that class a number of talents who spread the creed in China. But modern industrialism, on the contrary, runs counter to the traditional spirit of the gentry. The value of practical knowledge is slighted by them. They learn literature because it signifies leisure and delicacy and because it leads to officialdom. The abhorrence of manual work is strong even among the students of modern universities. Chinese engineers prefer making designs to handling machines. The social gulf between those who use the mind and those who use the hand is still present in modern factories in China and has created serious problems in labor administration. How could industrialism find an easy entrance into China?

The crisis created by the intrusion of Western industrial influences, since the Chinese government failed to resist the powerful intruding force, did not call forth the immediate and effective adjustment of the gentry. They failed because the crisis did not present itself as a direct threat to them. Their interest was in rent-collecting. As long as the peasants were able to pay their rent, the gentry had nothing to worry them. It would have needed foresight to see that Western industrial influences, if not

adjusted to the rural conditions in China, would lead eventually to the bankruptcy of the peasants and affect the economic basis of the gentry. But the gentry lacked foresight. Having no strong sense of political responsibility, they were naturally even less sensitive to the fact that China's political sovereignty was dwindling. They had little impulse to meet Western industrialism squarely and none to re-examine their own position in the destiny of China. The leading social class thus failed to live up to their social and cultural responsibility. The government at that time was in the hands of an alien monarch. The Manchu imperial house was degenerating. They certainly felt the danger of foreign intrusion, but the caliber of the ruling class was weak. They resorted to the primitive method of counteraction. The anti-foreign policy of the government furthered the aloofness of the gentry, who were submissive in nature.

The rapid intrusion of the Western powers, mainly motivated by commercial interests, on the one hand, and the ineptitude of the Chinese government and the leading class, on the other, resulted in a peculiar adjustment in the first phase of contact between the East and the West. It was characterized by the creation of a special zone of foreign settlement which was later developed into the so-called treaty ports. Treaty ports were created for the benefit of Western traders. To protect them, Western laws were allowed to apply in those cases in which Western interests were involved. Order in the ports was maintained by a specially organized government either in the hands of the consuls or in the hands of the representatives of the foreign residents. The Chinese government had no voice in the rule of the special zone. In such zones a type of cosmopolitan community developed. A brief analysis of the nature of such a cosmopolitan community will help us understand the main trend in the change of Chinese social structure during the last hundred years.

Cultures come in contact with each other through their agents. In the treaty ports different elements of the Western peoples and the Chinese are gathered. Among the Westerners, traders are predominant. Their interest is in making profit. They are not concerned with the wider spheres of social welfare and international goodwill which bear no immediate commercial benefit and endanger no community security. No efforts have been made on the part of the Western traders to improve the incongruous relation with the people among whom they are living. On the contrary, affected by their superiority complex, they make deplorable discriminations against the Chinese. These make a respectable Chinese uncomfortable. Humiliation prevents harmonious association. Therefore to such ports a special type of Chinese was attracted. They are known as *compradors*. I possess no sufficient data on the family background of those who form the first line of contact with Western traders, but I strongly suspect that those "secondhand foreigners" were, at least for the early period, recruited from the outcasts of the traditional structure who had lost their positions and sought their fortune through illegal means. Treaty ports are open to them. If they find regular employment in the community, such as servants or interpreters in a foreign concern, they gradually become compradors or first-boys; if they fail, they form gangs. They live in, and take advantage of, the margin of cultural contact. They are half-caste in culture, bilingual in speech, and morally unstable. They are unscrupulous, pecuniary, individualistic, and agnostic, not only in religion but in cultural values. Treaty ports are ultraurban. They are a land where the acquisition of wealth is the sole motive, devoid of tradition and culture. It is unfortunate that the East and the West should meet on such a ground.

To the towns in the interior come foreign missionaries. As individuals they are decent people. But they carry in one hand, the enthusiasm to convert the heathens who

are not conscious of their sins themselves and, in the other hand, the privilege of political protection given to the nationals of the Western powers. Religious salvation attracts few because the ordinary Chinese feels no need for a new creed, but the political protection shines in the eyes of those who need extra shelter for their illegal pursuits. Before the light of God has penetrated into the souls of the Chinese social outcasts, they have already done a lot in the name of God, who will never approve of their deeds. The antagonism against foreign missions that was aroused at the early period and resulted in open conflicts and wars between China and the Western powers came not from the ill feeling of the Chinese people against foreign missionaries but from their hatred towards the "secondhand foreigners" who had turned God into the devil.

However, as the influences from the West, both political and economical, grow in China, the special group of Chinese, nursed in the treaty ports and in the churches in the interior, gathers importance. Regardless of the type of their character, they occupy a strategic position in China's transition. They are the first few who know foreign languages and the ways to deal with Western people. As their children grow up, they give them modern education and send them abroad to attend Western universities. From this group a new class is formed. They are engaged in professional jobs; at first mainly dependent on foreign sponsors and later on their own feet. But, being reared in a cosmopolitan community, they are fundamentally hybrids. In them are manifest the comprador characteristic of social irresponsibility. It is this class that dominates the first phase of Chinese social and political changes.

VII

Western industrial influence does not stop at the treaty ports. It works its way far into the interior. As I have

mentioned above, the bulk of Chinese manufacturing industry is widely scattered in the homesteads of the peasants. The peasants work on their simple looms in their spare time. They have to take up jobs like that because the farm is too small to support them. But handicraft is far less efficient than machine work. Native products cannot compete with the manufactured goods from Western factories. The quality of native products is poor and the cost high. Gradually the native workers lose their jobs. The cheap but good cloth made in factories, for instance, penetrates deep into the remotest villages. This means that thousands of looms in the peasants' homes must stop working. The decline of native industry owing to the invasion of Western industrialism further impoverishes the already poor peasants. Rural depression forces the peasants to sell their land, and more and more peasants sink into tenancy. This is not the end. Tenants have to pay rent to the owners. This means an increase in the peasants' burden. In the area near the modern cities in the coastal provinces, where Western industrial influence is most strong, more than 80 per cent of the peasants are already tenants. The annual drain on rural produce in terms of rent payment is terrific. Many peasants leave their land and become landless laborers. They crowd into the treaty ports to be factory workers or gangsters. Those who remain in the villages linger on, hard pressed under the exacting taxes, rents, and interests. They are desperate.

Rural depression at last threatens the privileges of the gentry. They begin to disintegrate. Those who cling to the traditional privileges have to resort to stronger political backing. They become the spearhead of the oppressors of the peasant movement. They exert pressure on the government to maintain their privilege. However, being an intellectual class, a part of them, the second generation of the old landed gentry, after receiving mod-

ern education, take up professional jobs and earn their living independent of land.

Here we find another front of contact between the East and the West. This front is different from that found in the treaty ports. It is mainly cultural. Early in the last period of the imperial dynasty, a new form of gentry had the opportunity to go abroad, mainly on government missions or scholarships, and, unlike the compradors, grew interested in Western civilization. They were educated in academic centers, mostly in England. They translated the works of Adam Smith, Herbert Spencer, Montesquieu, J. S. Mill, and others into classical Chinese (which, I believe, are still the best translations of Western classical works in Chinese). They tried to dig into the source of Western civilization and to introduce the best of the West to China. But it is a slow process, and much slower than the aping of the irresponsible and superficial commercial spirit of the foreign traders in the treaty ports. Slow as it is, it moves on gradually. The new gentry started the movement of the Chinese renaissance. It was a movement for vernacular literature, scientific research, democracy, and modern morality. This movement was a combined effort of the returned students and students in Chinese colleges. Most of them were the children of the landed gentry.

However, the new gentry share with the old the same traditional spirit in their lack of active political responsibility. They frequently voiced their disapproval of the government politics but rarely attempted to assume government responsibilities by taking up political power themselves. The central power, since the downfall of the Manchu Dynasty, has been held by the warlords and by the treaty-port group. The rising of a soldier into imperial power is an old story. In the traditional structure, when a ruler is degenerate and abuses his unbounded power, he will encroach on the peaceful life of the people. The peasant will suffer most. Many of them will become

bandits and begin to revolt. Inefficient government will not be able to check the uprising. A new ruler will appear. In the same way, warlords appeared in the early years of the Republic. Most of them were of peasant origin and many started their career as outlaws. The treaty-port group rose from the same background and took a similar way. The difference is that they were settled in the protection of the cosmopolitan community and attained their power not through military strength but through financial strength. They lusted for power, and, living under foreign traders, they soon realized that the opportunity enjoyed by foreign traders could be theirs if they could get into power. With these matured compradors are the gangsters who form an integral part of the treaty-port group. They are well organized and disciplined in their gang spirit. They are daring and unscrupulous. The instability of the Chinese political situation gives those power-thirsty elements the opportunity to seize power. Indeed, I am not trying to minimize the importance of other groups of the Chinese people in the political struggle. Successive revolutions were prepared mostly by the new professional gentry and carried through by the peasants and workers; but, owing to the lack of political responsibility in the gentry and the backwardness of the peasants, power repeatedly slipped into the hands of the warlords and the treaty-port group.

The economic decline of the land interest, on the one hand, and the rising of a new politically conscious treaty-port group, on the other, undermined the importance of the gentry in the social structure of China.

VIII

It is quite probable that the second generation of the old gentry and of the compradors may form a new responsible class on a professional basis, working for the

modernization of China. With the combination of political consciousness and cultural farsightedness, this group may have a chance to employ modern knowledge to stabilize the deteriorating national economy, especially the depression of the rural areas. But, unfortunately, such a possibility continually diminished as the war against Japan lasted, the war itself resulting in a further alienation of these two groups.

In China the government has practical reasons for adopting a financial policy of inflation. This policy has shifted the enormous burden of the war on people who earn regular salaries and wages. An honest civil servant gets about one-thousandth of the income of his pre-war days. This is a fatal stroke to the newly emerging class. They disperse in several directions. One outlet for them is to joint the profiteers and give in to the old treaty-port spirit of irresponsibility and recklessness. Another outlet is to fall back upon their fathers' tradition of entering officialdom and participate in corruption. The few who stand on their own ground fight hard against the immediate menace of starvation.

Inflation encourages profiteering. With the ineffectiveness of governmental control, the market becomes lawless. Concentration of wealth in the hands of a few is unprecedented in Chinese history. The ruthless class which represents vested interests seizes the opportunity of enriching themselves and exerts strong pressure on the government, which has long suffered from corruption and inefficiency (another result of inflation), to pursue the policy of inflation. This profiteer class is a combination of big landlords in the interior and financiers who have moved in from the treaty ports. It should not be compared with the capitalist class in Europe during the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. The latter gathered their wealth from introducing a new technique in production. They exercised their newly acquired power to further productivity and by so doing reformed the social

relation of production and put an end to medieval feudalism. In China the war-profiteer class acquire their wealth through nonproductive means, like the old gentry. They monopolize opportunity by sheer power, which is feudal in nature. A type of trust organization is directly grafted upon the stem of medievalism. The stage of free competition is skipped over, and planned economy for social welfare is blocked. They drain capital from productive sources and hoard it for private enjoyment. They add poverty to the war-torn nation. The rise of such a class in the structure of Chinese society endangers its existence.

How about the peasants? A more or less self-sufficient peasant family can stand aloof from the change in the value of money. In the Yunnan villages around 1941, the only source of suffering at that time was the bad administration of the draft. To draft an able-bodied producer from a family may ruin it. But such disasters do not fall on all families. Those families which do not suffer from labor shortages enjoy the benefit of a temporary relief from the population pressure. Wages for farm laborers increased and at one time rose even higher than the price of rice. The real value of farm produce increased because the price of food in the early period of the war went up higher than that of other commodities. However, the situation has changed since the introduction of the grain tax. Before that the peasants paid their tax in money, and inflation reduced their burden. But in 1942 the government changed the policy and ordered the peasants to pay their tax in grain. In later years a law was introduced granting the government the power to buy rice from the peasants at a fixed price which is much lower than the market price. Bad administration further aggravates the burden on the peasants.

Since the land tax is collected from the landowners, the grain tax affects the gentry as well. To protect themselves, the gentry resort to their traditional means of neutralizing the law through personal influences. The

revival of court politics in wartime, which has resulted in hundreds of cases of corruption and scandal, is the consequence.

The recent war has definitely arrested the trend of reorganization of the Chinese social structure according to a modern pattern. In some respects, it falls back to the old line and in other respects it slips into dangerous pits. What the next step should be is a grave question which the Chinese have to answer realistically.

In concluding the present paper, I should like to add that a sketch like the present one necessarily oversimplifies the reality. An attempt at making a comprehensive interpretation of the social structure of China is premature because it requires thorough investigation. But to formulate research programs, it is advisable to prepare an outline which will provide hypotheses for investigation. This is the purpose of the present paper. However, it may also be used as reference by those who are interested in a general view of the social structure of China. But this paper should not be taken as conclusive. It serves only as a stimulus for further studies.

KAIXIAN'GONG REVISITED (1957)

SECTION ONE

I left Kaixian'gong Village on May 16, after a stay of twenty days.

Located in southern Jiangsu, in Wu-Jiang Xian (county) not far from Lake Tai, Kaixian'gong is deep in the lake region and is reached by a two-hour rowboat trip from the nearby market town of Chentse.

During the war with Japan the village was taken, and all communications with it were severed. After liberation, though I often thought of returning to visit my friends there, circumstances were not favorable, and I was never able to do so. This spring Chairman Mao called on intellectuals to "get off their horses to look at the flowers,"[1] and I then resolved to go to learn from this village that I knew comparatively well. That is how I came to spend the last twenty days there.

When it came to writing, however, I found it difficult: I did not know where to begin. It would take a long time to outline all the changes that have taken place in the last twenty-one years. Those twenty-one years were such unsettled years that really tremendous changes have taken place. Each person's experiences are enough to write a history. To speak of the sufferings incurred during the occupation brings tears of sorrow to my eyes. To speak of the struggles of liberation, though, brings tears to joy. A living example is Comrade Zhou Fu-lin,

supervisor of the Agricultural Co-operative. To tell how he, a poor agricultural laborer, whose mother had died and whose father was ill, was able after liberation to participate in the Peasants' Congress, how he was able to evade the evil plots of the landlords; to follow his story through how he turned over, through the land reform, and the establishment of co-operatives would take me all day and all night. It would be an unforgettable story if we went on to talk about the experiences of the co-operative movement, from the mutual-aid teams to last year's establishment of the advanced cooperative, which filled the village with celebration.

I ought to write about these things, so everyone can know these stories, but my writing is insufficient to realize my intentions. I have wasted a lot of paper and still have not accomplished anything. From youth onward I never studied literature and thus have seriously neglected important writing skills.

So what can I write about?

If I really must write, I can only report to the readers some of the rural problems encountered in those twenty days.

I

It goes without saying that in this village, as in myriads of other villages, the changes that have occurred in the last twenty-one years are absolutely unprecedented in their significance and depth; a society based on exploitation of man by man has changed into one in which there is no exploitation. Anyone who cannot see this change, or who underestimates its significance, is certainly blind. That such a great change will certainly usher in a new prosperity and happiness is something that those who have actually learned from the last few years cannot in the least doubt.

In our China the problem is no longer which road to choose, but how best to advance along the road which has

already been chosen. If we adopt this perspective, then it is incumbent on us to investigate what obstacles may await us on our chosen road, and how to remove them. To focus on the obstacles and neglect the road itself is wrong, but so also is focusing on the road and not the obstacles along it. In what follows I will, following this premise, raise a few problems, so I wanted to make my position clear.

II

My sister, who is a people's representative for Jiangsu, accompanied me into the rural areas. Everyone in the village over thirty recognized her.

As our boat entered the village, the news of our arrival had already spread along both banks of the river. Many of the older women lined the banks, calling out my sister's name and beckoning to her. As the boat landed they all crowded around, saying, "We're always thinking of you. Why don't you come more often? Just look—I've grown so old, and you're still the same." "No, you're all unchanged." It was really as though they were sisters meeting again after a long separation. A few of the older men still remembered me, saying laughingly, "Oh, you've come. We couldn't recognize you, you've grown so fat." All of our friends were so warm in their greetings that it moved us very much, bringing tears to our eyes.

They held our hands, not wanting to let go. What could we say? We asked after their lives: "How are things going?" Several of the old women answered at once, "Fine, but the grain. . . ." Thereupon others interrupted, saying, "They've just arrived, and you start talking about this. Let's talk about it later," and then asking us, "How is your father?"

Several children crowded around us, and I suddenly wondered how at this time of day they could be here at the riverbank watching the commotion. Why weren't they in school? When I asked, they all giggled shyly.

One of them grimaced and said, "We don't go to school. We cut grass for the sheep." An old man standing nearby added, "How can we afford studying? Eating is more important."

Though we heard only these few sentences, we at once recalled that word "grain." After we sat down to rest and most of the people had gone away, we casually asked the cadre of the agricultural commune, "Is there a problem with the grain?" He shook his head. "In a village of 600 households there will be a certain number of people who feel that the grain situation is critical." He continued, "The problem can be solved."

If we "rode horses to see the flowers," we would feel very uneasy and would think that there must be a problem in the co-operativization of this area. Fortunately, we were able to stay a while longer and could look further into the problem. Only then did we begin to realize that it was not at all that simple. In order to make that clear I am required to use up more ink, so let me begin at the beginning.

III

Have the agricultural co-operatives been adequately managed?

The achievements not only approach the limits of the possible, they are also very great: the average per *mu* unhusked rice yield in 1936 was 350 *jin*; after collectivization, in 1956, it had reached 559 *jin*, an increase of over 200 *jin*.

There were also obvious increases in overall agricultural production. If we calculate the figures for this co-operative's No. 2 Production Brigade, we find that in 1936 it produced, in husked rice equivalents, over 259,000 *jin*, while in 1956 this figure had risen to over 418,000 *jin*, an increase of 61 per cent.

Isn't this sort of increase due to collectivization? Of course, in analyzing the reasons for the increase, we find

first that the area that is double-cropped is larger. In 1936 this village did not generally grow a spring crop, while now it does; we saw that they were growing a double rice crop. Second, there has been progress in irrigation. This area is quite swampy. The land is low, and at high water time there is more water to be seen than land. In the past, many fields could not be drained at flood-time, and so yields were very low. After collectivization, there was energetic construction of ditches and the installation of pumping stations, so that the poor lands of the past were transformed into good land. Third, the amount of fertilizer use increased. In the first place, because of the creation of irrigation and drainage ditches it was possible to transport river mud by boat to fields that could not previously be reached. There is no longer any problem with initial fertilizer, and owing to the co-operative's leadership, composting is also more plentiful than before. Any other reasons are negligible—with just these three it is quite possible to improve production from 350 *jin* to 559 *jin*.

