Social Change and Continuity in a Village in Northern Anhui, China: A Response to Revolution and Reform

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Min HAN

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Preface

This book is essentially a revision of my doctoral thesis, presented to the University of Tokyo in 1993. An earlier version of some parts of Chapter 6 and Chapter 8 were included in a joint paper under the title, “Responsibility System and Marriage: Economic change and changing patterns of marriage in rural Anhui Province,” [Han and Eades 1992: 67–121]; another paper was published under the title, “Gendai Chugoku no Noson Shakai ni okeru Zotogirei: Ankisho no Genchi Chyosa kara” (Rituals of Gift Exchange in Rural Societies of Modern China: Based on Fieldwork in Anhui) [Han 1991: 222–232]; a paper came out under the title, “The Revival of Tradition in Northern Anhui: A Response to Social and Economic Change,” in Perspectives on Chinese Society: Anthropological Views from Japan [Han 1995: 67–91]. They have been revised to be included in this monograph.

There is an old saying in China: “When drinking well water, don’t forget those who sank the well.” With the publication of this book, I would like to thank the people who contributed to this book and to my research over the last twelve years.

My graduate advisor at University of Tokyo, Professor Funabiki Takeo, is not only an excellent anthropologist but also a wonderful mentor. He gave me encouragement and many useful suggestions during my master’s and doctoral courses. I owe him the deepest gratitude. During my fieldwork and throughout my work on my thesis, Professors Eades Jerry, Suenari Michio, Ito Abito, Sekimoto Teruo, and Yamashita Shinji at the University of Tokyo provided much useful advice and many perceptive comments. I especially wish to acknowledge Professor Eades, who edited my entire doctoral thesis manuscript with great patience. His valuable comments and suggestions have been a constant source of stimulation and insight.

The members of Sennin no Kai, “The Society of Mountain Hermits”—a gathering of anthropologists studying China, especially Professors Yokoyama Hiroko, Nishizawa Haruhiko, Nie Lili, Ueno Hiroko, Shimizu Jun and Mio Yuko—gave me many useful suggestions. Discussions with the members of the “writing-up seminar” in the Department of Anthropology, Tokyo University, organized by Professor Funabiki, were also very helpful. My doctoral thesis was once presented to the State University of New York Press. Three anonymous readers of this press offered many comments. I want to thank them, as well.

During the research, I was also generously supported by scholarships from the Japanese Ministry of Education and the College of Women’s Associations of Japan (CWAJ). I am grateful to all these people and organizations for their support. My old Japanese friends, Mr. Oda Toyomasa and his wife, Mrs. Oda Misae, who worked in the Chinese People’s Liberation Army as a doctor and a nurse for eight years, invited me to Japan and funded me until I obtained a scholarship from the Japanese Ministry of Education. They have always been like parents to me, in their encouragement. I convey special thanks to my parents and my parents-in-law for having faith in my work. I especially thank my parents-in-law, who lived in a town
in northern Anhui for many years and had a wide social network in both the urban and rural areas, for introducing me to their friends. With their help, I finally chose Lijialou Village as my fieldwork site, which was the home village of one of my father-in-law’s students.

During the fieldwork, I received generous support from Mr. Zhou Daobin, an editor of the Records and Editorial Committee of Suxian Prefecture, Mr. Yang Houmin, Mr. Li Maoxiang, officials of the Women’s Association of Xiao County and other officials of Xiao County, and at the district, xiang and administrative village levels. All of the villagers in Lijialou accepted me as a relative and shared with me their friendship and support. This was especially true of my host father and his family, who allowed me to stay in their home for more than a year and who really made me feel that I was at home.

I am also grateful to Professor Nagano Yasuhiko and Professor Kuroda Etsuko at the National Museum of Ethnology. Without their advice, it would have taken much more time to get this book published. My final words of appreciation go to my husband, Xie Lin, for his constant encouragement. Last, I want to say that I accept sole responsibility for the interpretations presented here and for all remaining shortcomings in this study.

Min HAN

National Museum of Ethnology, Japan
Spring, 2001
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Notes on Text

1. Period in Chinese History

Xia Dynasty 夏朝 21st — 16th century B.C.
The Spring and Autumn Period 春秋 770 B.C. — 476 B.C.
Qin Dynasty 秦朝 221 B.C. — 207 B.C.
Han Dynasty 漢朝 206 B.C. — 220 A.D.
Sui Dynasty 隋朝 581 — 618
Tang Dynasty 唐朝 618 — 907
Song Dynasty 宋朝 960 — 1279
Yuan Dynasty 元朝 1271 — 1368
Ming Dynasty 明朝 1368 — 1644
Qing Dynasty 清朝 1644 — 1911

Periods of reigns:
Shunzhi 順治 1644 — 1661
Kangxi 熙 1662 — 1722
Yongzheng 雍正 1723 — 1735
Qianlong 乾隆 1736 — 1795
Jiajing 嘉靖 1796 — 1820
Daoguang 道光 1821 — 1850
Tongzhi 同治 1862 — 1874
Guangxu 光緒 1875 — 1908
Xuantong 宣統 1909 — 1911

Republic of China 民國
Japanese Occupation 日本占領 1938 — 1945
Chinese Civil War 国共內戰 between Communists and Nationalists 1946 — 1949

People’s Republic of China 中華人民共和國 1949 — present
Land Reform 土地改革 1949 — 1952
Collectivization 合作化 1953 — 1957
Great Leap Forward and People’s Commune 大躍進，人民公社 1958
Three Hard Years 三年困難時期 1959 — 1961
Cultural Revolution 文化大革命 1966 — 1976
Fall of the “Gang of Four” 打倒“四人邦” 1976
Political and Economic Liberalization 政治，經濟開放 1978
Breakup of the Commune 人民公社解散 1984
2. General Administrative Levels

1958 — 1983
Central Government
Province
County
Zhen or Commune
(Township)
Production Brigade
Production Team

1984 — present
Central Government
Province
County
Zhen or Xiang
(Township)
Administrative Village
Natural Village

After 1984, zhen and xiang were both called “township” in English. People living in zhen have urban registration, while those in xiang have agrarian registration.