Doesn't this obvious increase in production mean an increase in peasants' income? That is actually another problem. If the income of peasants were solely from agriculture, then an increase in agricultural production would increase income. If this is not the case, if income is not solely from agriculture, but there are a number of supplementary occupations, then one must look at the proportion of agriculture to those supplementary occupations to see if the latter also increased. Kaixian'gong was originally an agricultural village with well-developed subsidiary occupations. Twenty-one years ago I often heard the older villagers say that agriculture there was only for consumption; apart from that, they relied entirely on supplementary industry. This time we carried out a rather careful analysis and found that agricultural production occupied about 55 per cent of all production. Thus, in this area, although agricultural production increased

by about 60 per cent, it could not completely overshadow the income from subsidiary occupations. The key to whether or not peasant income grew thus lay in the supplementary industries.

The reason why, in villages like Kaixian'gong, the subsidiary occupations were relatively important in the past was basically because there was great population pressure on limited land. There were only about 2 *mu* of land, on the average, per person. Using the old figure of 350 *jin* of rice per *mu*, if each person put all of the land to the production of rice, the average yield would be only 700 *jin* per person. At that time the various forms of exploitation were rather severe, amounting to a loss of at least 25 per cent of the income, so it was quite difficult to stay alive on what was left. Even if it were enough to keep one fed, it was not enough to make a living, so people began to develop subsidiary occupations.

It may well be that this is the usual situation in a village with little land but many people. In the nine counties around Suzhou the average person had only 1.8 *mu* of agricultural land. In my view if one wishes to raise peasant income significantly in this kind of area, it is certainly not enough to focus on agricultural income alone. If one ignores the various kinds of subsidiary occupation, very serious problems may arise.

IV

In order to further illuminate the economic conditions here, I think that we must first try to compute the total income from agriculture and subsidiary occupations over the last twenty-one years. But once we embark upon an attempt to calculate income from subsidiary occupations, we run into a number of problems. Now, talking about the current situation, apart from all the subsidiary industries managed by the cooperative, there are also to be taken into account those managed by the family, something not easy to clarify. If one wants to include the con-

ditions of twenty-one years ago in the calculations, not only are there many relevant items, there are many changes as well; production figures and prices both were unstable, and if one treats these variations casually, the results will be far from the reality. But if we do not seek these comparative figures, and instead rely on our impressions, then even I myself will lack confidence in them. During these twenty days our main effort was directed at clarifying this problem. Day and night we searched out people to talk to, gathering the older villagers together for discussion and argument. Several young friends who had accompanied me to help in my research worked at their abacuses and calculating machines through the night — we burned about a *jin* of midnight oil each evening. By the time I had to leave, we still had not finished calculations for the last sets of figures we had collected, and so we left someone to continue the work; but we had arrived at the outlines of the central figures: in 1936 the average overall income from agricultural and subsidiary occupations (apart from capital investment) was the equivalent of about 800 *jin* of rice. In 1956 it amounted to 850 *jin*, an increase of about 50 *jin*. If we look at the real income of peasant families, that is, that portion usable for consumption, the difference between these two years is rather smaller — an increase of only about 30 *jin*.

What do these figures tell us? The year 1936 was comparatively good in this village, approaching the highest production figures that had previously been attained. After the[Japanese] occupation, the economy declined in every respect until liberation. Only then was this trend reversed. In the process of rural collectivization the earlier levels were all exceeded. However, our figures are average figures — in fact, conditions were not equal for all. In the rural social revolution the position of the former poor agricultural laborers was quickly raised, and they soon exceeded their earlier levels. On the other

hand, it was a contrary situation for the middle peasants. Most of them did not experience any improvement, and some even became worse off. Not a few households feel that their lives are not as good now as they were in the past. (We have not yet finished our calculations of the distribution of different categories of peasant households, so I will not mention any concrete figures.)

Why is it that agricultural production has increased by 60 per cent and yet there are still those who feel that they were better off twenty-one years ago?

The problem lies in the supplementary occupations.

V

This lake region has long been famous as a silk-producing area. The "chi-li silk" that enjoyed an international reputation was produced here.[3] When I arrived in this village twenty-one years ago all of the families and households raised silkworms. The cocoons they produced were basically enough to provide the necessary raw materials for a small-scale silk factory. We have taken a production brigade in the cooperative for a detailed comparative analysis. In those days 132 families raised over 650 frames of silkworms. Computations of the value of the fresh silkworms sold show that each year they could be sold for the equivalent of 96,000 *jin* of rice. But in 1956, only some 130-odd frames were raised. Because the number of worms produced per unit of eggs increased, and since techniques were improved after the collectivization of management, each frame's production of silkworms was doubled, and the value of the cocoons also rose somewhat, but still the income from this was only 60 per cent that of the early period — 57,000 *jin* in all. Overall, this is a fall in production.

Why was there a fall in production? The key to this lies in the decline in the provision of mulberry leaves. The reason for this decline is twofold — in the first place, the village's mulberry trees were cut back during the

period of occupation because the enemy feared attack by guerrilla groups, and a portion of them were destroyed by floods. Furthermore, quite a number of the remaining trees are old and the groves have not been renewed—there were several years during which no attention was paid to planting new trees, and little fertilizer was applied. Thus there is less self-sufficiency in mulberry-leaf production compared to the past. In the second place, in the past the Dongshan area of Lake Tai and the hill areas of Zhejiang used to specialize in growing mulberry, the leaves of which were then provided to silkworm-growing areas. Now these areas grow silkworms themselves and thus no longer provide leaves for others. If it were not for the fact that last year there was an epidemic of silkworm disease in Zhejiang, this village would not have been able to buy any mulberry leaves, many silkworms would have been lost, and the income from this would not have reached the level it did.

If one analyzes it, this is a big problem. We cannot go into it in detail, but can only raise two points: First, why was the area devoted to mulberry trees allowed to decline? Why weren't the deficiencies in the mulberry-growing area remedied? Why weren't new saplings used to replace old trees? The answer to this is that there was a lack of saplings. I have heard that last year Jiangsu Province began to pay attention to this problem and is right now involved in planting many saplings. But the distribution of the saplings is irrational, and it seems that its timing is another problem. Quite recently the news in the press that a provincial representative in Jiangsu had disclosed that several tens of thousands of mulberry saplings sent to Wuxi were never planted caused great anguish among quite a number of elders in the village.

Second, in the past the production of mulberry leaves and silkworm raising were geographically separate pursuits. Whether or not such local concentration of special-

ized production is justifiable on economic grounds is worthy of research. The present trend is that areas with materials for feed grow their own silkworms, so each cooperative must certainly then be self-sufficient in silkworm feed. Thus when there is a lack of such feed, a village with a tradition of silkworm production will have to render idle a good deal of skilled labor. It is quite difficult to switch such occupations in a short time, and whether or not it is economically worthwhile is really a problem.

If we just look at it from the point of view of this village's present conditions, if it cannot provide the mulberry saplings, it cannot provide mulberry leaves, and one cannot see a quick way to restore the old supplementary occupation of silkworm raising. Even if one can solve the silkworm problem, one must wait three to five years before any result will be seen. Moreover, the area which can be devoted to mulberries is of course limited. According to our rough calculations, the area could be doubled, but beyond that, a conflict with the agricultural system would develop. If a doubling were possible, the old levels of production could be regained, but then the skilled labor would still not be able to expand to the same degree.

VI

The above discussion was just about silkworm raising: the silkworms produce cocoons, which are then sold. In this village today the peasants stop at that. But in the past it was different. They went on to reel silk thread off the cocoons, and then sell that. Originally each household reeled its own thread, but by twenty-one years ago, because of improvements in the textile industry, such locally produced thread began to fall behind in quality and thus fall in value. If they sold the cocoons, most merchants wanted to buy at a discount, and the peasants then suffered a loss. Thus at that time the Jiangsu Silk

and Mulberry Training School was promoting an improvement of techniques in rural villages. My sister was a part of this work, helping to introduce mechanical reels into the villages. In this village she helped the villagers organize a small-scale cooperative silk factory to improve the quality of the raw silk, while retaining the silk-reeling process within the village. This silk factory was razed to the ground by the enemy during the occupation.

Outsiders might think that this would have been forgotten by now, but within the village it is vividly remembered. The reason is very simple. The benefits from this small village factory were very great. Simply put, there were over eighty full-time workers in this factory, each paid about 10 *yuan* per month. There was also some part-time or temporary work of a kind that could be done by old women. Second, this kind of light industry approximated a village technical school, continually producing skilled laborers. At that time over twenty persons went outside the village to work. Since their wages were then relatively high, each one was able to send back home over 100 *yuan* per year. Third, this was a cooperative silk factory, and its method of management was that the peasants turned over the cocoons, made the silk thread, computed the costs of production, and calculated dividends on the basis of amount of materials provided and capital invested. This jointly operated, collectively owned enterprise set up with the help of the school on the one hand did away with the previous exploitation and on the other extended the profits of the silk reeling process to the peasants themselves. In these several ways it is obvious that it operated to increase the peasants' income.

After the destruction of the factory, what could the trained mechanics do in the countryside, apart from attend to family affairs? What could they produce? There was no market for locally produced silk and no factory for mechanized silk reels. After liberation the Suzhou Silk

Factory began production and hired over forty workers from the village. But there were still over sixty skilled female workers who were unable to find work. The majority of these forty workers were locally trained in the earlier years, but after the village lost the factory, the young girls of seventeen and eighteen today have had no opportunity to learn the skills. The people have good reason to remember the factory vividly.

The problem raised here is, I believe, very important, and that is, does it still seem possible or necessary to establish light industries in these rural villages, in raw-material producing areas? I have a personal motivation for raising such a question since I myself saw, twenty-one years ago, the benefits that can come from such a small factory in a developing village economy. Its influence can be very great, and this is why in the years before liberation I wrote a number of works advocating so-called "rural industry." Owing perhaps to a certain lack of clarity in my argument, and to an overly zealous emphasis on the position of such small-scale light industry in the national economy, I was taken as a bourgeois thinker during the thought-reform period and severely criticized. Now, thinking about it in a calmer period, my thought of that period was not without error. The error lay in neglecting heavy industry, something which ought to have been criticized. Nevertheless, as for these questions about rural industry, I still feel now, as I did then, that they are worth investigating, and I believe that in certain places they are well adapted to our concrete conditions in China. Recently what I have heard about the Second Five-Year Plan comes closer to my own view. This re-visit to Kaixian'gong brought my innermost thoughts swelling to consciousness. Today, while many schools of thought contend, I have gathered courage to bring these things up again, in the sincere hope that the leadership will pay attention to these problems.

Our country has many light industries, and it is not

necessary to concentrate them in a few big cities in order to improve technology. As for silk production, I have asked the advice of quite a few experts, and they all hold that small-scale factories of a certain size can produce a very high quality raw silk, and that moving processing industries into the area of raw material production can effect many savings. Not only is this so, this kind of small-scale factory can also promote the movement for rural technical innovation. Many of the by-products are usable as the best of fertilizers, and the improvement in the technology of both agricultural and industrial pursuits can be made together. Furthermore, the excessive centralization of industry in urban areas has already created difficult social problems. An unnecessary concentration of population is a profitless and harmful thing. Of course, I have never advocated the complete dispersal of industry throughout the countryside. However, I still want to affirm today that some processing industries can be dispersed, and moreover, once they are dispersed, there will be advantages for both the economy and the technology. Silk factories are just one example.

This advocacy of mine does not fit in with the present trend. Over the last few years at least it has seemed that agricultural co-operatives were to carry out only agriculture and that all productive activities of a processing nature were to be transferred to other parts of the system, to be concentrated in urban areas. Even things like grain milling cannot be carried out in agricultural co-operatives. In Kaixian'gong I saw a milling machine, something very easily used to produce pig feed in the process of grinding. The mill in the town, however, does not permit it to be used in this way, but rather gives the chaff to the villages as fuel to be burned. As for silkworm cocoons, the drying process has also been given over to merchants, the result of which is not at all good. But it appears that the things that cause the country to suffer losses are regarded as minor, while on the other

hand transgressions of the regulations are regarded as major. I hope that it is in this basic question of the scope of management of the agricultural communes that we can open up to argument, and to actual research, how best to truly unite agriculture and industry. Isn't this the only way we can best carry out the development of a socialist economy in these concrete conditions of many people and little land? If the leaders feel that this kind of plan is worth a real test, and they restore the co-operative factory to Kaixian'gong, then I believe that the level of activism of the masses will certainly be very high, and furthermore, I would encourage my sister, together with a few other experts, to come up with a concrete plan.

I have gone on at length about this — let me take another way to express my argument.

VII

Another kind of subsidiary occupation that was quite important in the past was the use of boats in the slack agricultural season for transport to market.

Boats are necessary equipment for people living in this lake region. Village buildings in this area are all built along the rivers, and the rivers are the high ways. Some fields are completely surrounded by water, like little islands; without a boat one cannot get near them.

In this village of 600-odd households, there are 160 boats, large and small. Apart from use as transportation, their use in agriculture is in gathering water plants to use as fertilizer — something which does not occupy a lot of time. In the past, during the slack agricultural season, the peasants would use these boats to go sell things or transport goods. It was said that about 140 of the boats were used in this way. The range of their movement was quite wide, encompassing almost the entire Lake Tai drainage basin: east to Shanghai and Pu-dong, south to Hangzhou, north to Changjiang, and west to Yixing and Chu-jung. The peasants were very familiar

with all the waterways in this drainage area and knew many shortcuts. In two days they could row to Shanghai a remarkable speed. The merchandise they transported and sold was quite varied because in this region each area had its own special product. For instance, the hill areas produced large bamboo, pine timber, hardwoods, and charcoal; the coastal areas produced dried jellyfish; the Lake Tai area produced vegetables; and there were some other areas where handicrafts, such as bamboo implements, were produced. They went among these several areas, taking advantage of supply and demand.

This economic network seems to have existed for a long time. The older peasants in this village all had traditional relationships with those in the production areas mentioned above. Once such a friendship was created, it enabled them to buy goods on credit in area A, take them to area B to sell, then take the cash back to A to pay off the debt. On the one hand, this seems in the nature of a system of commission sales by the producers. On the other hand, it seems to me that the important thing is the use of the boats. Of course there are ways in which the boat-owning peasants are similar to merchants. Connected by the movements of these boats, each area is then able to develop its own special product.

Since it is restricted to boat owners, certainly not every family has an opportunity to participate in this activity. The number of days spent by each person in this pursuit is quite variable, and of course the amount of money earned each time is also quite variable. When we make computations, we find that it was not difficult for a boat to earn the equivalent of 750 *jin* of rice each year.

After the establishment of the agricultural cooperatives, this trade movement came completely to a halt because such activity was considered to be capitalist. Although the government Bureau of Transportation tried to set up methods to employ the transport potential of the boats in the rural villages, the peasants were not at all active in

this; in 1956 only ten boats participated in this transport activity.

Why was this pursuit of transportation almost completely halted? Is it the same for similar villages in the area? What is the influence on the economy of the area? These questions involve such broad areas that those of us who live in one village have no way to answer. But from the point of view of peasant income, it is not a good idea to leave these boats idle. We do not believe that in realizing socialism we cannot make use of this production equipment. We should be able to make *better* use of it, but in fact it has not turned out this way.

VIII

I mentioned above that the children tend the sheep. This sort of supplementary family enterprise existed twenty-one years ago as well. The pastoralists of the grasslands may find this difficult to believe — it seems to be contrary to all logic. How could sheep be raised in this lake region with checkerboard patterns of fields and bunds? Someone who "looks at flowers from horseback" might actually miss this supplementary occupation, since at a glance there is not a single sheep to be seen. Yet in the past the village altogether raised close to a thousand of them. They were kept all year in small pens and did not have to go searching for grass on their own, but were fed grass collected by people.

The income from sheep-raising was not bad; one sheep could be sold for 10 *yuan*, the fertilizer produced was worth 20 *yuan*, and one could shear them and make clothing with the yarn produced. I saw quite a few old villagers wearing knitted woolen clothing. At first I thought that they were trying to imitate contemporary fashions and were being extravagant; only later did I realize that this clothing was a product of a self-sufficient handicraft industry.

This business of raising sheep shows even better how

peasants in this area used the land in every way possible, without an inch wasted. The grass eaten by the sheep was all cut and brought, stalk by stalk, by the children; children in groups of two and three cut grass along the edges of fields, along the roads, and along the banks of the rivers. Many children were unable to attend school because they had to cut grass, something I will return to later. Quite a bit of land which in the past was not arable was made so in the process of collectivization. Thus the area of arable land was increased, and that supporting wild grasses was decreased. Improving production made things more difficult for the children. In order to collect grasses, they have to go out in boats; the farther they go, the more time it takes, and furthermore, as time goes on they are able to gather less and less. There are only about 200 sheep now.

That is not all. In the last few years the raising of rabbits was also developed. Since rabbits also eat grasses, there is a conflict between rabbit-raising and sheep-raising. Moreover, the rabbits have the advantage here. The reason is that to buy a lamb to raise requires a fair amount of capital, and it is not easy to build a pen in which to keep it. If one sheep does not mature, but sickens and dies, then the loss will be great. Baby rabbits, however, do not require much capital, and if two of them can be raised, then one can make about 10 *yuan* profit on the meat, pelt, and fertilizer together. At present the village has at least 1,000 or more rabbits.

When I was little I also raised rabbits. They were raised as pets and ran all over the place, defecating everywhere, which aroused everyone's opposition. I never thought that rabbits would be living docilely in large tubs, never coming out for a walk till the end of their days. Without seeing it personally, who would have believed that an animal's behavior could be so easily changed? Rabbit fertilizer is very valuable, and the active use of such fertilizer is a new development since collectivization.

I also have an opinion on the question of raising sheep and rabbits. That they help in the creation of wealth for the peasants is very good. But to cause children to miss school seems too big a sacrifice. Of course, if we can develop another source of feed, the situation will be different. We should make special efforts to develop a cultivated feed, so that the children can go to school. Obviously, if the feed problem is not solved, then there will not be many sheep or rabbits.

In the past, very few pigs were raised in this village; most meat that was consumed was brought in from outside. Only in the last few years have they started to promote this, and I must say that the results have been quite successful. Now there are over 200 pigs, an average of one for every three families. The big problem in raising pigs here, apart from the lack of experience, is again the feed. One must be a little more careful about what they eat than with sheep or rabbits. Most of them need a diet mixed with rice chaff, which is in insufficient supply. I mentioned earlier that arrangements used to be made whereby the chaff from the grain mill, together with a little bran, was used to make a good pig feed. But due to the conflicting interests of the cooperative and the rice mill, it is now all burned, a sight which causes me great pain. That the abuses of red tape should reach this level! Last year the co-operative set aside some land for growing pig feed for the pig-raising households, but land is too valuable here, and the things grown were not used to feed the pigs, but were eaten by the people. Pigs, of course, cannot compete with people. As a result, this year even this land was taken back. No wonder co-operative members lack morale. It seems that they are not permitted to make any decisions regarding the land.