3. Notes on Land Measure

\[ 1 \text{mu} = 666.7 \text{m}^2 \]

4. Official Exchange Rates of U.S. Dollar and Chinese Yuan

- 1980 1 U.S. dollar = 1.5 yuan
- 1985 1 U.S. dollar = 2.7 yuan
- 1991 1 U.S. dollar = 4.71 yuan
- 1993 1 U.S. dollar = 5.71 yuan
- 2001 1 U.S. dollar = 8.2 yuan
Introduction

In the early 1980s, the Chinese government began to put into effect an “open door policy”, in order to bring about the “four modernizations” in agriculture, industry, science and defense. This open door policy gave the Chinese a chance to understand the outside world better. Many Chinese people began to realize that China had fallen far behind the industrialized countries. As a result, a new intellectual wave surged throughout China, as China was compared with other foreign countries, like Japan, and people rethought the meaning of the past decades since the socialist revolution and the functions of traditional systems in the process of modernization.

At that time, I was studying in China for a master’s degree in classical Japanese literature, and as a member of the young adult generation, I was of course affected by this wave. Various questions buzzed in my mind, such as how we should assess the socialist revolution and what kinds of social change and continuity could be found relative to pre-revolutionary and revolutionary China. It was just at that time that I encountered my first book on anthropology, a study of Japanese society, written by Nakane Chie, a Japanese anthropologist. I was fascinated by her framework of analysis, and I thought that maybe I could find some answers to my questions about Chinese society by studying cultural anthropology.

I came to Japan to study cultural anthropology at the University of Tokyo in 1986. Three years later, I finished a master’s degree in anthropology, writing a master’s thesis on social changes in rural Hungary. My research aimed at making comparative studies on social changes in the process of socialist revolution and modernization in China and Hungary and determining the characteristics of China’s socialist revolution and modernization. I started my fieldwork in China in the first year of my doctoral course in 1989. I chose a rural area on the Central Plains of the Yellow River as my field site, for two reasons. First, as a Han Chinese, I was born and brought up in the northeast, historically a marginal area of Han China. I wanted to study an area that had been more central in Chinese history. To me, the Central Plains had always seemed like the place where my roots originated. This was one of the areas where the ancestors of the Han had moved and settled, where nations had risen and fallen, and where civilizations had prospered and declined. Second, my parents-in-law had lived for many years in a town in northern Anhui, in the southern part of the Central Plains, and they had a wide social network in both the urban and rural areas, which would be helpful to my research.

However, the data used in this book come from the fieldwork I carried out between October 1989 and April 1991.

1. STATEMENT OF THE THESIS

The major foci of my research are to assess the effects of the socialist revolution and reform on Lijialou, to outline changes and continuities in rural China subsequent to land reform (1950), the Great Leap Forward or collectivization (1958), and the Cultural Revolution and de-collectivization, and to examine the relationship between Chinese peasants and the government. In the 20th century, one of the world's greatest revolutions took place in China, the country with the largest population in the world. The revolution, based on socialist ideas, produced new sets of economic, political and social institutions. What, then, against this background, is the situation of the Chinese peasants who account for 70% of the total population? The book provides a detailed account of the history of over 600 years of a lineage that, before the 20th century, produced many scholars and office-holders, and became one of the most influential in Xiao County. The dynamic history of the Li Lineage and the life histories of its members may help us to understanding modern Chinese history and its impact in rural areas.

The purpose of this book is to reveal the changes and continuities of social structure and their mechanisms, by examining a lineage and a village with a long history. The reason I took the lineage as the main target of analysis is not because the study of lineage has been predominant in anthropological research in China for the last 60 years. Studying lineage is not my only purpose in this book, but rather is a means to an end. In my view, lineage is not a given structure in Chinese society. It has been no more than a kind of institution or strategy that people have used to organize themselves. In other words, by exploring how a lineage has survived during the last 600 years, and especially during the last fifty years, I will be analyzing how peasants played their role in modern Chinese history and what the relationships have been between the government and the peasants. The lineage study is important to me and to the book as a whole for the following reasons.

(i) Lijialou has remained a single lineage village for about 300 years. During those 300 years, nearly ten generations of Li members went through the chaos of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom (1851–1864), wars among the warlords in the early 20th century, the anti-Japanese wars and the civil wars between the Guomindang, the Nationalists and the Communists, as well as natural disasters. Since the Liberation of 1949, despite many political storms, Lijialou continues to be the village of the Li Lineage, and its main institutions still survive. What can we infer from this continuity of the lineage or the continuity of the peasantry? One of the answers will be that over the years, the lineage has provided a source of security and structure within which the villagers can arrange their daily lives.

(ii) The continuity of the lineage provides a sense of identity for its members, and with the liberalization of the economy and the political system after the adoption
Introduction

of the responsibility system, this is one of the factors which has been related to the revival of traditional practices and beliefs.

(iii) The existence of the lineage influences relations with the outside world, and especially relations with the state. Especially after the revolution, not only every village, but also every person in the village has been integrated into the framework of the centralized government, through the new administration and the appointment of cadres at the grass-roots level. Local cadres who are also members of a local lineage are in an ambiguous position: they remain members of a lineage or family, in addition to having functions which they are supposed to carry out on behalf of the community or the collective. This makes their relations with the county, province and state, as well as with the other villagers, very complicated. The complexities of the relations between the villagers and the state can be seen if we look at the history of the village from the time of its foundation, which itself was instigated by the state.

2. STUDIES OF CHINESE PEASANTS IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The anthropological study of rural Chinese communities started in the 1920s, but the literature on Chinese peasants since then, though extensive, is uneven, mainly because of the extraordinary history of the country in the 20th century. Before explaining the significance of this book, it may be necessary to place it within the context of the long history of studies of rural China.

Because of the effects of this unevenness, I have divided this history into three periods: the pre-revolutionary period, the Maoist period and post-Maoist period. The period up to 1949 was something of a golden age for anthropological data, because many excellent historical and sociological accounts of rural China were made, based on fieldwork and survey research from various parts of the country.

Today Chinese social scientists point to Cai Yuanpei's 1926 article, "On Ethnology", as the first Chinese anthropological or ethnological article [Guldin 1991: 6]. In this article, Cai made the first use in an academic publication of the word minzuxue to mean Ethnology, and defined the discipline [Wang Jianmin 1997: 103]. Cai had learned about anthropology from the Japanese, and indeed, it was through the Japanese that the Western disciplines first reached China. By the 1930s, however, European and American influences began to outweigh Japanese as Western works were translated into Chinese [Guldin 1991: 6]. At the same time, Western anthropologists, such as A.R. Radcliffe-Brown and Davison Black, came to teach and do research in China. During this period, many students went to America or Europe and received good training in anthropology. In fact, it was those who were trained in Europe and America, such as Wu Wenzao, Pan Guangdan, Fei Xiaotong, Xu Langguang, Lin Yaohua, Li Jinghan and Yang Kun, who comprised the founding generation of Chinese anthropology, with their research on family and marriage, the land system and the peasant life, social strata, social mobility, the law, and so on.

Fei Xiaotong, one of Malinowski's students, carried out community studies both in the Yangzi Basin and in Yunnan. Peasant Life in China [1939] is a study of
Kaixiangong, a village in southern Jiangsu on the Yangzi River. It deals with family, kinship, and the economic life of the peasants. *Earthbound China* [1945] is a study of family finances, consumption, land tenure, population movements, and the organization of commerce and industry in three villages in Western Yunnan. The influence of functionalist anthropology is to be felt in both of these two works. Lin Yaohua, who was supervised by E. A. Hooton, Kluckohn and Raymond Firth at Harvard University, wrote a semi-fictional account of a village in Fujian, published as *The Golden Wing* [1947]. Martin C. Yang, who was sponsored by the Department of Anthropology at Columbia University, did fieldwork in his home area. The results of his research were written up in his work *A Chinese Village, Taitou, Shantung Province* [1945], which focuses on the family, kinship, religion and certain other aspects of the communal life. Afterwards in *Under the Ancestor’s Shadow* [1971] Francis Hsu pointed to differences in social behavior between the wealthier households and the poorer ones. Using this difference as a starting point, he proceeded to analyze the culture of West Town in Yunnan. The wealthier and more scholarly tended to adhere much more than the poor people to the socially upheld ideal of a big family; this apparently explains larger households among the rich as a whole as contrasted with the poor as a whole. Beside these accounts there were also some excellent economic and social studies by foreigners, such as Buck [1937], Gamble [1954] and Skinner [1964, 1965].

With the social revolution, there came a major break in anthropological research in China. As for native anthropologists, as soon as the People’s Republic of China was established, anthropology came under suspicion. Since it was associated with colonialism, and with the great imperialist powers of the United States, Great Britain, and France, it is no wonder that anthropology was distrusted by the communists. As a result, Zhongshan University’s anthropology department was suspended in November 1949, and other nascent anthropology departments or courses suffered the same fate. Not long after that, sociology began to be criticized as reactionary, foreign and imperialistic and sociology departments were abolished in 1957. After that, there was almost no anthropological or sociological research about the Han people, but research on non-Han minorities continued and developed considerably during this period. For many ethnologists, the key decision affecting their future was the 1951 State Council directive that all scholars in “minority studies” move to the newly formed Central Institute of Nationalities in Beijing, which by the mid-1950s had become the center for ethnological teaching and theorizing in China. The largest group of students consisted of minority nationality cadres who attended the institute to study nationality policy and nationality theory before returning to their home districts to serve as government or party officials [Guldin 1991: 9].

During this period, there was also a break in research conducted by foreign scholars. As J. H. Steward pointed out, “Unfortunately for western social science research in China, the nation was swept by the communists just at the time when interest in the area had reached significant proportions” [Fried 1953: xi]. Therefore, after the revolution most of the first-hand research in Chinese societies was carried
out in Hong Kong and Taiwan. However, there were still some works basing on materials from before the Liberation or even earlier. The most influential writings about mainland China, namely Guangdong and Fujian, were based on library sources by Maurice Freedman. His most important books were *Lineage Organization in Southeastern China* [1958] and *Chinese Lineage and Society* [1966]. Though studies of village communities in mainland China since 1949 are rarer than those before it, there are still some accounts of the revolution in Chinese villages by foreign anthropologists and other observers. *Revolution in a Chinese Village: Ten Mile Inn* [1959] and *The First Years of Yangyi Commune* [1966] are studies of Henan Province by David and Isobel Crook, who taught English at the Foreign Languages Institute in Beijing. They reported on many changes in a village on the formal level after the socialist revolution, between the late 1940s and the early 1950s. The most famous work about the early years of the revolution may be that of Hinton, *Fanshen: A Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese Village* [1966]. He was working as an agricultural adviser in China at the time of the revolution, and visited China twenty years later to report on changes in the village in the intervening years. In his book, he described how a massive transformation occurred in a village of Shanxi Province. C. K Yang carried out his fieldwork between 1948 and 1951, in Nanching Village of Guangdong Province. He described the changing relations of a village to the greater national community under centralized communist rule in his book, *A Chinese Village in Early Communist Transition* [1959]. He also analyzed the shift in the forms of marriage and divorce, the alteration of age and sex as criteria for family status and authority, the reduction of the functions of the family and disorganization of lineage in another book, *The Chinese Family in the Communist Revolution* [1959]. Recently, a group of American anthropologists and historians have provided a series of challenges to the sinological anthropologists' approach to Chinese kinship, in the book *Kinship and Social Organization in Late Imperial China, 1000-1940* [Ebrey and Watson 1986].

In the post-Maoist period, social science began to be rehabilitated in China. There was a relative explosion of domestic scholarly publications, though most of them were still studies of non-Han nationalities. At the same time, there has been a great expansion in the number of academic associations and conferences. Anthropology departments that had been abolished were reestablished in Zhongshan and Xiamen Universities. The first Ph. D. in anthropology was awarded to China's first Tibetan doctoral degree holder, Gelek, in July 1986, at Zhongshan University. Chinese ethnology is still in its formative stage. However rich it might be in ethnographic material, it is still theoretically relatively unformed. As for the study of the Han nationality, Chinese scholars carried out a discussion of its origins in the 1950s, but that was suspended. It should be noted that the study of the Han nationality is seen as a major task for ethnological institutions in China today [Lin 1991: 155]. However, some excellent studies on peasant society among the Han people began to appear in the areas of Fujian [Zhuang 1996; Pan 1997; Wang 1997], Sichuan [Xiao 2000], Hubei [Qin 1994], Hebei [Ma 1999], Shaanxi [Liu 2000],
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Gansu [Jing 1996], Liaoning [Nie 1992], Heilongjiang [Yan 1996].

For a long period foreign scholars had to be content with studies of Hong Kong and Taiwan, and accounts of the mainland based on information from refugees [Parish and Whyte 1978; Chan, Masden and Unger 1984]. After the adoption of the responsibility system, full-length accounts of village life based on fieldwork by scholars outside the mainland China have once more started to appear, such as research in areas of Guangdong [Siu 1989; Potter and Potter 1990; Segawa 1993], Fujian [Huang 1989], Sichuan [Endicott 1988], Hebei [Nakao 1990], Shandong [Judd 1994], the North China Plain [Sasaki 1991] and Shaanxi [Fukao, Iguchi and Kurihara 2000].