The importance of feed-raising, I hardly need add, is in fact very great. Not only is it of course very important in solving the crisis in the meat supply, but with regard to the improvement of agricultural production, many prob-

lems would arise without the aid of animals like the pig, sheep, and rabbit. We over and over again pondered, with experienced villagers, the latent energy in various kinds of production. First and foremost is agriculture. No matter how important supplementary industries might be, one must recognize that at present agriculture is preeminent. In the opinion of all the older villagers, to improve production from the current 500-odd *jin* to 600 or 700 *jin* per *mu* should not be too hard, but they lack the one crucial necessity: fertilizer. The region produces enough river mud for initial fertilizer, and there is no reason to worry about this. What is lacking is supplementary fertilizer. Considering sources of supplementary fertilizer other than chemical fertilizer plants, we must view these animals as natural fertilizer factories. Moreover, these kinds of factories all can be dispersed into the rural areas and are very much quicker in development than are heavy industries. Among these sorts of fertilizer factories, the pig is the best.

If the production per unit agricultural area is to be raised to 700 *jin*, the supply of supplementary fertilizers must be increased. If chemical fertilizers are in insufficient supply, then one must rely on pigs, sheep, and rabbits. If we want to set up these natural fertilizer factories, then the problem of feed must be solved. In this lies the key to the development of today's supplementary industries.

IX

The supplementary industries in this village are not restricted to those mentioned above. If we were to discuss each one of them in turn, this essay would be much too long. However, the important ones were brought up earlier. In brief, the supplementary industries of today do not match those of twenty-one years ago. In general terms the supplementary industries of 1936 amounted to 40-odd per cent of agricultural production, while those of 1956 do not amount to 20 per cent. One reason for this

has been an increase in the value of agricultural production, and the other a decline in income from the supplementary industries.

The reasons for such a decline, as analyzed above, are quite complex, but cannot be laid entirely at the door of collectivization. On the contrary, the process of collectivization promoted the development of many sectors crucial to supplementary industries. The problem lies, rather, in the failure of the earlier leaders in rural industrialization to carry out the policy of "making proper arrangements for unified planning with due consideration for all parties concerned" in regard to a multiplicity of planning strategies in areas like this with comparatively great past development of supplementary industries. There are a good many internal contradictions worthy of note in this. If hereafter the realization of this policy can be improved, this problem of the development of supplementary industries can certainly be solved.

X

Speaking of a village like Kaixian'gong, one might say that whenever supplementary industries are so many and varied, the relations between them will of course be this complex and confusing: "What are you getting at?" it might be asked. "What am I getting at?" This is the last subject I want to discuss. When a hundred schools contend, we ought not to stop at exposing contradictions, but we must go on to reason things out and make decisions. We may not arrive at a decision to match every contradiction, but there is something to be gained in trying.

The reason why the people were so very warm and friendly to us was that our arrival awakened a great hope they had been nourishing. If we were just to write essays, or even publish a book, what good would that do them? Wouldn't that be to act unworthily towards them? But wanting to come up with an idea of what to do, I ended

up racking my brains, sleepless through the night, and still could find no way out. Outside the window the spring rains fell endlessly. It seemed that this year's spring flowers would be much benefited. By dawn the rains had almost stopped. I walked back and forth among the paddy fields, looking here and there, noting that all of the land was being used, so that even the paths were so narrow that it was difficult to keep one's footing on them. I had no great hopes of coming up with any ideas. What was to be done?

One day, suddenly the cloud broke up and it became clear. I realized that the young friend who had come with me had been working without letup for ten days and needed a rest, so I decided to get a boat, and we went boating. While we drifted quietly along, an idea drifted into my mind.

This is a riverine area, with waterways, lakes, and marshes everywhere. The area of water surface is no less than that of the land. A question occurred to me on that boat. How wonderful it would be if this great expanse of water could be profitably used! Once I voiced this thought, my companions were inspired to say: "Why couldn't it be exploited? The land needs fertilizer, so the pigs need feed. Why couldn't the water be used to grow the feed?!"

Once this train of thought was begun, a series of connected questions naturally presented themselves. I said that water was in many ways superior to land. The watercourse has a bed and a surface, and in addition there is the volume of water itself which could be developed. Land has only one of these, while water has all three. The mud and silt from the beds of the waterways are already used, one could raise fish in the water, and one could grow water plants on the surface as feed. Isn't this getting three for the price of one?

"Not just three — you get even more," added a young friend. "The children would be freed from the chore of

cutting grasses for the sheep and could go to school to become literate."

As soon as we returned to the village we called a meeting of the cooperative officials and the older villagers to look into this idea. Everyone thought that this policy of having waterside villages exploit the water resources was an apposite one. In the long term, if the vast area of water could be exploited, it would not be a question of raising peasant income by several per cent, but of raising it several-fold. However, a complete investigation would show that there are many difficulties with this plan. Of course, if there were no difficulties this huge area of water would long ago already have been exploited. Our ancestors over the last several thousand years were no less intelligent than we are. Why else have these waters been left idle? To serve as scenery? If we think about it, though, there is one respect in which we are superior to our ancestors; we have collectivized and so can accomplish many things that they could not. Problems which were unsurmountable in the past can be tackled today. The villagers' saying is absolutely correct: now that we have Chairman Mao, the water can be made to yield its riches. This is when ideas started coming to people. Someone thought of growing water lilies; another mentioned the water chestnuts planted the year before. The things that can be grown in the water are many indeed! In the past, since no one was able to control the lakes or marshes, to lock them up or build walls around them, no one could be sure of being able to harvest whatever might be planted. Now there are cooperatives, and so such management is possible.

Everyone discussed the various kinds of difficulties. There were technical difficulties. For instance, water chestnuts had been planted the year before, only to be blown away by a typhoon. How could one guard against the wind? Also, water lilies have no roots, and so can

float away with the current. What could be done about this?

This is an important matter — we habitually dogmatic intellectuals ought not to be self-satisfied as to our own intelligence, ought not to haphazardly throw out ideas. But if we submit these problems to the intelligence of the older villagers, then many fruitful results may come of it. When the villagers asked us to look into these questions, I said, "You should all think about this carefully to see if the reasoning is logical, whether or not it will work out, or, if there is any point in all this, whether or not we should try it out on a small scale."

Before we left, we conferred a few more times with rural Party secretaries and village cadres and heard that they had already sent out boats to attend to the water lilies.

Supplementary industries and agricultural pursuits need not be contradictory; if the two are managed well, they can even support each other. In terms of the uses of resources, labor, and capital, they can form a profitable system: feed can be grown in the water, to be given to pigs, sheep, and rabbits, which in turn will increase fertilizer output, which in turn will improve the rate of crop production on land. If we include the rice, wheat, beans, and vegetables that can be grown on the fields, and the mulberry trees, melons, squashes, and fruits grown on other land, then capital will grow and can be invested in fish. If the rivers and marshes are full of fish, then even in bad years such a village will have no reason to worry about having enough to eat.

For the time being we will end our discussion of agricultural and supplementary industries here. However, I have not yet explained the grain problem we encountered when we first entered the village. This will be treated in the next section.

SECTION TWO

I

After returning from the countryside, whenever I run into any friends who know that I went there to undertake an investigation, they always immediately say, "Returning to a village you know well after twenty-one years, appearances must be very different. How has the improvement in peasant life been?"

If this is just chit-chat, then I can tell that the other person already assumes he knows what sort of thing I will say. If, on the other hand, he wants me to answer sincerely, then that depends on what "appearances" means.

If "appearances" refers to the nature of society, especially that aspect having to do with the relations of production, then the semi-feudal, semi-colonial class society of twenty-one years ago is now a society based on collective ownership, which is on the road to socialism, and which has done away with exploitation. In this respect the appearance of the village has undergone a basic change and is completely different from what it was in the past.

If "appearances" means life by the waterside, surrounded by scenes of mulberry groves and rice fields, then this is very familiar to me from the past. It is even more difficult to tell past from present in the case of the local accent or colloquialisms.

If "appearances" refers to the standard of living in respect to clothing, food, housing, and transportation, then I hesitate and do not know what to say. In the past of course there was a viewpoint that once socialism was realized, people's lives must be improved, improved to a great degree over past conditions. Investigations into peasant life which failed to emphasize such improvements seemed not to be supporting socialism. You talked that

way, I did, we all did, spreading everywhere the good news of the improvements in the lives of the peasants.

Socialism can certainly bring us prosperous and happy lives, whether in urban or rural areas. Moreover, in fact, the life of the majority of peasants has been improved. Emphasizing the improvements in peasants' lives also had the function of strengthening confidence in, and spreading the influence of, the collectivization movement at its height. I do not doubt any of these statements. Where I hesitate is in this: is it a good idea to continue to propagandize this way? The Forty Points of Agriculture[6] are transformed into a general guarantee to the peasants. The distant, ultimate goal of socialism, as in a telescope, becomes so close it seems one could touch it. Everywhere it is said that life is so good, that making a living is so easy, that the winds of improvement are blowing from the four quarters. In fact, I am afraid that a basic change in people's livelihood and in the relations of production is not something which can be accomplished in a short time. Just how good this sort of trend is for socialism is worth considering.

During twenty days in the countryside, I was puzzled by various kinds of contradictions: If one is to act as a people's representative, then one must keep the people's livelihood in mind. As I mentioned in the earlier section, as soon as we arrived at the riverbank, the old women complained of a grain shortage, of lacking money to buy rice. I thought to myself that unless they are not telling the truth, there has been a problem in collectivization.

We sat down to our computations, and after figuring it many ways could not deny that although agricultural production had increased, supplementary industries had declined in production. Still, total income had exceeded pre-war levels. When we re-examined peasant income in this village, we found it to be among the highest in the nation. The average share of rice was not low, so how could they complain about a grain crisis? Were they

lying? No. One day we dropped in on a neighboring village to visit my old godmother, who had taken care of me when I lived in the village twenty-one years earlier. When we arrived we were mistaken for doctors come to administer smallpox vaccinations. Once we found her and sat down, however, we were once again surrounded by talk about the grain problem. In fact it was only my own well-fed frame which was able to break through their preoccupation.

To doubt the superiority of collectivization is incorrect. But to recognize the superiority of collectivization and at the same time believe that it solves all problems is in my opinion incorrect as well. The one way is as incorrect as the other. If we think too simplemindedly, we will be in greater danger of error. Please excuse me if I go on about this: I hope that I can keep the reader from seizing on one or two of my sentences to argue that I am being negative.

II

We still need to figure accounts.

"Heaven above, Suzhou and Hangzhou below" — Although this saying is somewhat exaggerated, it reflects something of reality. The peasants throughout the country have an average income of about 60 *yuan*. In the area around Suzhou the average is 78.6 *yuan* (not including family cottage industries and the fruits of the petty economy). The average income for agricultural cooperatives in this village last year was 82 *yuan* per person. If we add in cottage industries and remittances from family members residing elsewhere, it amounts to, in our calculations, about 100 *yuan*. If we look at just this figure, it will be difficult for the villagers to convince us when they plead poverty.

But is the grain sufficient? Agricultural production has risen steadily over the last few years, as I have already pointed out. Last year the average production per

mu was 559 *jin*. Although this cannot be said to be very high, neither is it low. Now is it true that little is left over? No. Last year the average share of unhusked rice was 547 *jin* per person (a small portion of this is figured as the equivalent of the wheat and beans grown), or 380-odd *jin* of husked rice. One must conclude that this is enough.

Of course the standards of how much is enough to eat are not simple. There was a young helper in our small research group who ate three times what I did. According to our calculations he ate at least two *jin* per day. If we had let him eat as much as he wanted, he would have exceeded this amount. To use this as a standard would of course be unreasonable; yet we can say that if everyone let themselves go, they could eat double the amount of 380 *jin*, and only then would there be enough to be completely full all year.

How much rice one eats before becoming full is in part a question of nutrition, but in part it is also a question of custom. Customs differ, and so how much is enough varies in different areas. Thus we asked several older villagers to come to act as judges, to see what, in their many years of experience, was considered to be enough. The figures we obtained were 50 *jin* per month for a male full-time worker (this figure seems a bit high because somewhat more is eaten during periods of heavy work, less during ordinary times), 35 *jin* per month for female half-time workers, and twenty *jin* for children under ten. Infants were not included. In the economy of a household, the old and young can be considered together; using an average figure of four persons, a man, woman, and two children, they would require 125 *jin* per month, or 1,500 per year. This is just about equivalent to the average figure of 380 *jin* per person. If we take this approach, and use local standards, the amount of grain available at present must be said to be sufficient. Yet it also must be said that even if this standard is met, the

people cannot be called well-to-do. We must calculate very carefully, making adjustments for the amount of labor required, before we can say that there will be no problems. We must especially account for the small amount of beans and wheat grown. Although beans and wheat customarily were never regarded as major foods in this area, since people began eating them, they have known no starvation.

By now the reader can see that whether or not there exists a grain shortage in this village will be determined by the way the villagers eat. If they know in their hearts that they must restrain themselves and eat in a spartan way, then there will be no grain crisis. If, on the other hand, vigilance were relaxed at all it would be quite easy for famine to hit between harvests. If vigilance were relaxed anymore, famine would come more quickly and more severely.

The customs of the people in a certain area were formed in the context of concrete circumstances existing over many years. If we calculate economic conditions for the past we see that the above figures are generally correct. For instance, the average two *mu* of land per person twenty-one years ago produced 350 *jin* of unhusked rice. A family of four needs altogether 2,800 *jin*. If we subtract the one-fourth that was lost to exploitation, and convert the remainder to husked rice, we get about 1,500 *jin*. When I was first in the village doing research, most people said that the rice produced in the village was just about sufficient for consumption needs, and that all other income relied on supplementary industries. This agrees quite well with our calculations. Life at this level over the years must have been like walking a tightrope as far as grain was concerned. If one limits expenditures to accord with income, one false step would result in falling into the trap of usury. This kind of custom, formed in these historical conditions, now seems more highly developed here than in other areas. Still, one cannot say that

in the past they were profligate and ate as much as they wished.

When this village became socialist, it was correct that grain rations were set according to custom. However, care must be taken to preserve this custom. If it is not maintained, then problems will become unavoidable; indeed it will become a fatal flaw.

III

When the high tide of collectivization came to this village its vigor truly moved people. A few days before the establishment of advanced co-operatives, everyone was called on to volunteer to gather fertilizer. All the boats came out and loaded up with river mud, blocking several rivers with their numbers. People of several villages, all wearing holiday clothing, gathered in group after group in the meeting place, setting off firecrackers along the way. This unrestrained productive enthusiasm made everyone feel renewed in every respect.

Collectivization created a new enthusiasm for production, and this in turn caused an increase in production. Fertilizer was applied to the soil, and the brilliant green rice shoots growing so proudly made the peasants elated. All this happened last summer. The peasants returned home from the fields in a state of great enthusiasm. The slogan "700 *jin*" would pose no problem, but it soon gave way to "three meals a day; we'll eat our way to socialism." Just think; if each *mu* could really produce 700 *jin* of rice per year, then each family would be assured of over 2,000 *jin*. Might as well eat and be merry.

Who could know that heaven is not as beneficent as man, and that in August a typhoon, a big one, would come, and right at the rice-plant flowering time. That typhoon brought with it this year's grain crisis. "Three meals per day" cannot be considered excessive in the concrete circumstances in our country today. It is human nature that an active worker, seeing ahead a harvest richer than any-

thing he had experienced, and in high spirits, would eat an extra meal. If I had gone to observe then, and saw such scenes, wouldn't I have hastened to write glowing accounts to report it? Of course we can still argue this way. A typhoon is an accidental thing. One should not be surprised at the results caused by an accidental disaster. But if we think of it carefully, excessive optimism certainly is not a good thing. It goes without saying, moreover, that in agriculture we still depend on the weather for our food, and so natural disasters like this cannot be regarded as completely unanticipated. The big storm over improvements in livelihood blown up by the high tide of collectivization cannot be said to be a wind that blew everyone good.

IV

It is incorrect to emphasize the grain crisis in this village because in fact there is no absolute lack. This particular village has simply eaten up its reserves. Neighboring villages not only do not complain of a crisis, but in fact have a certain surplus they can use as a cushion. Of course once this rice shortage developed, then supplementary allotments were shipped in. But rice costs money, and everyone complains of a lack of money.

How is it they lack money? According to our calculations, each person receives from the agricultural cooperative 82 *yuan*; subtracting 547 *jin* of rice, worth 46.5 *yuan*, there still should remain 35.5 *yuan*, or 142 *yuan* per family of four. Moreover, what about the domestic cottage industries? Where does the money from them go?

To answer this question we must proceed with investigations of domestic accounts. A more complete calculation of the figures is still unfinished, but from our first figures we can say that a middle-aged woman spends about 25 *yuan* on clothing per year, and a middle-aged man spends 35 to 40 *yuan*. A family of four spends about 35 *yuan* per year for daily meals (exclusive of rice and

any goods produced by the family). Miscellaneous daily expenses amount to 60 *yuan* per year, costs of social intercourse 20 *yuan*, and firewood is equal to 40 *yuan* in value. This expenditure then amounts to over 200 *yuan*. If we add expenditures for children's clothing, house maintenance, tools, etc., an average family's actual cash outlay will be about 250 *yuan*. These figures cannot be seen as very accurate. More accurate ones must wait until the research material has undergone analysis. But from these general figures we can note several points.

First, in this village an income restricted to agriculture would be insufficient to support the standard described above. Those who have some supplementary domestic industry have managed to think up some way of earning another 20 *yuan* or so per person. This corresponds with what I have said above about income. In other words, if a family of four is not able to come up with some way of earning about another 80 *yuan* per year over what it gets from the agricultural cooperative, it will not be able to reach the average level of consumption.