Most of these studies of the Han people are about changes in social life in rural society during the last 50 years. Among these, Endicott, Huang, Nakao, Sasaki and Qin generally describe the social changes in their areas during the last 50 years, whereas the others tend to analyze some certain topics of rural society. For instance, Nie emphasizes the radical changes in relations within family and lineage as a result of political struggles during the Maoist period. Judd examines reconstructed households of the reform era and emphasizes gender relations within the household. Judd demonstrates that gender plays an important role in aspects of the rural political economy, such as the revival of household agriculture, the restructuring of villages and village-run industry, and re-opening of market forces. Fukao, Iguchi and Kurihara provide us a joint ethnography of a village with detailed analyse of the pit dwellings, the changes in traditional entertainment, villagers’ social life and the interactions among these three.

3. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS BOOK

The significance of this study may lie in the following. First, it is the first ethnography about Anhui since the revolution and the first account of a social history of a community in northern Anhui. The only three major pieces of research about Anhui, carried out by Fried [1953], H. Beattie [1979] and Hazelton [1986], are all about the middle or southern part of the province, and these three major studies are all about the time before 1949. Beattie did a comprehensive study of land and lineage in Tongcheng County during the Ming and Qing dynasties. She describes a more loosely organized, more purely elite-centered lineage, which is different from the Guangdong and Fujian types described by Freedman. The description of lineages in Tongcheng of Anhui has caused interest among anthropologists, and Patricia Ebrey has even proposed that lineages similar to those in Beattie’s study are of the “Tongcheng type” [Ebrey 1983]. Hazelton’s work is also a historical study on a lineage in Xiuning, Huizhou during the Ming Dynasty. Perhaps Fried was the only person to carry out fieldwork in Anhui. He chose a community near Nanjing on the Yangzi plain in east central China. He did his fieldwork between 1947 and 1948; altogether he was there for a year and a half. His research is a kind of “community study” of the county headquarters of Chu County. In his book, Fabric of Chinese
Society [1953], he dealt with family, kinship and non-kinship ties and how they bear on Chinese life. His research is significant in various ways. In the first place, he provided some information about the history of the region. He was one of the last foreign scientists to do research in China and left only when the Communists were literally at the gate of Chu County. Second, he argues that kinship relations were very important but that they did not meet all the needs for various kinds of interactions between different classes of landlords, merchants, artisans, peasants and workers. The reason, he thought, was that the development of states and nations was marked by the emergence of a governmental superstructure that began to supersede kinship relations in many areas of behavior and might even conflict with such relations. Therefore compared with the above three researches, this book is significant because it describes the transition of a lineage and a village during the Confucian period, the Republican period, the Maoist period, to the post-Maoist period in Anhui, where there had been a vacuum in anthropological research since 1949.

Third, this book provides a deep and immediate description of the process of adopting the responsibility system and its social impact on households, women's status, the reconstruction of agnate and affinal relations, and so on. Northern Anhui is the place where the responsibility system was first developed, and from which it spread to other parts of rural China from the early 1970s onwards. Finally, in 1980, the central CCP legitimized the system and introduced it all over China, in order to improve the management of the rural economy, to furnish incentives for increasing productivity, and to raise peasant incomes. It was one of the first times in China's history that local peasants and cadres forced the government accept a system that was the opposite of established policy. The immediacy and detailed description of the impact of reform provided by this book are lacking in many ethnographic reports on contemporary China.

Fourth, this book provides a detailed description and a comprehensive analysis of social change and continuity, the changing status of women, marriage patterns, affinal relationships and the rapid growth of Christianity after the reform. The first two subjects are current topics in the existing anthropological literature on rural China, whereas the latter three are rare in recent literature. Therefore, the importance of the book lies in its contributions both to anthropological studies on rural China and to understanding the social history of China in the 20th century, as well.

4. THE LAYOUT OF THE BOOK

This book is a diachronic investigation of a lineage and a community in northern Anhui, and takes the early Ming Dynasty of the 14th century as its starting point. It will be divided into roughly three parts that will deal in turn with the pre-revolutionary period, the period of land reform and collectivization under Mao, and the period of de-collectivization after the death of Mao. This historical division is based on changes in the peasants' rights to the land: the right to use it and the right
to own it. In the pre-revolutionary period, both of these rights belonged completely to the private sector. In the early period after the revolution, the right to use land was taken over by cooperatives, but ownership was still in the private sector. After 1958 and the establishment of the People's Communes, both of these rights belonged to the collective. Since 1980, land use has been privatized, but ownership remains collective. All these changes in the relationship between peasants and the land took place as a result of the policies of the national government. Of the three periods, I will stress the most recent of them, after the establishment of the production responsibility system.

This book consists of eight chapters, arranged mainly in chronological order. In Chapter 1, I will give a general description of the region, including the population, geographical and ecological characteristics, and the social-economic composition of Xiao County and Lijialou. In Chapter 2, I will discuss the early history of the Li Lineage from its immigration to the north of China in 1369. Over 600 years, though wars, floods, droughts, and frequent epidemics, the Li Lineage has grown from two brothers to over 50,000 people living in hundreds of villages. In this section, I will make a comparison between the Guangdong lineage model, the north China lineage model and the lineage model of the lower Yangzi River area. I will also show how rituals of ancestor worship, the maintenance of genealogy, the attainment of office through the examination system and the development of affinal relationships with other lineages all provide integration, prosperity and continuity for the Li Lineage.

In Chapter 3, I will analyze the dynamics of the lineage by concentrating on social mobility and segmentation in Lijialou, and on households during the Republic period, from 1912 until 1949. I will focus on the processes of segmentation and patterns of social mobility and factors lying behind them, together with economic relations between Li and non-Li people, landlords and tenants, and on politics inside and outside the village.

Chapter 4 covers the entire period between 1949 and 1980, which can be summarized as the collectivization period. The People's Commune was not only a new administrative unit, but also a new political, economic and cultural institution, through which the CCP destroyed the old socio-economic structure and established a different one. By describing the memories of the villagers about this period, I will illustrate the interaction of the old traditional order and the new socialist order: how people managed to survive in difficult times using ties of kinship, affines, fictive kinship and other kinds of social networks which cut across the divisions of social class. I will also analyze the local politics concerns about national politics: the changes and continuities of old elites and new cadres, and complex relations between Li and non-Li people, and those inside the Li Lineage during the collective period.