Second, this level must be said to be comparatively high. We can discuss the different items. As for clothing, each year a new cloth jacket and a new pair of cloth trousers are added. In summer western-style cotton shirts are worn, and in winter cotton-padded jackets. In general one cannot find raggedly dressed people. On the contrary, the older people all have one heavy vest, quite a few young boys wear uniforms, and the girls wear flower-print blouses. Most women no longer go barefoot, and they all wear rubber shoes when it's raining. Many of the boys have tennis shoes. Adults get three pairs of socks every two years, and every year four pairs of cloth shoes and one pair of cotton shoes. If we go to their houses to look, we find that most of the beds have mosquito netting and a cotton quilt. As for food, we will stick to pork. Most eat 20 *jin* a year. Last year there was an obvious increase; at New Years many people ate 20

jin, while I heard that some ate as much as 80 *jin*. This was because people earned cash payments from raising silkworms, bought suckling pigs, raised them till the end of the year, then butchered them themselves. As for miscellaneous goods, they have always drunk tea, which costs each family at least 10 *yuan* per year. The expenditure on tobacco has increased with the switch from pipe tobacco to cigarette tobacco. All average families have toothbrushes and toothpaste. When they go out in the evening many use flashlights.

We need not cite any more examples. These things are all characteristic of an average level. In the past, they were quite rare in rural areas throughout the country. How does this compare with twenty-one years earlier? I do not have the complete data at hand, but based on my own impressions, many families who were below such a level then have risen above it now. Tattered clothing is no longer seen, and moreover now a number of new things have appeared. Particularly, the young people wear "Soviet clothing": tennis shoes, a uniform jacket, etc. Cadres in the cooperative wear woolen caps and long padded cotton coats. Some women laborers who have returned from the city wear woolen trousers. No one in the village has built any new houses, but last year a number of families carried out building repairs. They say that generally speaking over the last two years quite a few families have repaired their houses and bought manual pumps used for irrigation and cotton quilts. Last year many families bought new clothing, and many of them ate meat at New Years. In short, the people's livelihood is improving quite rapidly.

Third, the improvement in the conditions of life is happening faster than production is increasing. As I noted in the first section, in figuring a general financial account, the total income for this village has just surpassed the level of twenty-one years ago. Although we have still not yet computed the indices for standard of living, we

can affirm that they are higher than they were twenty-one years ago, and that although in the last twenty-one years the standard of living dropped for a while, in the last few years it has improved in the areas of clothing, diet, and housing, and expenditures have risen. Income has remained the same, and expenditures have risen, so the result is that whatever people have they spend. They have no cash on hand and do not consider saving. From the point of view of individual families, they must calculate carefully. They can get by easily most of the time, but they cannot survive any large disaster. If they relax at all with respect to financial affairs, and the income is not there on time, a crisis may develop in cash on hand. We were lucky to do our research when we did. People were quite well dressed, guests were offered tea, and yet people still complained that they lacked rice for the pot. Seen from this perspective, one can say that the rice shortage was not the result of collectivization. Nor was it the result of the unification of purchase and marketing functions. Rather, the important thing was that the development was not balanced. If last summer everyone had not recklessly eaten three meals per day, if people had not eaten so much pork at the New Year, if people had not bought uniforms, tennis shoes, and rubber boots, I think that no crisis would have developed.

V

This rice shortage is local and not a serious thing, yet a thought-provoking question arises from it, that is, the problem of socialist accumulation. Socialist accumulation can of course be advanced through the efforts of national organizations, but wool is produced, in the last analysis, by sheep, and similarly accumulation is at base the difference between each individual's production and consumption. It is a matter of diligence and thrift. Diligence can improve production, and thrift can reduce expenditures. Diligence and thrift together can increase accu-

mulation. In our country the great majority of the population is agricultural; whether they eat one *jin* of rice more or less can amount in aggregate to a lot of rice, to a big difference. Thus when peasant expenditures are a little more or a little less, the influence on socialist accumulation can be great. Think about it; in a village with a per capita annual income of around 100 *yuan*, if income and expenditures more or less balance, and there is no surplus, then how can we hope that the village will achieve any accumulation? If such a village still complains about a lack of rice, and pleads poverty, then what can be done in other villages with even lower income? If a rice shortage can develop in a village where the average amount of rice per year per person is 547 *jin*, and the government must step in to remedy the situation, what is going to happen to our grain reserves? Thus in our view, although we can be well assured that the conditions that we saw are not widespread, we must see this as a warning, one from which we must learn. Being diligent but not frugal will bring only a false prosperity; it is no way to build up an economy.

My historical knowledge is greatly lacking. I do not know what life was like for the feudal lords at the time when the old slave society became a feudal society, but I have read biographies of the industrialists in the early periods of capitalism. These men, confronted with the possibility of increasing production opened up by the new relations of production, established very strict demands for the accumulation of capital; they simply created a mechanism for accumulation. Everything was to be carefully calculated as to its cost, and profit came to be the universal standard of activity. In the early stages of capitalism, life was extremely difficult for the workers, as the value of profits was being forced up. At the same time, the industrialists were extremely miserly and eager for competition. Their lives were very "austere"; many were puritans and opposed extravagance. This kind

of person raised human society from feudalism to capitalism and actualized the levels of production permitted by capitalist relations of production. The reason why people suffer in the capitalist stage is because they are exploited in order to achieve accumulation.

The abolition of exploitation by socialism opens the way for a much greater development of human productive potential. In order to realize this potential, we still must accumulate and must do it more quickly and in greater degree than in capitalism. This kind of accumulation depends on the self-motivation of the workers, something which is quite possible in a socialist system, since the wealth accumulated this way belongs to the workers themselves. In the early phases of socialism there is also a strict demand for accumulation, not on the part of a few industrialists, as in the early stages of capitalism, but on the part of the broad masses of socialist workers. These workers should not only be energetic workers, but also should be able to be frugal. If we do not have broad masses like this, how can we realize any socialist accumulation? Without accumulation, how can production be increased?

From this viewpoint the rice shortage in the village of Kaixian'gong can be said to be local and temporary, but something which deserves our attention and thought.

VI

Were people in this area completely unable to get by? No, that is not it. But before liberation, peasants lived very cautiously, from day to day. Who could be sure that disaster would not come to their own door? Then, haven't changes taken place here over the last few years? All in all, I think, few. Why?

First, hard times are over, and good times are here. Although various aspects of life need strengthening, everyone's state of mind is much more relaxed now, which inevitably means a relaxation in financial and other

affairs. It was a period of ten-odd years here between the Japanese invasion and liberation. Life was not easy during this time. There were very bad years agriculturally, and the supplementary industries all collapsed. To take just one example, silk, the small factory was completely razed. This goes without saying: the things hated most by the older villagers are the Japanese puppet government and the blackmailers and extortionists of the reactionary Nationalist Government. They say that Kaixian'gong became a piece of meat on which these dogs were constantly gnawing. Again and again, whole hog and piecemeal, they all wanted money and rice. There was no letup. In this way they sucked dry those who were at all well off. This originally fairly well-to-do village was brought to ruin, was emptied, was poverty-stricken.

Little wonder that they looked desperately to the Communist Party and saw bright rays of hope. Rural peasants arose, the land was divided, the irrigation canals were repaired, collectivization came, and crops were better and better each year. Such things had never happened before. Houses were leaking and in need of repair, farming tools were insufficient and needed replacing, beds lacked covers and needed new quilts, but this was the first year that one could replace the old cotton-padded jackets with new, better-made ones. In summer people made western-style cotton shirts. If going barefoot was uncomfortable they bought a pair of rubber boots. The young people were even more proud in their uniform jackets. At New Years the pigs had already been raised, and since it was meat that one did not have to put out cash to buy, they butchered the fat ones to have feasts, invite guests, have a little extra food, and so regain a little self-respect. In this way, little by little, as life improved money was rapidly spent.

One cannot say that the villagers actually wore too much clothing, or ate too much. It seems that this kind of

improvement cannot be excessive. What didn't need improvement? Yet if we start spending here, there, and everywhere, it will amount to quite a considerable sum. If we want to increase an income of ten *yuan*, it will take a lot of careful thought. If we want to spend the same ten *yuan*, that will be easy. If we are not strict, it will be hard to hold the line.

Second, socialism is a completely new thing to people. The Forty Points moved every one. They were forceful and good from the beginning. Things that could not be accomplished in the past could be after collectivization. What struck people more than anything was the increase in agricultural production; this was what was furthest from their past experience. Older villagers who had farmed for decades had never seen fields grow rice so well. Last summer an atmosphere of optimism pervaded the entire village. Many people came to observe, and all were full of praise. No one thought of the possibility that there might be difficulties along the road to socialism. The cadres also used the method of the "post-dated check" to increase the masses' enthusiasm in production. "Three meals per day; we'll eat our way to socialism" became a slogan on everyone's lips. In August a rare typhoon came and destroyed the growing rice shoots. However, even this did not alter this kind of blind optimism: "Anyway, with Chairman Mao we'll never starve."

Third, after the land was turned over to the agricultural cooperative, whatever problems arose were taken to the co-operative to be solved. It seemed as if the co-operatives were viewed as a big family, with the cadres as the family heads. In the past everyone thought for themselves and thought up their own methods of doing things. Now as soon as problems arise they grumble loudly. If problems cannot be solved, then it's the cadres' fault. Some cadres do not know what to do when they are cursed this way. If we want the masses to think things through themselves, that is also a problem. I discussed this with

the villagers, saying, "These are everyone's problems, so everyone should come up with ideas about them." They answered, "We can't come up with ideas these days. If it isn't a matter of being unable to do things, we aren't permitted to do them." For example, they cannot make silk anymore. When the silkworms spin their cocoons then they must sell them to the state. They say that they want to make silk, but they have no cocoons. The old women all used to sew and weave (they would use raw silk scraps to use as wadding, to spin thread, and to weave silk cloth), but now they lack the materials. As another example, many of the peasants still remember using their boats during slack periods to go trading. This also is impossible now. The circumstances are this: many of the supplementary industries have been mismanaged, and if we ask the peasants themselves to come up with new ideas, it will not work. It seems that everything is controlled from "above"; in this situation it is of course inevitable that solutions to problems should also be sought from "above."

After I returned from the village, I caught up on the previous month's newspapers. Throughout the month there were many articles and columns discussing the slogan "building the country through hard work and thrift." We felt that this was also the important lesson that we learned from this trip to the countryside. We also felt that "hard work" is easy, while "thrift" is quite a bit harder. Why have the old customs of frugality now begun to change? This question has not been analyzed in a penetrating enough fashion. After we came back we raised this question often, asking people's opinion. Many thought that the propaganda of the recent past had been one-sided, overemphasizing the superiority of collectivization and making insufficiently clear the possibility of encountering problems. We agree with this opinion. However, the propaganda seems not to stop. The increase of productive forces under a socialist system is dependent

upon conscious accumulation on the part of the workers. This kind of realization may well not depend for its promotion solely on slogan after slogan on how best to build socialism. Where is the key to all this? We hope that those friends who have thought carefully about this will be able to give us more guidance.

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[1] It is a call on leaders and intellectuals to investigate actual situations and real problems themselves.

[2] A standard greeting, implying that the person must be living well, to be so well-fed, though it seems that Fei did put on weight in middle age.

[3] Chi-li Silk is known in the West, in its Cantonese version, as "tsatlee" silk, produced by the handreeling of the Chinese silkworm farms.

[4] The "Forty Points" refers to the "National Program for Agricultural Development, 1956-67."

PRESENT DAY KAIXIAN'GONG (1981)

In October of 1980 I had a chance to revisit Kaixian-gong together with my still healthy and lively 78-year-old sister, the reformer of the village's silk industry, who had made my 1936 trip some 45 years ago possible. We spent five days in the village altogether; the warm, personal reception we received from the villagers was beyond description.

Situated on the southeast bank of Lake Tai, the village of Kaixian'gong enjoys easy access to both Suzhou and Hangzhou, two busy urban centers in the Lower Yangtze region. As suggested by the popular saying, "Suzhou and Hangzhou, paradise under heaven," the region's advantageous economic conditions are reflected not only in the higher productivity of agriculture, but also in the advanced development of sideline occupations and village industries which are based upon agricultural products. The advanced economic status that the region enjoyed historically persists to this day. Among the 700,000 production brigades sampled in a 1979 national survey, there were no more than 1,632 production brigades whose per capita income exceeded 300 *yuan*, while the national average was less than 100 *yuan*. The per capita income of Suzhou approached 280 *yuan* per year. These findings provide the context for understanding the advanced economic status of the Suzhou prefecture.

In this wealthy region, the village of Kaixian'gong achieved a per capita income level of 300 *yuan* per year, a rather high position on the national scale and a middle

position on the regional scale. The special position of Kaixian'gong can be compared with other brigades of higher or lower incomes to gather some precious glimpses of some of the major differences in the transformation of China's rural economy, and to begin making some observations about the possible approaches to rural development in the Chinese countryside.

The task of explaining the economic position of Kaixian'gong both nationally and regionally is rendered easier by the fact that the accumulation of research data on Kaixian'gong now extends over nearly half a century. The enormous changes that China has experienced during this period are unprecedented in world history—changes which have transformed a country under semi-colonial and semi-feudal rule into a socialist society. This transformation has affected every individual and every village in China. The experiences thus acquired and the lessons derived from such experiences concern not only Chinese scholars but also the people of many other countries.

Beginning with my original field trip in 1936, anthropologists have on five occasions had the opportunity to study the Kaixian'gong Village. The second visit was in May 1955 by Professor W. R. Geddes of the University of Sydney, Australia. The data he gathered were subsequently published in his 1963 monographic work entitled *Peasant Life in Communist China*. The third one was my own revisit in 1957, the fourth was Professor Nancie Gonzalez's visit in September of 1980, and the fifth was mine in October of the same year. Therefore empirical data are available for analytical treatment of a period extending over more than forty years.

In 1936 I made the observation that the major problem facing China was "the hunger of the people." It is primarily on the historical development of this major problem that I want to focus my attention.

The problem became even worse between 1936 and

1949, the year of liberation. By the late 1940s landlords owned 56.5 per cent of the farm land in the village, and 75 per cent of the peasant households obtained their incomes from a combination of working on rented land and of money borrowed from usurers. Most of the peasants therefore lived on borrowed money. Usually they sold their food grains immediately after each harvest to clear their debts and then again borrowed money to buy food for the coming months. Their economic misery during this 13-year period was compounded by the repeated floods around the Lake Tai region, the result of official negligence of water conservancy programs. Many peasants fled the village.

Under these conditions, farm production remained stagnant or actually declined between 1936 and 1949. In 1936, according to my figures, the output of food grains was 300-400 *jin* per *mu*. In 1949 it stood at only 300 *jin* of grain per *mu*, 50 *jin* of wheat per *mu*, and 30 *jin* of oil-producing rapeseeds per *mu*. The decline in the output of food was compounded by the oppressive taxation and the rampancy of banditry. The condition of the peasants in Kaixian'gong was ultimately the product of an exploitative system of land tenure and of the political power which sustained that system. Chinese peasants did not become the masters of their own land, as Dr. Geddes pointed out in his book, until after 1949. The liberation of 1949 transformed the nature of political power. The land reform of 1952 fundamentally transformed the system of economic production. With these two basic changes, one political and the other economic, China entered a new era.

The effects of land reform may be brought into bold relief by a comparison between the production figures for 1949 and 1952. Food grain increased by 42.5 per cent and cotton by 93.4 per cent. Peasants' purchasing power doubled. The production of grains, which was at 300 *jin* per *mu* in 1949, had reached 500 *jin* per *mu* after 1952,

according to Professor Geddes. By the time of Professor Geddes' investigation in 1955, when the village had already entered the phase of agricultural cooperatives, grain productivity was further raised to 560 *jin* per *mu*. Kaixian'gong's economic performance was well above the national average.

The establishment of the communes in 1958 appears, in retrospect, to have been a premature move. There is no need to elaborate on the detrimental effects of the ultra-leftist ventures in the years following 1958. An abundance of literature on the subject is available in Western languages. During the subsequent 1962-1966 period, ultra-leftist tendencies were rectified, the production teams were designated the local fiscal units for economic management, and the principle of distribution of income according to skill and actual labor time expended was implemented.

This period also witnessed an increase in state investments for basic improvements in farmland and irrigation system, including electric-powered pumping facilities. As a result, grain production in Kaixian'gong increased at an annual rate of 8.25 per cent during the five-year period from 1962 to 1966. The village industry of sericulture and silk reeling was not only restored but further expanded. Commune members thus enjoyed an average annual income of 119 *yuan* by 1966.

Many villagers referred to 1962 as the turning point in their economic fortunes. "From this year on," they told me, "we could have three meals of steamed rice every day." By "three meals of steamed rice," they meant two *jin* of grain daily for an able-bodied peasant.

But this period of rectification from 1962 to 1966 was followed by the so-called Cultural Revolution. Although the rural sector of the Chinese economy did not suffer as much as the urban sector during the 1966-1976 period, general stagnation prevailed in Kaixian'gong and other villages in rural China. Peasant incentives for economic

production were drastically reduced by the combined effects of several policies: First, the policy of promoting grain production at the expense of sideline occupations and rural industries; second, the increased power of higher level cadres unacquainted with local conditions, leading to arbitrary bureaucratic command from the top; and third, the leftist emphasis on the doctrine of absolute egalitarianism. As a consequence, the rate of increase in grain production declined from the 8.25 per cent figure of 1966 to 3.95 per cent by 1976. Even these small increases were cancelled out by increases in the population. The average income in 1976 thus lingered around 114 *yuan*, with no increase from the 1966 level.

The major policy changes introduced in 1978 finally removed the various negative effects of the leftist phase. Since then, economic production in rural areas like Kaixian'gong has entered a new and promising phase of development. Before expressing my observations on the changes since 1978, let me return once more to the question of the major problem facing China in 1936, the problem of hunger. And let me place that problem within the context of China's population problem and our attempts to solve the dual problems of hunger and population.

I have pointed out already that by 1962, the peasants of Kaixian'gong were able to eat two *jin* of food grains, or as they say, "three meals of steamed rice" daily. By 1980 the average yearly total of food grains available to each peasant of Kaixian'gong had increased to 1,000 *jin*. In this regard, the position of the peasants of Kaixian'gong, compared with the position of peasants in other parts of China, is enviable indeed.

On a national level, despite the enormous growth of agricultural production since 1949, the average per capita intake of food grains has not significantly increased. Although agricultural output since liberation has increased by 169 per cent nationwide, per capita consump-

tion of food grains has only increased by 52 per cent. As late as 1980, the average yearly individual share of grain in China was 547.5 *jin*, in contrast to Kaixian'gong's 1,000. Some agriculturally underdeveloped regions in China thus have yet to solve the problem of hunger. And the primary reason for the imbalance between China's dramatic increases in food production and the availability of food to the peasants can be found in the similarly dramatic increases in the Chinese population. Food production has only just kept up with the increases in population. It is for this reason, of course, that controlling our population is a major problem facing the country today.