In Chapter 5, I will deal with the period of de-collectivization. This includes an account of how the responsibility system was utilized as a way of resolving the economic crisis within the brigades, and how it at first obtained provincial and later obtained central government assent and became a system which spread all over China. I will also show what happened after the responsibility system and the breakup of the commune. On the level of local politics, with land in their hands, the peasants and
their lineages became more powerful and they began to influence local politics. On the other hand, local governments lost their power as a result of the weakening collective economy. All this allows a clear-cut comparison with Guangdong and Fujian, where the responsibility system was adopted later, and local cadres still retain strong control over the peasants. In the case of Fujian, through administrative means, cadres control bank investment, and in the case of Guangdong, cadres still control the business rights of companies run by the collective, and therefore they control the business ties of the peasants. After the adoption of the responsibility system, the increase in prosperity and the economic growth of Lijialou and the whole of Xiao County have been remarkable. There have been three significant economic improvements: first, irrigation under the leadership of the xiang government; second, a surge in scientific farming and mechanization; third the replacement of traditional crop production by a diversified economy. On the other hand, the traditional household mode of production has recovered. Thus, both the lineage and its branches are now strengthened. For instance, in Lijialou in 1991 there were twenty mutual aid groups in Lijialou, seventeen, or 85% of which, consisting of members of the same lineage.

In Chapter 6, by focusing on women as one of the points of contact between different lineages, I will deal with the changing position of women in a patrilineal society, and changes in marriage patterns throughout the three periods, namely the pre-revolutionary, collectivization and de-collectivization eras. My basic argument concerning changing marriage patterns is that the increasing value of female labor, together with demographic factors, has led to rapid inflation in marriage-related expenditures by grooms’ families, but not by those of brides. This has produced a major shift in the power relations between wifegivers and wifetakers in marriage negotiations. Whereas girls in Anhui used to be described by their parents as *pei qian huo*—goods on which you take a loss—this is now no longer the case. The difficulties which that many men face in finding a suitable partner locally have led some of them to try unconventional solutions, sometimes with unhappy results. With the relaxation of social controls that followed the breakup of the communes, a new breed of professional marriage broker has appeared, and they have made a considerable profit out of introducing women from Sichuan, Yunnan, Shanxi and Shaanxi to the area. The cost of marrying a woman from outside may be a third or a quarter of that of marrying a local girl, though the risks are also considerably greater. Finally, I suggest that with the rapid growth of the rural economy, fundamental changes are taking place not only in the relations between marriage partners and their respective families, but also between the generations.

In Chapter 7, I will deal with the new boom of Christianity in the village and in Xiao County as well. After the adoption of household production, though the family and lineage have increased in importance, change has also brought instability to the lives of those on the margins of the family and kinship structure. The economic reforms and the opening of markets have led to polarization. Those who have access to sufficient labor, technology and cash get rich, while those who have insufficient
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labor, or who have to look after the sick at home, live a poor life. In addition, the breakup of the commune has affected the welfare system in the rural areas. Medical payments have increased, so that many poor old people can not afford to make them. In this sense, these poor and sick people have more difficulties than they had during the collective period. It is against this background that Christianity has appeared and it attracts people, men and women, young and old, by helping to solve their problems. In this chapter, I will discuss the reasons for this rapid growth, preaching, the process of conversion, and the influence of Christianity on social life.

In Chapter 8, I will deal with how and why the traditional rituals and institutions revived after the breakup of the People's Commune. I will also analyze the nature of revived rituals and discuss the interaction of networks of affines and agnates. During the commune period, private economic activity was limited in scope and this was narrower than before the revolution. Compared with the kinship network in the commune period, the current network plays a more important role in agrarian production. In addition, as the market economy has developed, it has enlarged the range of economic activity among the peasants. The revived rituals between affines, practices inside the lineage or segment level ancestor cults and the rewriting the genealogy are symbolic statements of the renewed economic and social importance of the household and lineage. All these are expressed in the description of an occasion when hundreds of descendants of the Li Lineage staged a magnificent ritual to re-establish a stone monument for an ancestor who died 300 years ago. What makes the event more interesting is that the rite was carried out during the Socialist Education Campaign in the rural areas. I will also discuss the role of the anthropologist in all these events.

My general conclusion from this research is that through the history of the Li Lineage and Lijialou, we can find that in spite of social change, there is continuity in its structure. The peasants are not always passive and merely obedient to the rulers. They are actually very rational and pragmatic, and able to turn a situation to their own advantage. Therefore, they use their social, economic and political resources so that policies imposed from outside work in ways that are favorable to them. Furthermore, people have long memories, much longer than the life spans of most government policies. During their lives, they experience many changes of government policy, and develop different strategies to deal with them. Thus, the responsibility system, which at first began secretly among the peasants of Anhui in the 1970s, can be taken as a peasant strategy adopted to deal with the policy of collectivization forced on them by central government. Also, what in one way seems to be a re-construction of tradition is in another way a creative response to changing political and economic conditions. Having been well trained in the last 40 years, they will have increasing self-confidence to pursue their own interests.

Notes

1. In order to respect the privacy of my informants, I use false names for all the places.
below county including district, township and village, and for most of the characters in this book.

2. In the following chapters, I will use GMD and CCP referring the Nationalists and the Chinese Communist Party.

3. This developed in the countryside in the early 1980s by contracting collective resources, such as land, farm tools and other agricultural resources to individuals, households, or groups of households, together with the responsibility for delivering a certain amount of agricultural produce and for managing the resources.

4. Yang C. K was born in Guangzhou in 1910. He once worked in Lingnan University in Guangzhou between 1948 and 1950 as a sociologist, and later left China for America.

5. Using historical materials, they have mainly challenged four assumptions: (i) Corporately owned land or some other form of material property is essential to hold people together; (ii) Uxorilocal residence and nonagnatic adoption are strategies or adaptations that are confined to people near the bottom of the social hierarchy; (iii) Women have little to do with the formal structure of agnatic groups and women rarely have anything to say about the disposition of property; (iv) Ritual is a reflection of economic and / or political forces. Ancestral rites are thought to be derivative of preexisting corporate activities and are discussed as secondary epiphenomena, rather than as primary motivating forces, in the formation of kinship groups [Ebrey and Watson 1986: 275].

6. The theme of their investigation is “General Research on the Massive Movement in Modern Huabei Rural Society”. It was carried out by a group composed of Japanese and Chinese scholars, between 1986–1987, and 1988–1990, in the Huabei area that includes Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei, and Shandong.
Chapter 1 General Description of Xiao County and Lijialou

In this chapter, I will give a general account of the geography, ecology and history of Xiao County, and a description of social and economic life of Lijialou before and after the Liberation of 1949.

1. ON THE OLD ROUTE OF THE YELLOW RIVER

Xiao County belongs to Suxian Prefecture, Anhui Province. It is located in the northern part of the Huaibei Plain, which is a part of the North China Plain, bordering Jiangsu Province and Henan Province (Map 1-1, Map 1-2), with cultural traditions and history tracing back to the Xia Dynasty (c.21st-c.16th century B.C.). During the Xia Dynasty, the Xiao Kingdom was established here, but during the time of the Spring and Autumn Period (770 B.C. – 476 B.C.), the Kingdom was destroyed, and the area became part of the Song Kingdom. In the Qin Dynasty (221B.C. – 207 B.C.), the First Qin Emperor abolished principalities and established prefectures and counties. During this period, Xiao County was first established and it has continued as an administrative unit until the present. It includes ten districts (qu), three zhen and 74 xiang. Its total area is 1,861,119 km2 and its population was 987,000 in 1985. Of this, the population registered as living in agricultural areas was 941,586, or 95.1% of the total, whereas the population living in non-agricultural areas was only 45,873, or 4.9% of the total. The gross output value of industry and agriculture in 1985 was 48,425,000 yuan, and within this, the industrial output was 13,401,000 yuan, or 27.7% [Xiao Xian Difang Zhi Bianzhuan Weiyuanhui 1989: 1-5]. Before the Liberation, there was no industry and commerce on a large scale. The county township was only two kilometers in circumference, and its population was only 70,000 in 1948. Xiao County has therefore been a mainly agricultural area. According to the old records of Xiao County [Zhu 1948: 237; Shen 1814: 3], the customs of Xiao County were nearly the same as those of the Zoulu area, the old name of the present Shandong Province, which was Confucius’ home area. Duo gong jin, mu jia qiang, shang li yi, jian shang jia, mu jia qiang zun ru xue — “People were vigorous, engaged in farm work, set great store by rites, despised commerce, engaged in farming and followed Confucianism”.

The biggest commercial town in Xiao County is Hekou. Since it is one of the stations on the Longhai railway, which is the biggest railway running between the east and west in China, it became the most thriving urban center in Xiao County. Goods and merchants from east and west, north and south gather here. The Longhai railway was built by the French in 1914, and during the following years, people began to settle here.

The location of Xiao County is 33°56’ – 34°29’ north and 116°31’ – 117°12’ east. It has clearly demarcated seasons: in the spring, it gets warm quickly and the rainfall increases, and in the summer, it is extremely hot and it rains heavily. In the
autumn, the weather is variable: sometimes there is a drought and sometimes there is excessive rain. In the winter, it is cold and dry with little rain. January is the coldest month, with an average temperature of $-0.2\,^\circ\text{C}$. June is the hottest month, with an average temperature of $27.3\,^\circ\text{C}$ [Xiao Xian Difang Zhi Bianzhuan Weiyuanhui 1989: 1].

Agriculture, forestry and fruit planting developed early in Xiao County. People plant wheat as well as beans, sweet potatoes, maize and cotton. Among these crops, the cotton and wheat are of very good quality, so Xiao County is classified by the Chinese government as a cotton exporting county and a national base of wheat production. Among fruits, their grapes, yellow peaches and white peaches are famous all over China. Wine, garlic, canned asparagus and goat leather are exported abroad. Besides this, the county is rich in mineral resources, such as lime, marble, dolomite, quartz and coal, the latter of which is the most important. There are three county-run mines, in addition to six other mines which were formerly run by Xiao County. These were either taken over by Huaibei City or Anhui Province. The mines draw many surplus laborers and influence the lives of the people in the surrounding rural areas.

On the other hand, because of frequent chaos resulting from wars and the
flooding of the local rivers, this area has been characterized by a comparatively sparse population, low agricultural productivity, poor living conditions and frequent social unrest. This was exactly the situation that Pearl Buck described in her novel, *The Good Earth* [1954]. The circumstances were quite different in southern Anhui, which is a productive, fertile and prosperous area, as H. J. Beattie describes in her book on Tongcheng in the central Yangzi Valley [Beattie 1979].

The first set of difficulties came from problems with the rivers, and other natural disasters. Until the Han Dynasty, the Bianshui River flowed to the east through Xiao County. At the end of the Han Dynasty, the Yellow River joined the Bianshui River, making it silt up frequently. Later the Yellow River separated from
the Bianshui River and flowed to the north. During the Song Dynasty, in 1128, in order to defend the capital, Kaifeng, from the Mongolian armies, the government breached the banks of the Yellow River, which, as a result was redirected to the south and joined the Bianshui River again. From then on until 1855, over a period of 720 years, the Yellow River flowed through Xiao County, bursting its banks many times. After 1855, the Yellow River changed its course to the north, through Shandong Province once more, leaving the old course still visible. People call this Huanghe Gudao, which means “the old route of the Yellow River”, or Fei Huanghe which means “Waste of the Yellow River”\(^1\). Besides the Yellow River and the Bianshui River, there are thirteen other rivers flowing through Xiao County, and these have generally caused people more harm than good. For instance, during the 109 years from 1840 to 1949, there were four cases of rivers bursting their banks, eleven floods and four plagues of locusts. The ecology has had a considerable influence on Xiao County. The name Hekou, the biggest commercial town in Xiao County, refers to a place where the Yellow River burst its banks.

The second set of difficulties was the result of warfare. Xiao County is situated in the strategic center of China. It is 22 kilometers from Xuzhou and controls the road there (Map1-2). Before the Liberation, control of Xuzhou was often contested. Xiao County was most directly influenced by Xuzhou, and these links were strengthened by the building of the railway in the early years of the twentieth century. Feudal lords fighting for the throne had to control central China, including this area. There was even an idiom, zhu lu zhong yuan, which means “chasing the deer on the Central Plain” a reference to fighting among rivals for the throne. Because of its geographic position, warfare in the area was frequent from the earliest times. For instance, during the Han Dynasty, Liu Bang and Xiang Yu contended for hegemony here, which people still remember. During the Three Kingdoms’ Period, from 220 to 280, Xiao County was also strategically important. In 1853, the Taiping rebellion against the Qing government (1851-1864), the largest peasant movement in China’s history, made Nanjing its capital. Since Nanjing is only about 1,250 kilometers from Xiao County, this shocked the local gentry, and caused them to build fortifications for the villages. The following year, tens of thousands of Taiping troops came from the south and encamped there for some days, and then went north. The Li Lineage in Xiao County describes this event in their genealogy in detail, because they lost their previous genealogy in the resulting chaos. In 1856, about 6,000 troops of the Nian, another peasant uprising against the Qing Dynasty, came from the south and fought against the Qing army there.