Not only is the soil of Kaixian'gong more fertile than many other parts of the country, and hence capable of producing more food, but its population increase has also been slower. In 1980, China's total population approached one billion. The rate of increase during the last 30 years was about 80%. But Kaixian'gong's population has grown from 1,458 in 1936 to 2,308 in 1980, a 60% rate of increase. The result is that in Kaixian'gong the people have surplus grain to raise pigs and chickens and considerable land to grow mulberry trees for raising silkworm. Consequently, their income is higher and life better.

From this small window of Kaixian'gong Village, we can see that the solution to China's problem of hunger lies not merely in raising the production of food grains, but also in controlling population increase. But the population cannot be reduced in the near future, even if effective population control is carried out. Even the most conservative estimates suggest that the population will reach 1.2 billion by the end of the century, and the vast majority of that 1.2 billion people, some 80%, will live in China's rural areas. This is a basic fact from which our theories and observations of the Chinese economy and society must flow.

As late as 1978, Kaixian'gong's per capita income re-

mained at 114 *yuan*. How, after such a long period of stagnation, did the villagers succeed in enriching themselves so quickly. The answer can be found in the question of village industries.

As early as 1936 I noted the importance of village industries as a means of raising the standard of living in rural areas where there is enormous population pressure on very limited land. During my 1957 visit to Kaixian-gong, I became concerned about the tendency to neglect peasant sideline occupations and about the lack of official support for the restoration of village industries. Some of my opinions have been validated by information released some twenty years later. It is my opinion that village industries will remain a key to the solution of China's rural economic problems. Much of the increase in peasant incomes in Kaixian'gong since 1978 can be explained by a shift away from a single-minded concentration on cultivating food crops to a new, pluralistic approach which not only allowed the collective economy to absorb the peasants' sideline occupation of cocoon cultivation into a publicly-owned silk industry, but also gave encouragement to a great variety of individual household sideline occupations.

For instance, I had noticed the raising of sheep during my 1936 visit and of rabbits during 1957. Such sideline occupations had become extremely popular by 1980. Altogether there are about 100,000 rabbits being raised in the village, which produce an annual income exceeding one million *yuan*. The average income from all sideline occupations reached 120-150 *yuan* per person in 1980 — that is, about half of the village's per capita income, accounting for a major portion of the increase in per capita income from 1978 to 1981.

One household I visited which consisted of three persons was able to earn 1,087 *yuan* in 1980 by selling 9 pigs, 2 sheep, and 8 rabbits; by providing fertilizer to the collective; and by marketing produce from their private

plots. In addition, they received 660 *yuan* from the collective for their contributions to its collective agricultural and sideline production. The household's total yearly income reached 1,747 *yuan*, or an average of 582.3 *yuan* per person. While this income is higher than average, this is not a particularly wealthy household by village standards.

Another household of five, including four laborers, earned a total income of 2,429 *yuan* in 1980, averaging 485.8 *yuan* per person. Since the family's total living expenses were only 970 *yuan*, their savings for the year totalled 1,469 *yuan*.

With the problems of hunger and clothing solved, as they have been in Kaixian'gong, and with many peasants now able to save substantial sums of money, one must wonder what new demands have been created by the new economic situation. How will the peasants spend their newly acquired savings?

My own observations suggest that housing, including both the buildings they live in and the furniture in those buildings, has become the major new concern of the peasants of Kaixian'gong. The family I just mentioned, with a savings of 1,469 *yuan* this year, certainly intended to spend their savings on housing, as did many other of the villagers with whom I spoke. The housing problem indeed is serious. Not only are most of the villagers living in the same houses in which they lived in 1936, but those houses now appear rather more dilapidated than in 1936 and are providing shelter for a much larger number of people. In one of the production brigades, I found that inside three household gates lived more than ten families. But I clearly remember that there were only three families occupying these three houses in 1936.

From an anthropological perspective, the villagers' new concern with improving their housing situation is interesting indeed, for the major expenditures on housing improvement are made on the occasion of marriages. In

the past, with few savings and a major housing shortage, peasant households in Kaixian'gong were faced with the alternatives of either postponing their sons' wedding or dividing their already small living quarters into two even smaller apartments to create a separate room for the son and his bride. With the savings available in recent years, however, most of the families with a son of marriageable age are busy with housing projects. In the past year, therefore, fifty new houses have been added to the cluster of 250 households along the southern bank of the village. Since most of the new structures are additions or extensions of the existing houses, I must confess that the new construction adds considerable confusion to the already chaotic layout of the housing settlement.

The occasion of a village wedding is not only an opportunity to build new housing structures, but is also the occasion to add new furniture, such as beds, tables, and chairs. These new pieces of furniture are acquired through the process of wedding negotiations and arrangements, a process which usually occupies the full attention of the parents of both sides during the period between engagement and wedding. In the patrilineal and patrilocal society of Kaixian'gong, it is largely the groom's responsibility to provide the living quarters for his bride, while the bride is responsible for the furnishings. The *li-jin*, or honorarium, which the groom gives to the bride, is actually a sort of stipend for her expenses for the furniture, bedding and clothing; however, the materials provided as the dowry from the bride's side usually far exceed the value of the groom's *li-jin* payment. In short, the responsibility for furnishing the newly-weds' living quarters is to be shared by the young couple, although the bride's economic status determines the proportion of contributions from either side. In cases where the groom is too poor to provide the living quarters, he might be obliged to move into the household of the bride's parents and even adopt her family name.

We made a quick survey of all the items exhibited in the living quarters of a newly-wed couple in an attempt to reach an estimate of the total value of the gifts provided to her groom's household. The total value apparently exceeded 2,000 *yuan*. Indeed, such extravagance in a village that has only recently won the battle against subsistence might justifiably come under criticism. But for an anthropologist, this practice may be regarded as part of an important process of refurnishing and renovating one's living quarters in the broad cycle of rural family life. Some of the furniture pieces and fine clothing represent major investments for life long use by the young couple.

Indeed, among the new problems arising from the recent successful economic recovery in the Chinese countryside is the currently inadequate supply of consumer goods to the eight hundred million peasants in China. As they face economic success and the new problems — welcome ones, in this case — that economic success involves, they need assistance from us, the social anthropologists and sociologists. To be truly useful, we will need new "micro-sociological" studies like those advocated by scholars in the 1930's. I myself want wholeheartedly to pursue this type of anthropological investigation in order to meet the needs of my peasant friends.

In discussing the new face of Kaixian'gong in recent years, I have focused thus far on the revival of individual sideline production in the village and other economic benefits and problems that increased household sideline production has entailed. But to focus on individual sideline production is to focus on only part of the story of the economic recovery of Kaixian'gong. For a major part of the peasants' income still comes from the village's collective economy, and the changes within the village's collective economy in recent years have also been great. There are three major sources of income within the collective economy: income deriving from participation in agricul-

an increase in collective sideline production relating to agricultural production — the collective raising of pigs and poultry, for instance, and the revival of silkworm production. Income from these collective sideline enterprises has increased, and with it individual income.

But beneath the successful development of collectively-organized agriculture and sideline production are cruel and inescapable facts. Not only is the price of grain low, thereby restricting the amount of income to be derived from its production, but in many parts of China, including Kaixian'gong, the limits of agricultural growth have been, or are about to be, reached. Moreover, some of the unfavorable factors which have restricted the growth of grain production also cast a shadow on those collectively-organized sideline occupations which depend on agricultural products, for instance, raising pigs and poultry, which depend on food grains, and raising silkworms, which depends on mulberry leaves. The restoration of sericulture in Kaixian'gong was made possible by the newly installed electric-powered pumping facilities, which transformed a large tract of flooded area into mulberry groves. But the prospect of further increases in mulberry acreage in Kaixian'gong appears as bleak as further increases in the output of grain.

It is within this context that the new promise of collectively-organized rural industry must be understood. Collectively-owned rural industries in China may be divided into two categories: in the first category are those industries involved in processing local agricultural products. The silk industry in Kaixian'gong is a good example. The second type of rural industry has evolved largely in villages located close to cities, where large urban factories have contracted with commune or brigade level workshops to manufacture parts for bicycles, sewing machines, radio sets, and the like. This latter type seems to have a bright future.

In Kaixian'gong several new collectively-owned indus-

ished brigades break out of the cycle of poverty through the introduction of sideline enterprises and rural industries. The introduction of rural industry has the effect not only of increasing the proportion of industrial labor in the national economy, but also avoiding an excessive concentration of population in urban centers. Introduction of rural industry thus leads to the elimination of an otherwise potentially widening gap between workers and peasants. What I found in Kaixian'gong, therefore, is particularly exciting to me. My dream of many years is now emerging as reality: we are witnessing the beginning of the industrialization of the Chinese countryside.

FINDINGS OF THE KAIXIAN'GONG VILLAGE RESEARCH GROUP (1981)

The Kaixian'gong Village Research Group was established in 1981 by the Sociology Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, in conjunction with the Jiangsu Province Sociology Research Institute. In line with Professor Fei's efforts to promote sociological research in the service of China's modernization program, the research group's brief is to conduct ongoing investigations into concrete social conditions in Kaixian'gong. This particular village was chosen because of the invaluable statistical basis for comparison provided by Professor Fei's earlier research.

The three selections in the final section of the present volume represent a portion of the research group's initial results.

— The Editor

CHANGES IN PEASANT LIFE IN KAIXIAN'GONG DURING THE PAST FIFTY YEARS

The findings of investigations into conditions at the village of Kaixian'gong are the topics of two books published in the past forty-odd years. One of these books, entitled *Peasant Life in China* was written by Fei Xiaotong (Fei Hsiao Tung) and first published in London in 1938. The second book, *Peasant Life in Communist China*, was written in 1963 by William Geddes of Australia. Because these two books depict the life of the peasants of Kaixiangong Village during two different time periods, many scholars in the West regard them as windows through which to observe China's peasants. The fact that "peasant life" is the subject of the present article is explained by two reasons: (1) the two aforementioned books, both of which take "peasant life" as their principal theme, furnish a substantial amount of historical data suitable for comparison; (2) talks with peasants concerning their own lives most easily evoke their interest and concern. In this way it is easy to secure their collaboration.

Follow-up investigations into the villagers' lives were thus carried out during more than thirty days' time on the basis of the data contained in the books by Professors Fei and Geddes. We combined a statistical approach with observation and inquiry in the course of home visits covering the livelihood of families and their labor needs. Beside contacts with several people whom Professor Fei had investigated during his 1936 visit, we held forums with former poor peasants, cadres, young peasants in the production teams, and young workers at factories run by

the commune, production brigades or teams. At the same time, we also looked up certain historical archives relating to the village. As a result, it has been possible to gradually attain a clear idea of the situation in the village.

I. THE ARENA OF PEASANT LIFE IN KAIXIAN'GONG

Located on the southeastern shore of Lake Tai, the village of Kaixian'gong has the appearance of a peninsula. In the absence of a highway, people travel by boat to fairs or to visit relatives and friends. As a comparatively isolated commune area, it retains the characteristic scenery of a lakeside village south of the Changjiang (Yangtze River), with an intricate network of waterways, scattered farmland, the peasants' brick dwellings, and abundant rice crops and aquatic products.

At the time of Professor Fei's 1936 investigations, Kaixian'gong was a natural village. Now, however, the village includes six production teams from the Hehuawan Production Brigade (the Nos. 1-5 and No. 10 teams) and all the teams of the Kaixian'gong Production Brigade. To facilitate the comparison of available data, the scope of the investigations and statistics is confined to the production teams originally belonging to Kaixian'gong. According to statistics compiled at the end of 1981, there are 432 households in the village with a population of 1,761 persons. The area of arable land amounts to 2,560.5 *mu* and the water surface totals 484 *mu*.

Although both Fei Xiaotong and William Geddes discussed in their books many of the cultural and economic aspects of peasant life in Kaixian'gong, they did not attempt a classification of life itself. The life of the peasants there at present is in no way monotonous, though neither is it rich and colorful. From morning till night the fields are busy with activity; otherwise people go about their daily lives, watching movies, listening to radio broadcasts, and visiting with friends and relatives. Their lives are actually quite full. The present article will

examine the subject of peasant life in Kaixian'gong from the angles of material life and spiritual life. Material life can be divided into two aspects — production and consumption. The following is a discussion of the former.

II. PRODUCTIVE MATERIAL LIFE

Productive labor takes up much of the time and energy of the peasants. Consequently, the first consideration in the study of peasant life should be given to this subject.

1. CATEGORIES

The productive material life of Kaixian'gong's peasants consists of five categories: (1) farm work, (2) factory labor, (3) sideline production, (4) services, and (5) administration. The classifications are based on the nature and aims of labor.

Farm work is the principal task of the peasants. The objects of their labor are the land and crops, and the nature of that labor is the output of physical strength, coupled with definite production techniques. Those responsible for farm work in the production teams spend the greater part of their time in the fields, but they also conduct activities apart from farming, such as sericulture. The principal farm work involves the growing of rice, wheat, barley, rye and rape. According to statistics compiled for the various production teams at the end of 1981, the total area of arable land in the whole village is 2,560.5 *mu*, which means an average of 1.336 *mu* per capita. With a multiple crop index of approximately 201%, the total land area utilized for rice production is 2,234.3 *mu*, while that of wheat, barley and rye fields comes to 733 *mu*; the area for rape crops is about 300 *mu* and that for vegetables about 200 *mu*.

At the time of his investigations in 1936, Professor Fei found that "76 per cent of peasant households are engaged in farming as their principal profession." We could estimate the number of persons engaged in farming at that

time on the basis of this percentage. The total number of households in the village then was 360, of which 76 per cent would have amounted to about 274 households. Calculated on the basis of 2.5 laborers per household, there would have been approximately 685 persons in the village engaged in farming.

Professor Geddes did not record the total number of laborers in 1956. In that year, however, there were 909 people between the ages of 16 and 60, which represented an increase of 18 over 1936. In 1956 some people who had not worked before 1949 had become self-supporting laborers. Meanwhile, there was also improvement in the peoples' health conditions. Thus the total number of laborers stood at about 950. Besides about 70 persons who worked in industry, sideline production and services, around 880 persons did farm work.

We carried out a general census on January 1, 1982, which revealed 1,183 as the number of registered laborers (including full and half-time laborers of both sexes). After subtracting the 299 non-farm workers, there were 884 engaged in farm work.

Factory labor. The second category is the peasants' second line of work — as factory workers. As early as 1928 the village set up a co-operative silk filature. Older people recall that in 1936 this factory had some 80 workers, but it was dismantled during the Japanese invasion. In 1956 there were almost no factory workers, with the exception of ten employees of the food grains processing shop. The silk factory was re-established several years ago, but because the cocoons had to be passed on to the higher levels, the factory did no silk weaving. Instead, it wove synthetic fibers. By the end of 1981, the number of employees at industrial works operated by the commune, production brigade or teams, and other enterprises had reached 209. It can thus be seen that the village labor force employed by industry has shown a marked increase over 1936 and 1956. This has put an end to the previous-

ly existing uniform economic structure and labor distribution and has created a new situation in which agricultural, industrial and sideline production have developed in an overall fashion.

Sideline production. This term is used here in its broader context, indicating both those engaged in collective sideline production and also those involved in individual occupations. According to the recollections of older people, the varieties of sideline production in the village around the time of 1936 comprised: (1) fishing in Taihu Lake; (2) itinerant peddlers of agricultural and other products outside the village, and (3) artisans. The activities falling into the first and second categories were generally conducted by ordinary peasants during idle seasons in the agricultural cycle, while the third category was made up of specialists. According to Professor Fei, there were at that time ten households which had come from outside of the village, including two barbers, one miller-cobbler, a silversmith, a bamboo craftsman, a water pump operator and a monk. In 1956, it is said, there were over ten households specializing in fishing. At the end of 1981 there were 63 persons engaged in sideline occupations—53 peddlers, artisans and other individual professions working elsewhere, nine fishermen, and one duck herder.

Services. Coming within this category are people engaged in rendering services to all those in agricultural, industrial and sideline production and their families. Commerce is foremost among the services. In 1936 there were ten stores in Kaixian'gong. Professor Fei classified them according to their scope of business activities: three groceries, three butcher's shops, two beancurd stores, one drug store, and one brick and tile factory. In 1956 the village had two stores, one a co-operative and the other under joint private-co-operative management. At present there are two general stores whose scope of business is not confined to the village but extends as well to the production brigades surrounding the village. With the exception

of two temporary workers engaged in transport work, the service personnel in the shops are all city and townspeople.

Another component of services is composed of three brigade doctors and a veterinarian of the belonging to the commune. The doctors' salaries are borne by the peasants. Teachers are yet another type of service worker, as they serve the people by educating their children.

Management. In this category are people that may be regarded as the "soul" of the village. They work in service to the whole population of the village. Their task is to exercise leadership and supervision over the villagers, but at the same time receive the supervision of the latter. The first part of those in this category is composed of administrative personnel (the production brigade cadres) among whom are the secretary of the brigade party branch, the brigade head, the brigade accountant and the head of the militia, totalling nine persons. In addition there are three other persons whose census registration is in the village but act as cadres of enterprises at the commune level. The second part consists of scientific and technical management personnel, that is, agricultural technicians. In the whole village there are two such technicians belonging to the brigade and one from the commune.

The above has been an introduction to the changes over time in the number of the village's people who are engaged in the various categories of productive material life. A chart is presented to enable the reader to understand the overall situation more clearly (see p. 218).

Among the five occupational categories in the list, the first three make up the basic components of the peasantry, while the last two (service and management) could be seen as the peripheral and core elements, respectively. All fall within the scope of the socialist collectivized peasantry. Although a few artisans or peddlers, for example, work away from the village on a long-term basis and keep their own incomes, they maintain their relations

COMPARATIVE LABOR DISTRIBUTION
IN THE YEARS 1936, 1956, 1981

Category	1936		1956		1981	
	No. of people	Percentage	No. of people	Percentage	No. of people	Percentage
Agriculture	665	73.9	880	92.6	884	74.7
Industry	80	8.9	15	1.6	209	17.7
Sideline production	130	14.4	35	3.7	63	5.3
Services	25	2.8	10	1.1	12	1.0
Management			10	1.1	15	1.3
TOTAL	900		950		1,183	

Note: The 1936 and 1956 figures are estimated ones, while the figures for 1981 are based on our general census.

with the collective by way of the following methods: (1) they submit contributions to the public accumulation funds of the production teams; (2) while they are back in the village they may conclude short-term contracts with the production teams for some type of sideline production; (3) they maintain their right to a share of the collective land and other property; (4) if they or their families encounter difficulties, they can receive assistance from the collective.