After the foundation of the Republic of China, Xiao County was fought over by three governments, namely the Guomindang, the Hebei-Shandong Allied Force, and the Northwest Army. During the Northern Expedition from 1925-1927, the National Revolutionary Army defeated the northern warlords in Xuzhou. During the Anti-Japanese War from 1938 to 1945, Xiao County was divided among three different governments who ruled at the same time. The CCP controlled the southern part, the Guomindang controlled the northern part and the Japanese controlled the
General Description of Xiao County and Lijialou

county town. In the later civil war, between 1945 and 1949, Xiao County was divided between the CCP and the Guomindang governments. The decisive battle of Xuzhou in the Anti-Japanese War, and the Huaihai Campaign between the Guomindang and CCP (Nov.6, 1948-Jan.10, 1949) which was the second of the three decisive campaigns in the Chinese People’s War of Liberation, began and ended at Xiao County. All these elements made the local political and social situation extremely complicated, and tended to reduce the level of economic development.

The socialist revolution changed all this. The new government brought a stable society free from wars and bandits, which people had never experienced before. Under the guidance of the Eight Point Charter for Agriculture, which was put forward by Mao Zedong, the government of Xiao County led the people in a campaign to improve the poor agricultural conditions. Since the Liberation, they have built forty reservoirs and many channels and drainage ditches. The traditional lifestyle of “living off Heaven” has almost ceased.

2. THE GENERAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF LIJIALOU

Describing the general characteristics of Lijialou reminds me of my first visit to the village. It was Nov. 9th, 1989. The weather was typical of autumn: the air was fresh and dry, and the sky was a cloudless blue. Endless wheat fields spread to the horizon like a green carpet, and inlaid among them were brown patches of cotton fields in which the harvest had just finished. The grape, pear and peach trees, carefully arranged beside these, seemed to greet the passers by. In the vast plain only three villagers were plowing the fields with their cows. Walking along the road and looking around, I could feel only the silent endless earth, my feet sensing its ancient and familiar rhythm. All the villages were hidden by groves of elms and willows, and Lijialou was one of the numerous villages inside these groves (Photo 8).

It is located about 22 kilometers northwest of the headquarters of Xiao County. The name of Lijialou literally means “the village of the Li Lineage”, because like most of the villages in the county, the core of the village population consists of members of the same patrilineal descent group. Lijialou is a “natural village” belonging to the Yangzhuang Administrative Village, Lilou Xiang, Lujing District in Xiao County. Lijialou itself is divided into two sections corresponding to the division between production teams in the commune period. As Table 1-1 shows, there were altogether 78 households with 301 members in the village. As is shown in Map 1-3, the households occupy a corner of the vast plain, extending 300 meters from east to west and 250 meters from north to south.

About 600 years ago, at the beginning of the Ming Dynasty, on the orders of the emperor Zhu Yuanzhang, large-scale immigration took place throughout northern China. For fifty years, people were sent from Shanxi to areas including Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei, Henan, Jiangsu, and Anhui. According to the genealogy of Li Lineage, it was because of this that the founders of the Li Lineage moved from
Hongdong County in Shanxi Province to Tongshan County in Jiangsu Province. About 300 years ago, a group of lineage members moved to the present site of Lijialou.

At present the village is divided into five segments, the members of each of which previously lived together in the same “big yard” or compound. The segments are therefore called “yards” (yuan): East Yard, Back Yard, Front Yard, West Yard
and Northeast Yard. Each of the five segments or five yards occupies a separate area of the village. There are 65 households at present, with 257 members who belong to the Li Lineage. There are 13 other households with 44 members, who belong to other surnamed groups, the descendants of tenants who arrived before the revolution, and who are concentrated in their own area of the village. Before the Liberation in 1949, there were 36 households with 178 Li members accounting for 80.18% of the total population of Lijialou, and nine non-Li households with 44 members accounting for the other 19.82%.

Here the local term “yard” (yuan) should be noted. A yard is a social unit based on ideas of both consanguinity and territory, and it can be used to mean “lineage segment”. In the beginning, “Back Yard” or “Front Yard” was only a territorial term that referred to the position of the yard, but later the term also came to mean the people who lived there. Several generations passed, and the population became so large that some of people had to move out of their original yard. However, their “yard” membership did not change. So gradually, the term “yard” lost its original territorial meaning, and instead its meaning related to common patrilineal descent was strengthened.

There has been little written about the concept of “yard” in the Chinese literature. Recently, Hashimoto Michiru and Li Xiaohui [Hashimoto and Li 1990]
have written a paper about the “yard” in a village called Xiaogaojialou in Shandong Province. They argue that “yard” is essentially based on patrilineal consanguinity and residence in the same village. Membership in a lineage relates only to patrilineally related male members, whereas membership in a yard includes unmarried women of the same lineage and married women from different lineages. There are two differences between yards in Shandong and Anhui. Firstly, in the case of Xiaogaojialou, the yard indicates a descent group, including the founding ancestor, whereas in the case of Lijialou, the yard is a segment of a larger lineage, descended from a more recent ancestor. The second difference is that within the yard in Shandong, they have branch-yards, whereas in Lijialou, within the yard there are no branch-yards, only households. Whether the differences between the two kinds of yards is simply a variation or whether the concept is used differently in the two villages remains a question. We need more accounts from different areas so that we will be able to understand the concept better.

Agriculture has continued to dominate the economy of Lijialou. Before the Liberation, most of the villagers in Lijialou were engaged in agriculture. The total farmland owned by the villagers of Lijialou was 1,738 mu. The Li owned 1,717 mu of land, accounting for 98.79% of this, while non-Li households owned only 21 mu of land, accounting for the other 1.21%. The main crops were wheat, soybeans, sorghum, millet and cotton. Besides agriculture, some of the villagers were engaged in sideline manufacturing or business. For example, one household of Back Yard owned an oil mill. They hired laborers to extract the oil from soybeans and, because they could use the pressed soybean waste on their fields, they also got fertilizer for their agriculture. Another household of Front yard ran a distillery. They made spirits out of their surplus of grain. The Li seldom left the village in search of work in other places, partly because they had enough land to support themselves, and partly due to the under-development of industry in the area. All these factors tied the people to the land, and things changed little after the socialist revolution.