People have varying social status according to their position within the five categories. Basically they may be divided into three levels: (1) The management level, that is, cadres and technical personnel, is on top. They are endowed with definite powers, possess a relatively greater amount of knowledge, and have a greater prestige. (2) The middle level is formed by workers in collective industrial enterprises and by service workers as well. (3) The lower level consists of the peasants who do farm work in the production teams. Those engaging in sideline production should be regarded as being between the middle and lower levels.

All people are equal politically, but some differences remain both economically and in terms of the amount of work required. In general the peasants who engage in farm work as their main activity have to work more than people in the other categories, and their average income is lower. There are exceptions, of course. Some artisans and skilled factory workers may earn more than cadres, and some peasants may earn more than cadres and workers through able management of family sideline production.

2. LABOR CONDITIONS

Labor conditions are an important index for reflecting the peasants' productive material life. Since 1949 the labor conditions of the peasants who till the soil have improved greatly; this is shown most clearly by the use

Farm activity	1936		1956		1981	
	Type of labor	Tool	Labor	Tool	Labor	Tool
Irrigation	Manual	Watercart	Manual & machine	Watercart, pump	Machine	Electric pump
Ploughing	Manual	Iron rake	Manual & machine	Iron rake, iron plough	Machine	Tractor
Threshing	Manual	Flail, threshing bench	Manual & machine	Foot-operated thresher	Machine	Electrically operated thresher
Fodder processing	Manual	Stone grinder	Machine	Grinding machine	Machine	Grinding & pulverizing machine
Transportation	Manual	Wooden boat	Manual	Wooden boat	Machine	Cement motor boat
Insect extermination	Manual	Gourd ladle	Manual & machine	Connecting rod sprayer	Manual & machine	Knapsack sprayer, motorized sprayer

of farm machinery and electrical appliances to replace a significant portion of manual labor, including particularly some of the most intensive work. At present the six vital links of irrigation, ploughing, threshing, fodder processing, transport, and insect extermination are basically done mechanically or semi-mechanically. But seen from the total amount of work involved in agricultural labor, the peasants of Kaixian'gong yet engage above all in manual labor. The changes in the course of farm mechanization in the village are shown in the table given on p. 220.

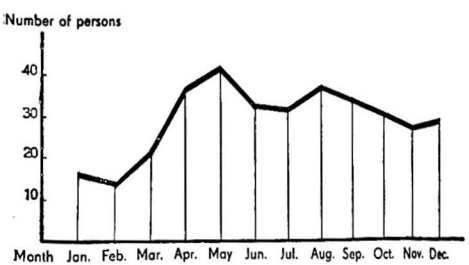
In addition there are nine other types of relatively heavy agricultural activities: gathering sludge for use as fertilizer, planting (including preparation of seed beds and transplanting seedlings), cultivation (weeding, loosening the soil, and application of fertilizer), and harvesting. When we met several peasants in the fields, they exclaimed, "This work is really exhausting! When are the comrades who manufacture the machines going to help us?" The peasants require machines which are suited for local conditions.

3. INTENSITY OF LABOR

The intensity of labor is also an important index of the peasants' living situation. The employment of farming machines has decreased its intensity, yet it remains quite high, particularly during the busy seasons. The present intensity of labor can be seen from the length of time spent in work per day. In the following table are listed the results of a 1981 investigation into the work attendance situation at one production team (the No. 4 Production Team of the Hehuawan Production Brigade):

There were 315 days in which ten or more people reported for work, and 282 days in which 25 or more reported (in other words, exceeding half the entire labor force). Full attendance (over 40 people) was recorded on 83 days. The work day was relatively long (more than eight) during the months of May, June, July, August,

	No. of days	Percentage of total number of days in a year
10 or more people reporting for work		
Less than 8 hours	177	48.5
8-10 hours	104	28.5
More than 10 hours	34	9.3
4-9 people reporting for work (within 8 hours)	30	8.2
Day off	20	5.5
TOTAL	365	100



Note: The curve line is so prepared as to reflect the seasonal changes of the requirements of labor force for agricultural production of the village. The attendance records of two other production teams in Kaixian'gong were practically identical. The periods around May and August mark the peaks of labor attendance.

September and November. The longest work days (more than ten hours) occurred during May, June, July and August, particularly a 21-day period in July and August,

when the rice crop was harvested and threshed. The silkworm cocoons were raised between April and October by women primarily, while work in the fields is done mainly by males.

The need for labor in the fields varies according to the season. The diagram on page 222 is intended to illustrate the situation of the Hehuawan No. 4 Production Team in terms of the number of laborers reporting for work in the course of one year.

4. THE STRUCTURE OF CROP OUTPUT

According to Professor Fei, the village's rice yield in 1936 was 18,000 bushels (900,000 *jin*). Professor Geddes reported that in 1956 rice production had increased to 39,667 bushels (1,983,000 *jin*), representing a yield per *mu* of 718 *jin*. In 1981 total rice production came to 1,933,000 *jin*, or 865.3 *jin* per *mu*. The total output of wheat, barley and rye in 1981 was 465,000 *jin*, or 634 *jin* per *mu*. In the same year, out of 1981's total grain output, the village sold to the state 838,700 *jin* of commodity grain. This works out to 476.3 *jin* per person, or 709 *jin* per laborer. This is one of the contributions of the village to the state and people.

At present the size of crop yields is dependent largely on natural conditions. A bumper harvest can be attributed mainly to favorable weather conditions. Under existing circumstances in which agricultural production is practiced according to traditional methods, the positive role of the human factor in production is expressed primarily by the peasants' painstaking cultivation and strong sense of responsibility. The peasants require scientific knowledge, but up to the present time scientific guidance has been somewhat lacking in regard to the planting of crops.

5. POPULATION

Human reproduction or child-bearing is another aspect of the peasants' productive material life. A detailed study must be the topic of a separate report dealing specifically

with the population question, but I would like to mention very briefly one characteristic of the population question in Kaixian'gong, namely the relatively low increase during the last 45 years.

The following chart gives the figures for Kaixian'gong's population during the three times from which we have data:

Year	1935	1956	1981
Total population	1458	1440	1761

The population actually decreased from 1935 to 1956. We presume that this was due to two reasons: first, the chaotic conditions arising from war and dire poverty prior to 1949 caused a high mortality rate; secondly, the practice of infanticide as a means of mitigating the family burden. Hence, the birth rate was low and steady. Following are the population figures in the three selected years for comparison:

Year	1949	1956	1981
Birth rate (%)	23.9	19.4	12.5
Death rate (%)	9.2	4.9	5.7
Rate of natural growth (%)	14.7	14.5	6.8

6. REPRODUCTION OF THE LABOR FORCE

We attempted a preliminary examination of Kaixian-gong's labor surplus in the village. The fact that work does not require the entire labor force of the village (meaning all those who are listed in the brigade registry) has led to an imbalance between labor resources and their distribution. This imbalance can be calculated by way

of the following formula: $G = \frac{A-F}{A}$ (G stands for the extent of the labor surplus, A represents the total labor force of the village, and F the labor force required for farming). To derive F we use the formula $F = \frac{M}{X}$ (M stands for the total amount of cultivated land, and X is one man-year, that is, the amount of land which can be cultivated by one laborer in a year). It is a complicated question to fix the value of X. It touches on two parameters: (1) the number of labor days required for working each *mu* (as represented by D); (2) the amount of land on which farm work can be completed by one laborer in a year (shown by L). Thus, $X = \frac{L}{D}$.

Concerning the first parameter, we used the work point allotment reports of some of the production teams to ascertain the amount of labor used to produce the village's crops, as follows:

	Amount of work per *mu* (man-days)
Wheat, barley and rye	34
Early rice	31
Late rice	27
Single crop rice	32
Rape	37

On weighted average, each *mu* requires 65 work days, that is, D = 65 (man-days per *mu*).

Regarding the second parameter, the question is, how much is the appropriate amount of labor for a peasant laborer to do in one year? We feel that it ought to be comparable to the amount of work required of workers and office staff, which means roughly 300 days in a year, or 2,400 hours. In Kaixian'gong the average work day of a peasant lasts about 6.5 hours; thus, an agricultural laborer

should attend work annually on average $\frac{2400}{6.5}$ =369 days. A check of the work point reports of several production teams going back many years reveals that the yearly work attendance of a male laborer comes to about 460 man-days and that of female laborers around 400. Therefore 369 man-days annually is both a possible and appropriate amount of work for a peasant laborer.

We calculated X, then, as follows: $X=\frac{L}{D}=\frac{369}{65}$ =5.68 *mu*; that is, each laborer can till 5.68 *mu* in a year. $F=\frac{M}{X}=\frac{2353.1}{5.88}$ 414, that is, the number of laborers required by the total farmland of the whole village is 414. Therefore the formula introduced earlier to calculate surplus labor works out as follows: $G=\frac{A-F}{A}=\frac{1183-414}{1183}$ =65%. In other words, 65 per cent of the village labor force is surplus, as far as field work is concerned.

Actually not all the people covered by this calculation come within the scope of the surplus labor force. Some of them work at collective factories or enterprises, while others are engaged in private occupations. Subtracting these additional members of the labor force, the rural labor surplus is: (1183-414)-(209+63+12+15+31)=439 (laborers or man-years.)

The rural labor surplus is marked by three characters: (1) Seasonality. In busy farming seasons, the whole labor force may be present at work, while in idle seasons the work is performed by only a part of the villagers. The method employed by the production team heads to solve this contradiction is known as "one laborer from each family," or "all males work." (2) Not enough work. Because there is no farm work to be done part of the time, the result is idleness. This means a waste of manpower and adversely affects incomes. Indicative of this state of affairs is the common saying "three people eat the food

of two." (3) Compensation by way of family sideline production. Family sideline production absorbs part of the labor force. According to our investigation, agricultural laborers spend on average some 50 work days engaging in family sideline production. Therefore the following number of people out of the total agricultural labor force find their own solutions to the labor surplus problem: $\frac{50 \times 853}{369}$=116 laborers or man-years. 853 refers to the number of registered agricultural laborers working in the village. (There are also 31 more working outside at the East Lake Tai Farm.) Consequently, the actual labor surplus in the village is: 439-116=323; the actual percentage of surplus labor G=$\frac{323}{1183}$ =27.3%.

What is the solution for the problem of the rural labor surplus? Seen from the situation at Kaixian'gong, there are three possibilities:

(1) Expand collective industry. The necessary path to follow involves setting up new factories and other enterprises at the team, brigade, and commune level in order to absorb more of the rural labor force and to build up new socialist villages. Professor Fei's idea of "setting up industries in the villages" conforms with the China's current needs.

In the West the modernization of agriculture has caused the large-scale migration of the rural population to the cities. China has a huge number of peasants; large and medium-sized cities cannot possibly absorb the rural surplus. Under these circumstances, it would run counter to history and objective law not to allow peasants to establish new industries, or to get rid of existing ones due to the existence of incorrect styles of work. In the past the establishment of industries by peasants was basically spontaneous. The problem to be faced now is to bring commune or lower-level industries on the track within the scope and aid of the planned economy.

Before 1949 Kaixian'gong Village operated a silk filature which processed and wove the locally-available silk cocoons. At present the commune filature has to obtain silk cocoons from other provinces, and the weaving factory utilizes raw materials from other regions. Since the peasantry support the cities economically, the cities must also support the villages. The sole correct way is for the state and related enterprises in the cities to guide and aid peasants in operating rural industries. The filature at Kaixian'gong will expand its weaving capacity, which will enable it to hire an additional several dozen workers.

(2) Develop aquatic products. The water surface within the village measures 482 *mu*, of which 180 *mu* is used for fish breeding, 20 *mu* for water chestnuts and 10 *mu* for other purposes. The village also raises 1,000 cultured pearls. It is planned to expand the area of the fish pond and increase the amount of fry this year. The Party branch secretary of the village revealed that the income from the fishery will possibly reach an average of 10 *yuan* per person per annum by 1985. In addition, the water surface can be utilized for aquatic products which make good fodder for poultry. Increased efforts can also be made for the development of cultured pearls. The water resources in the village can be further developed and utilized to facilitate multi-purpose management.

(3) Continue the development of family sideline production. Peasant families are both production and consumption units. The productive functions of the family units have been strengthened since the introduction of the production responsibility system. Sideline production on a contract-basis (for the collective) and family private production occupy a considerable amount of the peasants' time. In the case of sericulture under the contract system, the production teams distribute the silkworms to individual families for feeding. Cash rewards are given for results in excess of the quotas and payment in work points for attaining the quota. Raising pigs and rabbits are also

commonly undertaken by individual families. Family sideline production should be extensively developed in the near future. Compared with neighboring production brigades, the value of the peasants' sideline production in Xiaxiangong is not high, especially in the area of raising long-hair rabbits. The basis for family sideline production in the village is quite sound. More labor can be absorbed as the quantity and variety of sideline products are increased.

7. THE PATTERN OF SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE VILLAGE

In terms of the distribution of the labor force, a structure involving a four-three-four ratio of farming, industry and sideline occupations will suit the village during the next ten years or so. We can illustrate this in terms of its application to 1987, when the total number of able-bodied laborers will amount to about 1,250. The four-three-four ratio will mean that 450 of them will be engaged in actual farming, which is quite close to the ideal number of 414 required by the acreage; that 340 will be employed in industrial enterprises run by the commune or brigade, a number which exceeds the present number of employees by 130; and that 450 people will work in sideline occupations (including people in service trade and management), which means that these occupations will have to absorb an additional 250 people. We believe this ratio to be a realistic and attainable target, so long as new ways of employment are explored and local resources fully tapped. But whether or not a "triple-three" distribution structure is attainable by the end of this century, that is 1/3 of the labor force for local industry, 1/3 for sideline occupations and another 1/3 for farming, remains to be seen. However, the future development of socialism in the rural areas will help rural industry and sideline occupations assume ever greater proportions of the overall economic ratio of the rural areas. Presently

the order of the three is farming first, industry second, and sideline occupations third. Later the order will shift to industry, farming, and then sideline occupations. Further in the future we will find the order to be industry, sideline occupations and then farming. The ultimate elimination of differences between workers and peasants, rural areas and urban areas can and will be realized only by enhancing socialist construction. In China, all talk of "scientific socialism" and "communism" which does not realistically take the peasants' well-being into consideration will be nothing more than empty words.

III. MATERIAL LIFE OF THE PEASANT IN TERMS OF CONSUMPTION

The achievements of productive material life and the basis for consumptive material life mean virtually one and the same thing: income. "Earning" and "spending" make human material life a complete circle. Usually the income and consumption of a household are basically balanced. Therefore, income levels reflect the local people's level of consumption as well.

1. ANALYSIS OF THE CONSUMPTION LEVEL

INCOME FROM COLLECTIVE DISTRIBUTION

Year	Collective distribution	
	Per capita income (*yuan*)	Per capita grain (*jin*)
1962	81.7	514.8
1965	119.3	603.9
1970	113.3	564.8
1975	116.7	525.7
1979	151.2	631.8
1981	130.1	579.8

The income from collective distribution alone, however, cannot show the peasants' total income. Their income

comes from two principal sources — collective distribution and household sideline production. In order to get a clear idea of the income from the latter, we conducted a case study on twelve selected households which represented all three levels (high, medium, and low) of household sideline production. The result of our study showed the average per capita net income to be 120 *yuan*. This testifies to the fact that the peasants have to, as the saying goes, "rely on the collective for grain but on yourself for spending money". To check our study, we asked several commune members and cadres for their opinion about this figure. They thought it to be a fair representation of the average income level from the village's family sideline production. The composition of this figure is basically as follows:

Items of sideline production	Net income (*yuan*)
Pigs	40
Rabbits	25
Sheep	10
Mulberry leaves	15
Vegetables	5
Rapeseeds	10
Others	15
TOTAL	120

Both Professor Fei and Professor Geddes in their books reported on the consumption level of Kaixian'gong's peasants. Here is Fei's inventory of an ordinary household's minimum expenses in 1935:

The "ordinary household" here referred to a family of four. Professor Geddes' figure for 1956 amounted to 208 *yuan* for a family of three. Thus he came to the conclusion that people's living standard in 1956 was higher than that of 1935.

		yuan
1.	Goods bought from the market	
	Food, vegetables and others	30
	Sugar	5
	Salt	12
	Clothes	30
	Presents	10
	Lamp oil and fire works	36
	Spending on house and boat	20
	Tools and fertilizer	10
2.	Land tax	10
3.	Periodic expenses (weddings, funerals, etc.)	50
	TOTAL	213

This type of comparison, however, is not very significant. First of all, by "ordinary household," Prof. Fei might have meant only the "well-to-do" families, that is, the rich peasants and landlords. Therefore it didn't necessarily represent the average level of the entire village, in which the poor peasant households formed the absolute majority. This can be detected in some of his specific figures:

Firstly, the item of "10 *yuan* for land tax," for instance, would have applied only to landowners, for it was the landowners that paid their land taxes to the government. Whereas the tenants on the other hand simply paid their rents in grain. Secondly, the item of "12 *yuan* for salt," the price of which at that time was 0.11 *yuan* per *jin*, would be enough for 120 *jin*. An ordinary household could never consume so much, but well-to-do families who used to hire long-term or short-term laborers may well have. Thirdly, the item of "5 *yuan* for sugar," the price of which was 0.21 *yuan* per *jin*, would have meant that the annual per capita consumption of sugar was 20

jin. Absolutely no poor household could afford that much. In his book "Peasant Life in China," Professor Fei did not adopt the method of class analysis towards the peasantry and usually took the rich peasant and landlords as the object of his investigations and illustrations. This shows how he was affected by the limitations of the times.

We interviewed several old poor peasants, all of whom were over the age of 70, and asked them to recall their family expenditures in 1935. The figures they gave are as follows:

GOODS BOUGHT FROM THE MARKET

Foodstuff, vegetables and others	5
Sugar	2
Salt	4
Clothes	8
Presents	4
Fuel and light oil	8
Spending on house and boat	10
Tools and fertilizer	5
Periodic expenditures	10
TOTAL	56

They recalled that a family of four usually rented eight *mu* of land. In normal years the rice yield per *mu* was 300 *jin*. As 150 *jin* per *mu* went to the landlord as rent, the whole household had only 1,200 *jin* left. But the minimum amount of food required to last the family for a year was 1,800 *jin*, or 450 *jin* per person. This meant that the family used to have an annual food shortfall of 600 *jin*, or an additional expenditure of 56 *yuan* which had to be taken from their income or made up by borrowing. Things would be even worse during lean years. Therefore poor households seldom bought things from

the market. As they constituted the absolute majority of the population, however, the changes in their livelihood should be the sole base for any comparison between peasant life now and in the past. Only under socialism did the poor peasants' livelihood begin to take a turn for the better. According to our studies, the average consumption level of a family of three in 1981 was as follows:

Usage	Consumer Goods	Money (yuan)
Foodstuffs	Oil	17
	Salt	4
	Bean paste	4.50
	Wine	20
	Vinegar	1.50
	Cigarettes	20
	Meat	40
	Sugar	8
	Soybean products and vegetables	10
	Monosodiumglutinate	7
	Tea	20
	Fish	15
Clothing	Clothing, all types	80
Shelter	House repair	20
	Bedding	10
Miscellaneous	Soap, tooth paste, etc.	10
	Tools and fertilizer	8
	Medicine	6
	Children's schooling	7
	Presents	40
	Other	40
	TOTAL	388

This demonstrates that the peasants' living standards are higher than both that of 1935 and 1957. In terms of clothing and food, the present level of an average commune member has surpassed that of the rich peasant of 1935. The growth in the consumption level of the village can also be seen in the changes in the total annual business volume of the village store, the Hongwei Shop which is situated at the village center. Its volume of sales in 1971 was 65,559 *yuan*, while the figure of 1981 rose to 370,937 *yuan*, 5.7-fold increase.

2. THE CONSUMPTION MIX OF THE PEASANTS IN KAIXIAN'GONG

The consumption mix of the peasants in the village has undergone enormous changes along with their growing economic income. These changes can be seen in the following aspects:

1) The volume of non-foodstuffs purchased has risen sharply, while the proportion of foodstuffs in total household expenditures has experienced a decrease. 1935 saw the poor people toiling all year round just to fill their bellies. Expenditure on foodstuffs occupied about 80% of the total (production expenses excluded). By 1981, however, the proportion had declined to about 60%. The increase in purchase power for non-foodstuff commodities is manifested in the increased purchase of durable consumer goods like wrist watches, radios, and furniture. Visits with two three-person families revealed that they had each bought a watch, a cupboard, and some new clothes last year. The expenditure per household on these three items amounted to about 250 *yuan*, which approximated their respective income from the collective distribution.

2) In the composition of expenditures on foodstuffs, the proportion of grain has declined while that of animal products and other non-grain items has increased. Presently the proportion of grain in an average household's

total expenditure on foodstuffs is about 50%. Some village elders recalled that the proportion in 1935 among the poor and lower-middle peasant families was over 80%, while in 1956 it was about 70%.

3) Durable consumer goods such as television sets, radios, watches, sewing machines, and furniture are occupying a rapidly growing proportion of expenditure in the village on non-foodstuff commodities. This can be seen in the following table:

Commodity	1962	1981
Radios (set)	0	250
Televisions (set)	0	7
Watches	3	425
Sewing machines	0	102

4) The common practice of using marriage as an occasion to buy new furniture is an important cause of the growth in non-foodstuff commodities purchase. Nowadays the minimum inventory required for a new house would include a three-doored wardrobe, a cabinet with five drawers, a writing desk, a wooden double bed, four silk quilts, two wooden trunks, and four chairs.

There are, of course, more "modernized" homes. The two-room house of a newly-married couple, both of whom work in commune-run industrial enterprises, is furnished with the following items (see page 237):

This list, however, does not include the two watches they wore and much of their newly-bought clothing, which would total another 600 *yuan*.

Such families mark the appearance of a trend towards upgrading the quality of furniture in the home. As income levels grow, this trend should include many more newlyweds families. Meanwhile, it will create many difficul-

Commodity	Amount	Estimated value (*yuan*)
Three-doored wardrobe	one	150
Five-drawered chest	two	160
Quilt chest	one	60
Wood basin	seven	60
Foot warmer	one	20
Wooden trunk	two	50
Leather trunk	one	30
Toilet bowl	one	10
Dinner table	one	30
Wooden chair	three	30
Writing desk	one	20
Book cabin	one	80
Sofa	a pair	120
Radio	one	30
Vases	two	8
Tea table	one	10
Bed side cupboard	one	20
Clock	one	45
Floor lamp	one	30
Desk lamp	one	16
Standing electric fan	one	170
Clothes-stand	one	10
Thermos bottle	two	12
Wooden double bed	one	180
Quilt	ten	300
Blankets	two	50
Towel coverlets	a pair	12
Pillows	three pairs	45

Commodity	Amount	Estimated value (*yuan*)
Mosquito net	one	25
Sheet	one	15
Nylon door curtain	one	10
Pendent lamp	one	5
Fluorescent lamp	one	10
Leather shoes	four pairs	50
Tea utensils	two sets	20
Washstand	one	6
Wash basin	two	8
Nylon umbrella	one	6
Cosmetics	eight bottles	10
TOTAL:		1,973 *yuan*

ties for large families and families with relatively low incomes.

If we categorize domestic consumer goods into necessities and luxuries, we may conclude that in terms of expenditure the proportion of the former is dwindling, while that of the latter, which aims at the increase of people's pleasure, culturally and materially, is growing.

These luxuries, such as sofas, standing electric fans, floor lamps, televisions, and other expensive commodities, enter the rural areas in two ways, basically. First, they are bought by newly-weds to furnish their newly-established homes. Second, they are purchased by well-to-do households.

3. HOUSING

Housing conditions are another indicator of the peasants' living standards. Comparatively speaking, housing

conditions in Kaixian'gong are below average for the Suzhou district. Most of its houses are old and crowded into one small area. Peasants are thus always at a loss as to how to expand their floor space. The enlargement of one household must practically mean the contraction of another. This has in a way placed an effective check on population growth, particularly the growth rate of male children. Since the number of rooms in one house is fixed, more male children will make the redistribution of space (after marriage) more difficult. Although building additional stories can solve this problem, the peasants of this village don't have enough financial strength to cover the expenses for the required building materials. As the growth rate of the population is not very big and the housing conditions of the villagers have improved in comparison with the past, the construction of multi-storied buildings is not imperative. Although these types of homes have become an outstanding feature in other rural areas of southern China, we saw only one such building in Kaixian'gong during our stay. In general, the villagers have either rebuilt their old houses or built new ones since 1949. Therefore the per capita floor space has increased and can basically meet the needs for residence and sericulture. The following is a table of comparative housing conditions before and after liberation:

	Pre-1949	1981
Number of rooms		
Total	1,138	1,475.5
Per capita	0.78	0.83
Square meters		
Total	24,227	31,856.7
Per capita	16.61	18.09
Growth rate (square)		8%

IV SPIRITUAL LIFE

In the West spiritual life has failed to keep pace with the ever growing material life. Despite its ever so rich material comforts, more and more people feel spiritually lonely, empty and bored. Not a small number of individuals become psychologically abnormal. But what happened in Kaixiangong, one may wonder? We may answer this question with confidence that, in this village like many others, the enhancement of material life has also enriched the peasants spiritual life, though it must be said that their spiritual life is still not rich enough.

1. CULTURAL LIFE

The village provides three major facilities for the peasants' cultural activities. First, television sets are bought with the brigade or production teams' accumulation funds. At present there are seven sets in the village. Second, an open-air cinema is set up in the evenings on the playground of a school, on which the pupils play and do physical exercise, when the commune's mobile film projection team comes to the village. The playground is so small that it is virtually packed on these occasions; as a result many people have to stand. People told us that the team comes only once every month or two. Third, the commune and brigade have established schools. During Professor Fei's 1936 visit there, the village's primary school had only one teacher. Though its enrollment stood at about a hundred, the actual attendance seldom exceeded 20. During Professor Geddes' visit to the village, the number of teachers had increased to four and pupils to 166, or 80% of school age children. By the time of our visit, a fundamental turn for the better had taken place. There are presently two primary-middle schools and 18 teachers, four of whom are paid in wages from state educational outlays and 14 in work points from their respective brigades. All children now enter primary school, and

85% of primary school graduates continue on to middle school. But only 50% of the lower middle students go to upper middle school. A portion of the total educational outlays are not provided by the state. Thus in 1980 the peasants had to pay 3.78 *yuan* for each primary school student and 4.77 *yuan* for a middle school student.

Because of the limitations of educational conditions, the village's general educational level is not high. According to our study, the educational level of the villagers (preschool children excluded) is as follows: 46 persons, or 2.6% of the total population, received upper middle school education; 206 people (11.7% of the total) had finished lower middle school; 179 people (10.2%) completed primary; 436 (24.8%) had only one or two years of primary school; 172 people (9.8% of the total) can recognize only a small number of characters; and 598 people (40.8% of the total) are illiterate. Strictly speaking, those with only one or two years of schooling could also be considered illiterate, for they can recognize little more than their own names and those of their family members. Thus approximately one half of the villagers are illiterate.

Why is this? Is not education useful to them? In fact it does have its uses. Most of the production teams' accountants are graduates of primary or secondary schools since liberation. But unfortunately ordinary education is to a great extent divorced from actual production. To this day, the major production skills, such as farming, sericulture, and silk reeling, have remained basically unchanged and are learned in actual practice under the direction of the elder generation. Since they are not in the school curriculum, the students must still spend the same amount of time after their graduation in learning these indispensable techniques. Furthermore, to get work at one of the industrial enterprises run by the commune or brigade does not depend primarily on one's educational level. Therefore the advantages of receiving an education are not felt so keenly by the villagers. Actually a

relatively high educational level can enable a person to master scientific production techniques in both agriculture and industry. In response to the questionnaires which we handed out to 72 workers in local industrial enterprises, 52 felt education to be useful, 19 said not very useful and one not useful. It can be seen from this that most workers are very aware of the usefulness of education. Therefore, certain necessary and effective reforms in the present system of full-time secondary schooling would surely be welcomed by the peasants: for instance, adding to the curriculum some basic production-related knowledge or setting up technical schools for some middle school graduates to train specialists in farming, industry and sideline occupations.

In addition to the several types of public cultural facilities listed above, locally-originating wired broadcasting, radios, newspapers, and magazines are the most important private ones. Wired broadcasting is accessible to every household, and most families now have radios as well. The brigade subscribes to *People's Daily*, *Xinhua Daily* (the Jiangsu Province newspaper) and *Red Flag*, while the production teams subscribe to *Xinhua Daily*. Many young people also take out subscriptions to various publications to their tastes. According to questionnaires which we gave to 180 young people, 12 of them had 22 subscriptions. They were all aged 18-25, five were upper middle school graduates and seven lower middle school.

2. RELIGIOUS LIFE OF THE VILLAGERS

The general tendency is towards the diminution of the peasants' religious and superstitious beliefs and activities. In his 1936 study, Professor Fei listed ancestor worship, the Kitchen God, and the Goddess of Mercy as the three major focuses of religious activities. However, atheistic ideology has taken deep roots among the peasants since 1949. This is not solely the result of educational propaganda. Peasants are practical people. In the light of

their improved material life, they are convinced that their well-being lies with the correct leadership of the Party and their own efforts, rather than with the blessings of the "Goddess of Mercy" or some other deity. Most people no longer believe in the Goddess of Mercy and the Kitchen God. The old temples have been turned into collective warehouses. But many people still conduct simplified rites on certain festivals, setting out offerings of food and liquor and burning "spirit money" and incense to demonstrate filial piety towards their ancestors.

In his 1956 visit, Professor Geddes found ten Christian households. We tried to confirm his information in our investigation. People told us that when an elderly Christian woman died not long before our arrival, some of her old friends from the church came from Zhenze Town to attend her funeral. This shows that the former believers are still maintaining some contacts among themselves. Then we visited a number of the former Christian households who told us that they now neither go to church nor pray. As for how many Christians there actually are in the village, neither the brigade cadres nor former believers were sure. But one thing is definite: the influence of Christianity has not expanded since liberation, and the total number of believers has been diminishing. Besides, they do not seem to have much social influence, for none of the many young people we spoke with believed in the religion nor even knew that there had ever been Christians in their village.

3. VARIOUS ASPECTS OF TRADITIONAL PEASANT IDEOLOGY

In the following section we will introduce some salient features of traditional peasant ideology:

(1) Choosing a spouse:

In his 1936 visit, Professor Fei reported that arranged marriages predominated in the village. When a mother-in-law looked for a daughter-in-law, her paramount con-

sideration was given to the young woman's health, which determined whether or not she could assume her responsibilities in raising children and silk reeling. Now that young people have the freedom to choose their own spouses, the number of marriages based on free choice is on the rise. However, over half of all married couples are brought together by a third party. It should be noted that the third-party introduction differs from an arranged marriage. It is a rudimentary form of free choice. What are the main considerations of a young man and his parents in choosing his wife? Are there differences between their present standards and those which Professor Fei reported in 1936? Our findings demonstrate that no substantial changes have occurred on the parents' part. But the young people's thinking is much more advanced than it was. According to their answers on our questionnaires, young people order their priorities as follows: Moral quality, health, mutual affection, looks, education. It is worth noticing that economic and political considerations are essentially excluded. Young people face more interference from their parents in regard to the free choice of their own spouses than do their urban counterparts. The parents are usually more practical and give more thought to political and economic factors. The girls' parents in particular usually over-emphasize their son-in-law's economic background and personal prospects. This seriously obstructs young peoples' right to a freely chosen marriage partner.

What about the attitudes of the young workers in the rural industrial enterprises in this regard? The following were the responses to our questionnaires to 72 female workers (see next page):

These results are quite significant. On the one hand, more than half of the respondents are willing to marry peasants. At the same time, however, nearly half of them would prefer to marry a worker or cadre. But except for repair and managerial personnel, few male employees

Your ideal spouse should be . . .

worker	30
peasant	35
cadre	4

He should be from . . .

your own village	57
other village	15
cities	0

are required in the reeling factory. This means that many female workers will not be able to marry according to their wishes, for there simply are not enough male workers and cadres around. This is a real problem for young women in Kaixian'gong.

(2) Occupational Aspirations:

Young people's occupational preferences are an important component of their state of mind, demonstrating in a concentrated manner their aspirations, likes and world outlook. According to their answers to our questionnaires, the occupational preference of young males in Kaixian-gong is in the following order: factory work, farming, joining the army, furthering one's education, teaching, becoming a cadre, accountant, and rural doctor. The preferences of young females are as follows: factory work, farming, furthering one's education, engaging in handicraft production, becoming rural doctor, joining the army, becoming a cadre, becoming a teacher. This gives us some idea of the relative standing of various jobs as seen by Kaixian'gong's young people. Interestingly enough, both male and female youth put the entrance into rural industrial enterprises as their top preference. Therefore, it may be said that the development of rural industry has both economic and social significances.

Song Linfei

A LOOK AT KAIXIAN'GONG'S MARRIAGE AND FAMILY PROBLEMS

Kaixian'gong, known also in the academic literature as "River Village," is located amidst a closely intertwined network of small rivers in the region south of the Yangtze River. Because the village is not connected to the outside world by either railway or road, the only available means of transport is by boat; the village is thus in a relatively inaccessible area of southern Jiangsu Province. The old Kaixian'gong included what is now the entire Kaixian'gong Production Brigade plus six production teams (Nos. 1-5, No. 10) of the Hehuawan (Lotus Flower Bay) Production Brigade. Presently there are 432 families, 1,761 people in all, of whom 950 are male and 811 female, for a male-female ratio of 1.17:1. How does this kind of imbalance between the sexes influence marriage and the family in Kaixian'gong? We have here performed an initial investigation and discussion of this problem.

I. MANY MALES, FEW FEMALES

Males and females in Kaixian'gong aged 20-50 and their marriage status (arranged according to age groups) are shown in the table on page 247.

We have here delineated the ages of 20-55 for males and 18-55 for females on the considerations that first, people in this age group have attained a marriageable age and second, that after marriage they are able to support the basic functions of the family. From this chart we can see that, with a total of 506 males and 411 females, the male-female ratio of 1.23:1 is higher than that for the

THE VARIOUS AGE GROUPS AND NUMBER OF MARRIED PERSONS IN KAIXIAN'GONG

Age group	Males	Married Individuals	Age group	Females	Married Individuals
20	3	—	18-20	29	1
21-25	61	11	21-25	49	38
26-30	100	79	26-30	102	102
31-35	88	86	31-35	74	71
36-40	58	45	36-40	36	36
41-45	63	49	41-45	38	38
46-50	78	45	46-50	48	45
51-55	55	37	51-55	34	32
TOTAL	506	352	TOTAL	410	363

Note: The number of married individuals here does not include those who have divorced or whose spouse has died.

village as a whole. In reference to marriage status, married males number 352, or 69.6 per cent of the total number of males, while married females amount to 363, 88.5 per cent of the total. If one takes into consideration the national legal marriage age, as opposed to the actual marriage age in Kaixian'gong, and deletes 20 year-old males and the 18-20 female age group, then the disparity becomes even wider. The proportion of married men stands at 70 per cent of the total, while the corresponding figure for women amounts to more than 95 per cent.

It is clear then that Kaixian'gong has a surplus of single men. Because unmarried men above the age of 30 are considered to be "bachelors," we have delineated the single male age group at 30 to 55 years of age; including divorced men and widowers, there are 78 men in this group, which constitutes 15.4 per cent of the total num-

ber of adult male villagers. Seventy-six families, or 17.6 per cent of the total, contain single men, and two of these families each have two unmarried men. It must be said that, whether as an absolute or a relative number, the number of single men in Kaixian'gong is not low. People who are either unmarried or divorced, or who have been widowed yet have no children, will thus have no one to take care of them in their old age unless they adopt children. Neither will there be anyone to carry on "the continuity of incense and fire" (*ji cheng xiang huo*), that is to say, to carry on the family line. In regard to Kaixian'gong, this situation indicates an increasing need for the "five guarantees" system of care for the solitary aged. Based on the methods of production presently used in Chinese villages, we still cannot eliminate the profound, tenacious influences of such traditional conceptions as Confucius' precept "of the three unfilial acts, to leave no issue is most grievous." Therefore marriage is without a doubt the question which most concerns peasant families. In the course of investigation we met a family in Kaixian'gong's No. 8 Production Team in which the parents had raised two sons. The older, who was 38 years old, had been divorced in 1979 due to mental illness without having produced any children; the younger son, 26 years old, had no fiancée because of a slight condition of deafness. The elderly parents were extremely anxious, seizing on anybody they could to help them devise a solution.

As for preparing for marriage or remarriage, this is extremely difficult for the great majority of these single men. First of all, Kaixian'gong has virtually no unmarried women of the proper age; secondly, various conditions must be met for marriage, yet it is precisely for want of the proper conditions that they have missed their opportunity. Even if one seeks a wife from outside the village, the economic and age problems remain, so the woman's family must lower their demands. For those

who would like to remarry, the village has an unwritten law to the effect that "a girl shouldn't marry someone who's been married before" (literally, a "two-marriage head"). In the course of our investigation, we discovered that this applied without exception to the divorced men and basically applied as well to widowers. There was only one widower who had remarried a woman from the village. Thus the only recourse for the village's unmarried men is to go outside the village to attempt a solution to their problem. In the case of those with both parents and children (widowers), a wife will be impossible to find even outside the village. Because of these problems, the unmarried men in the village have up to the present been unable to marry or remarry.

II. FACTORS AFFECTING MARRIAGE OPPORTUNITIES

We investigated individually each of the single men who had passed the marriage age. The great majority were originally unable to marry for a variety of reasons. For example, a 34-year-old man in the No. 5 Production Team has been unable to marry both because of a bad family background (rich peasant) and also health problems (six fingers on one hand). However, in order to explain the problem even more clearly, we must make a precise quantitative exposition. Therefore we will make rough categories according to the major reasons for being unable to finalize marriage, as follows: of the 29 single village men aged 30 to 55, with the exception of one man with a fiancée and one man whom we were unable to contact, 11 others had economic difficulties or insufficient living space, nine men had health problems, three had unfavorable backgrounds, and two men, though personally honest and upright, had lost their chance due to the early death of their parents and the resultant lack of someone to make the arrangements on their behalf. Of two other men, one had been unable to find a suitable wife, and the other had a poor moral character. We can

see that economic and health factors are most important. In a village these constitute the basis for the formation of the family and are the factors which a young woman considers first in selecting a fiancé.

Among the economic factors mentioned above, first and foremost is housing; nine out of 11 men did not marry because of a lack of suitable housing. This is because the house is not simply the place for living and resting. It is also a center of production: brigade sericulture and family sideline enterprises such as raising rabbits all will use the commune members' own houses. The problem of the housing shortage in Kaixian'gong has not yet been solved because of the relatively short supply of arable land, with an average of 1.46 *mu* per person, and because the standard of living is still not high (in 1981 the value of one labor day did not exceed one *yuan*).

Another point that deserves mention is the case of those who lose their opportunity for marriage because there is no one to act on their behalf. Because transportation to and from Kaixian'gong is inconvenient, intercourse with the outside world is relatively minimal. Before the "cultural revolution," opportunities for contact between young men and women were few. If the parents aren't there to handle affairs and no matchmaker to handle the negotiations, even an extremely honest young man will have great difficulty in finding a wife. The mother of a man who reached a marriageable age in the 1950's died early, after which his father remarried. The stepmother brought her own son into the family. Afterwards the father stipulated that the best part of the house would be left to his new wife's son. Because the father now looked upon his son with different eyes, he failed to actively seek a match on his behalf. Although the son was an extremely upright man, he could not find a solution; as a result his stepbrother has long since married and had a son, while he himself has been a bachelor ever since.

According to our investigation of the 35 divorced men

in the entire village, their reasons for divorce were as follows: during the period from 1959-61 known as "the three difficult years," the wives of 23 men went away to beg, thus leading to divorce. Four men were divorced because the marriage arranged by their parents resulted in an unharmonious family and bad relations between husband and wife. Three other men were divorced because of poor moral caliber and because they were convicted of breaking the law. Two men were divorced because of mental illness or physical deformity, and three men were divorced due to other reasons. The above information indicates that the influence of the leftist line on economic life was the major reason behind the estrangement of husband and wife. The influence of the leftist line also is manifested in the fact that some youths lost their chance to marry because of economic difficulties.

From the above analysis we can see that the material foundation is emphasized in concluding a marriage because of the fact that the family is a productive unit (although young people nowadays have already begun to attach importance to the emotional foundation). The primary considerations of both the man's and woman's sides (but especially the woman's) in choosing a spouse are still those conditions which must be met in order to make a living: the family's economic status (particularly relating to the house), health, and moral character (most importantly, the person in question must not be wasteful).

According to the results of a questionnaire, only 15 out of 163 unmarried village youths were often in the company of members of the opposite sex during their free time. Because the interaction between local youths is so limited, marriage within the village has clear advantages. First of all, each person can fully understand whether or not their marriage partner can satisfy their requirements. Secondly, the woman will still be close to home, in case of any problems. Of the 341 couples that have married since 1949 (in which both husband and wife are still in

the village), 206 couples, or 60.4%, were within-the-village marriages. This point is especially worth looking at in the light of the surplus of males and paucity of females in Kaixian'gong. The great majority of youths both male and female with favorable circumstances will marry within the village, thus clearly explaining the village saying, "good boys and girls don't leave the village." Actually, most women, even those with unfavorable circumstances, will find a husband in the village. This only increases the difficulties of the men with unfavorable circumstances.

Kaixian'gong's marriage protocol is quite rigorous, with many rules having been passed down through the generations. Based on a comparison with Qing Dynasty records found in the village, we discovered that, though present customs have been much simplified, a substantial portion of the old system has been preserved. These old rules stipulate a certain mandatory expenditure between engagement and wedding. As far as the young man and the head of his family are concerned, only by handling everything in the proper fashion can a wife be obtained. In a fashion similar to many other places, marriage expenses have increased greatly in the last several years along with improvements in living conditions. According to our investigation, total marriage expenditures for both the man and woman's sides during the 1950's and 1960's (including the "cultural revolution" period) totalled approximately 500 to 600 *yuan*, and never exceeded 1,000. But with the present standard of living most commune members need at least 2,000 *yuan*, not including money spent for building a new house.

In the course of the marriage on New Year's Day of 1982 (lunar calendar) of a couple who would be considered by local standards to have an upper-middle class living standard, both sides spent a total of 3,000 *yuan*. This is unquestionably a heavy burden for a peasant family that is not even a rich one. In the No. 8 Production Team of Kaixian'gong there is a family of nine people; the

father and mother are both on salary, the former as chief of the brigade's electric pump-operated irrigation system and the latter as head of a workshop in the commune silk factory. A son and daughter are also both fully productive workers. Compared to other families they are quite well off, but when the son married in 1982, it was still necessary to borrow 200 *yuan*. Therefore, many parents are trying to economize on food and clothes from the time their children are young so as to prepare for their future wedding expenses. On the one hand, this situation reflects the elevation of the peasants' standard of living since the Third Plenum of the Party's 11th Central Committee (in Dec. 1978), but on the other hand it is not beneficial to young men of poorer families in their efforts to find a wife.

III. COMPENSATORY MECHANISMS

Two compensatory mechanisms for male youths' marriage problems can be found in Kaixian'gong — marrying a woman from outside the village and becoming an adopted son-in-law. Of the 363 married women in Kaixian-gong below the age of 55, 132 are from outside the village. Most of these are from the same county or even the same commune, but beginning in the mid-1960's the scope has been enlarged to include other regions as well. 28 per cent or 37 of the 132 women mentioned above are from outside the county, including one woman from Zhejiang Province. These 37 woman share two characteristics: their places of origin are concentrated in area (three counties each in both northern and southern Jiangsu), and their number has increased rapidly starting in the 1970's (31 of the women from outside the county arrived after 1970). This reflects the fact that there has been a greater increase in the absolute number of males entering marriage age who had been born of the first post-liberation baby boom.

One method of finding a woman from the outside is

called "snowballing" (*gun xue qiu*), in which a woman who has already married into the village will introduce other young women from her hometown to Kaixian'gong men. In this way the number grows larger and larger. A second method is for a broker to make the introductions. Though this person has no prior connection with either party, he stands to earn up to 100 *yuan* if the marriage goes through. Because southern Jiangsu is relatively near, some young men from Kaixian'gong will go themselves to seek a wife.

The original economic circumstances of most of the women who came from other counties were relatively inferior; life there was not as good as in Kaixian'gong, so they were willing to come. Men in Kaixian'gong who seek wives from other areas are naturally those who couldn't find them in the village. Their chances of success are greater away from Kaixian'gong because the women will not have so clear an idea about their potential husband's situation and their demands will not be so high. Furthermore, the cost of the marriage will be somewhat less; this practice therefore will tend to become more prevalent.

Another possibility for the young man is to become an adopted son-in-law. This custom has a very long history in Kaixian'gong. At present there are 36 adopted sons-in-law in the village. Most of these men became so because there were many brothers in their family, and their parents were unable to make a match for them. The wife's family, because it had no sons, needed the adopted son-in-law to continue the succession; according to custom, the children resulting from the match would take the surname of the woman's family. Before the 1950's the man would himself have to change his surname, but this is no longer necessary. In terms of economics, adopted sons-in-law have since liberation had full rights of inheritance, in contrast to previous practice. At the time of the marriage the man need only give a small dowry, which re-

quires far less expense than a standard marriage. Thus this kind of a match is considered by the man to be worthwhile. Many families will use this method in order that their son not become a bachelor. The woman's family feels that not only will they gain in labor power, but also that the expenditure involved is less than would be required to adopt a son and then make a match for him. It seems likely that the number of adopted sons-in-law in Kaixian'gong will increase.

IV. INFLUENCES ON FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

How do wives from outside the village and adopted sons-in-law get along in their new families? Because of time limitations we were only able to carry out preliminary investigations of intergenerational relations in the Hehuawan Nos. 1 and 2 Production Teams. As a basis for judging the relationships, we looked at whether the subjects argued often or cooked separately (and kept separate finances). Our sample consisted of 16 pairs of mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, four combinations of adopted son-in-law and wife's parents, and six father-in-law-daughter-in-law pairs. Of the 16 pairs of mother and daughter-in-law, the relations between them in six cases could be considered good, two only average, and eight bad. Among the four adopted sons-in-law, only one got along badly with his wife's parents. Of the six father-in-law-daughter-in-law pairs, half get along well and half didn't. Among the six pairs of mother-in-law and daughter-in-law who got along well, two of the younger women were from another county, two from a different village in the same county as Kaixian'gong, and two were Kaixian'gong natives. Of the eight pairs who got along badly, four of the daughters-in-law were from a different county and four from Kaixian'gong village. In all three of the father-in-law-daughter-in-law combinations who had bad relations, the women were from another county; among the three pairs with good relations, one woman

was from outside the county, and two others were local women. Among the 48 couples (husband and wife) in these two teams, there were only three with bad relations. In the Hehuawan Nos. 1 and 2 Teams there were eight wives altogether who came from other counties.

It is difficult to say whether the arrival in a family of a wife from another area influences family relations in any specific way. We visited separately with several of the mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law who were experiencing relatively serious contradictions in an effort to understand the causes of the disagreement and discovered that the major problems are ones of economic support. The older son of a family in the No. 2 Team married a woman from Jingjiang County (in northern Jiangsu) in 1978, spending 2,100 *yuan* in the process. Later on the younger son wanted to get married as well, but the older son's wife refused to help. When the mother-in-law asked for money the daughter-in-law actually cursed at her, thus causing great tensions between the two. Of course personality factors were also involved. In another family the daughter-in-law hasn't spoken to her mother-in-law for 13 years because of a single argument they once had.

The changeover of authority in the family (from the parents as master of the house to the son and his wife) occurs as the parents gradually weaken with age; as they can no longer work as hard, the amount of income produced is less, and they must rely more and more on their children's support. This phenomenon cannot be said to have any connection with the daughter-in-law's place of origin.

Local people say that wives who come from other areas, because they have no backing in Kaixian'gong, are mostly honest and straight forward. One question which deserves mention is that of cultural change. We noticed that most women from northern Jiangsu, after coming to Kaixian-gong, take care to change their native speech to a form closer to the Kaixian'gong local dialect. In style of dress

including for their own children and other customs as well they usually go along with the Kaixian'gong fashion. In other words, there is a gradual and increasing uniformity. But we also saw in the Kaixian'gong No. 1 Brigade a woman from Jingjiang County who, since her marriage in 1977, dressed her child very noticeably in the style of her home village. It seems likely that, with the increasing number of women from other areas marrying into Kaixian'gong, certain problems involving cultural adjustment and mixture will likely appear. At present it is still difficult to predict how this may affect family relations.

From the above discussion we can see that marriage and family problems in Kaixian'gong caused by the imbalanced ratio between the sexes clearly bear the imprint of an area with a poorly developed economy and transportation network, an area that moreover has been influenced on a certain level by the small-scale peasant economy and old cultural traditions. Since the Party's Third Plenum, however, the implementation of rural policy and economic liberalization have enabled Kaixian-gong's peasants to embark on the road to prosperity. At present a highway through Kaixian'gong is under construction with government support which will further promote the all-round economic development of the local area. The development of agricultural and industrial sideline industries will also hasten the attainment of prosperity for the village. Thus we can look forward to a fundamental solution of this village's marriage and family problems.

Yang Shanhua Xu Yali
Jin Yihong Huang Hongkang
Li Zhenqian Zhao Shanyang

FAMILY STRUCTURE AND MOTHER-IN-LAW-DAUGHTER-IN-LAW RELATIONS IN KAIXIAN'GONG

Kaixian'gong had a total population of 1,761 at the end of 1981, with 432 families averaging 4.08 persons each.

I

Based on a comparison with the Kaixian'gong household registry from the year 1964, the average family size is increasing. Figures from July 1964 show that the average family size at that time was 3.65 persons. The following chart shows the proportional representation of the differently sized families for 1964 and 1981:

(Per cent)

Person(s) per family	1	2-3	4-5	6-7	8-10
1964	10.9	32.1	47.8	8.0	1.2
1981	9.5	23.9	47.5	17.4	1.8

1. In both 1964 and 1981, almost half of the families in the village had four or five people. This configuration then is most fundamental and typical for the village.
2. The proportion of two- or three-person families decreased by 8.8 per cent from 1964 to 1981.

II

The enlargement in scale of the family in Kaixian'gong is primarily related to changes in family structure.

KAIXIAN'GONG FAMILY STRUCTURE

	1964		1981	
	No. of families	Proportion (%)	No. of families	Proportion (%)
Nuclear family (type one)	173	45.9	167	38.7
Nuclear family (type two)	60	15.9	91	21.1
Extended family	23	6.1	89	20.6
Incomplete family	121	32.1	85	19.6
TOTAL	377	100	432	100

Nuclear family (type one) refers to a family made up of a husband and wife with their children.

Nuclear family (type two) refers to a family composed of a husband and wife with their children and one parent of either the husband or wife, or siblings of either one.

An extended family is one composed of two married couples and their children. The vast majority of these couples are of different generations. In 1964 there was only one family containing two couples of the same generation, and in 1981 only two.

Incomplete families are those without a husband and wife.

The above chart reflects two characteristics of the changes in family structure in Kaixian'gong: First, the incidence of type one nuclear families has decreased by 7.2 per cent from 1964 to 1981. Second, families with three generations under one roof have clearly increased. Among them families with two couples of different generations have increased in number by 14 per cent, while type two nuclear families (specifically those including one aged parent) have increased by 5.5 per cent.

III

What are the reasons for the appearance of the characteristics described above of the changing family structure in Kaixian'gong? The first that comes to mind is the difficulty of access to transportation. Prior to 1981 there was no road connecting directly with Kaixian'gong. Because there also is no wharf for passenger boats, the major means of transport is farm boats which have only a small scope of interaction with the outside world.

However, the internal factors are decisive. The special factors influencing changes in family structure can be concretely analysed as follows: 1. Objectively speaking, the housing shortage does not permit the separation of households, which requires that each new household have living and working quarters for its exclusive use. Because the housing situation in Kaixian'gong is so tight, not a few families have had to vacate rooms to enable the younger generation to marry by having the aged parents use the kitchen, siderooms, or storage room as bedroom. In the No. 2 Team of Hehuawan, a 70-year-old woman whose grandson was getting married was forced to construct a "room" for herself in the kitchen out of reeds.

2. The fact that a son is responsible for supporting his mother is another reason behind the decrease in the separation of households. As soon as a village woman becomes a mother-in-law, she generally no longer participates in collective labor, but rather takes care of household responsibilities, including watching over the grandchildren. The son must thus take responsibility for his mother's food consumption as well as other living expenses even if they have formed separate households and the father is still a strong worker. A man named Yao in the Hehuawan No. 2 Team has lived along with his wife separate from their oldest son for 13 years. Even though the father earns full work points, the son bears responsibility for half of his mother's food needs, the other half

being taken care of by a younger brother. A son who refused to fulfil this obligation would be scorned by the other people of the village. This factor is extremely influential towards the reduction in household separations.

3. Kaixian'gong has a tradition of limiting population by means of abortion and infanticide. The average number of children per couple is not high. Families generally prefer to keep one son at home to carry on the family succession. Any additional sons will either establish a new household or become another family's adopted son-in-law.

THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER COUPLE

	Male	Female
Before liberation	1.76	0.71
1950's	1.46	1.1
1960's	1.41	0.96
1970's (including 1980, 81)	0.86	0.77

Because the number of children in each family was never very great and also because of the tradition of the adopted son-in-law, the frequency of household separation has decreased.

IV

One of the major characteristics of the changes in family structure in Kaixian'gong is the marked increase in three-generation households, going up by 19.5 per cent from 1964 to 1981. These changes have not only caused an increase in average family size, but have also caused family relations to become even more complicated. In 1981 there were 180 three-generation families, or 41.7 per cent of the total. This is to say that at least 180 families had mother-in-law (or father-in-law)-daughter-in-law relations. The mother-in-law-daughter-in-law rela-

tionship is one of the key links in establishing a harmonious and happy family. Bad blood between these two was a common ailment of the old society. Feudal morality forced the daughter-in-law into a position of absolute submission, to the point where mother-in-law and daughter-in-law became opposing camps. Thus it became through the generations something almost impossible to change. Since liberation and the elevation of women's economic and political status, the phenomenon of the absolutely submissive daughter-in-law is seldom seen. On the contrary there has even appeared the situation of lack of respect for one's elders. From the standpoint of the present situation, it is extremely necessary to promote respect among the younger generation for the older generation and daughter-in-law's filial obedience towards her husband's parents.

Using the Nos. 1 and 2 Production Teams of Hehuawan brigade as an example, 21 out of 42 families contain three generations (three families have four generations). An additional five families have already separated but still maintain mother-in-law-daughter-in-law relations. In all there are 24 pairs of mother- and daughter-in-law and 19 pairs of father- and daughter-in-law. The following chart depicts the quality of the relationships between these people based on whether they have established separate kitchen facilities and whether or not they fight frequently:

	Mother-in-law-daughter-in-law	Father-in-law-daughter-in-law
Good	12	12
Average	5	2
Bad	7	4
TOTAL	24	19

Looking at the numbers, 58 per cent of the mothers (or fathers)-in-law and daughters-in-law have good relations.

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is harmonious, all one's worldly affairs will
Research on mother-in-law-daughter-in-law
and family relations in general can promote sta
unity in our society and benefit our work to
Four Modernizations.

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