At present, excluding the residential area, the total land of Lijialou under cultivation, including orchards, is about 1,230 mu. This total has been reduced as a result of land reform and collectivization. However, the average holding per person of land contracted out to individual households is 2.3 mu, which is very large compared with the national average of 1.4 mu. Like other villages in the area, Lijialou produces annual crops of wheat, beans, maize, sweet potatoes and cotton. Cotton alone provides the villagers with more than 50% of their annual income. Besides these crops, the villagers in Lijialou also produce peaches and pears.

On the other hand, some of the villagers are involved in sideline production or in commerce. As Table 1-2 shows below, the 78 households in Lijialou can be divided into three categories: the purely agrarian household, those with additional rural sideline production, and those who have jobs in urban areas such mines or other units.

There are 58 purely agrarian households, accounting for 74.36% of the population. In 11 households, accounting for 14.1% of the population, some of the members have jobs in urban areas, although their families still remain in Lijialou.
Nine households, accounting for 11.54% of the population, are engaged in sideline production. Among these, five young men, three from Front Yard and two from East Yard, have bought tractors and minibus and are involved in transport. One household in East Yard runs a grocery store inside the village. The customers are mostly villagers in Lijialou who buy goods such as cigarettes, sugar, canned food and alcohol from the store. Another household in Front Yard operates a flourmill inside the village, which attracts customers from more than ten villages around. One household in Front Yard plants vegetables, because their son is attending college and they need more cash to pay for tuition and living expenses.

Besides these three categories of household, half of the young men work as carpenters on a part-time basis. They usually take part in a building team, consisting of carpenters and bricklayers from the nearby villages. Sometimes they work in the towns and cities nearby, such as the headquarters of Xiao County and Xuzhou, and sometimes they go further afield to places in Henan, Jiangsu and Shaanxi. All this sideline production and business began after the introduction of the responsibility system. However, compared with other provinces, the rate of sideline businesses here is still low. The higher-than-average per capita land holding is an essential factor holding the peasants back from engaging in commerce, and is one of the factors reducing the level of migration to urban areas. However, in order to better their lives, the younger generation, especially those with good education, have been actively taking extraordinary business risks, in the hope of eventual economic success.

With the implementation of the economic reforms, the family once more became a unit of production, and the motivation of the peasants was stimulated. They are not only actively engaged in sideline businesses, but also more actively engaged in scientific farming and investment in mechanization in order to raise their yield. As a result, they have increased their incomes and improved their standard of living. The average annual income per person in Lilou Xiang in the 1970s was less than 100 yuan; after 1980, it rose to about 180-190 yuan; in 1988 it stood at about 248 yuan, and in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Households</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pure Agrarian Household (subtotal)</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>74.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Sideline Production</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planting Vegetables</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mill</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling Newspapers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having Jobs in Urban Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miners</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadres</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1989 it reached about 422 yuan. The accountant for the village told me that, "At present, the average annual income per person in Lijialou is accounted as 450 yuan. However, the real income is much higher than this figure. As a clerk in this village, I do not want to report the real figure to the higher authorities, because the disadvantages of doing so outweigh the advantages. When the other xiang suffer natural disaster, the rich villages will have to provide a larger proportion of aid."

There are eighteen black and white TV sets in this village. Most of the households have bicycles and sewing machines. More than 95% of the households have built new brick and tiled houses to replace their pounded mud and thatch cottages. Two of them have even built new houses with two stories. Houses have become one of the main expressions of economic status, and a significant form of property which parents are expected to provide for their children. At present, without a new brick house with a wall around it, a young man is unable to get married. In 1991, the average income of a family was 4,000 yuan, while a common brick house consisting of three rooms with a surrounding wall cost nearly 10,000 yuan. Some of the parents even begin to build the houses for their sons while the sons are in their early teens. One reason is they have more cash in their hands when their sons are younger. The other reason is that they worry that the government will change the current policy and forbid them to build houses on their private plots.

3. EDUCATION IN XIAO COUNTY AND LIJIALOU

Since education has played an important part in the social history of the Li Lineage, I will give a brief description here of the changing system. Historically, China had a relatively democratic competitive examination system before the Xinghai Revolution of 1911. A poor boy from any family could fight his way to success in an official position on the basis of knowledge of the ancient classics and thereby raise his family from the depths of poverty. In other words, schooling functioned as a social ladder to raise people to higher status and bring people property. It was through this route that the Li Lineage became a locally influential lineage in Xiao County, because it produced a number of scholars and office-holders, with which I will deal in Chapter 2.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, especially after the Opium War (1840–1842), China began to realize that it needed new knowledge and new skills if it was to survive as a nation in the world, so its educational system began to accommodate the needs created by China's interaction with the West. As a result, China abolished the system of civil-service examinations in 1905. Under the new educational system, money became the primary factor determining whether a boy received the kind of education that led to social eminence. Government policy favored higher education, but it provided minimal resources to establish elementary schools. There were, as a result, few new schools at the village level; the best of those that did exist were located in the cities. Tuition and other costs of the new forms of schooling, moreover, were far more expensive than those of the old private schools.
No longer could a student get by with just the basic Confucian canon; the new schools required series of textbooks, reference works, libraries, and laboratory equipment. The cost of the new primary education, as a consequence, was about twice that of the old form of education, and secondary schools and universities cost four to five times as much. Thus, the poor were losing access to even those schools, and a modern education was becoming a luxury that was available to only the well-to-do [Eastman 1988: 200].

In the case of Xiao County, in the early twentieth century, there were two kinds of schools, yang xue tang or western style schools, including both ordinary schools and mission schools, and lao si shu, the old private schools. According to my informant from Lijialou, who used to be a student in the western style school run by the Catholic Church of Lujing, there were five priests teaching there, all of whom were Chinese. Some of the students were Catholics, and some were not. The tuition fees in the Catholic schools were the same as at the other schools. Compared with lao si shu, the Christian schools offered a richer curriculum, including singing, drawing, natural science and gymnastics.

The abolition of the examination system and high tuition fees in western schools led to a lower rate of education. According to an investigation in Xiao County in 1949, there were 84,878 children of school age, but only 11,180 (13%) of those had entered school [Zhu 1948: 237]. However, in the case of Lijialou, most of the boys attended the old private schools. Though the examination system was abolished, most of the parents in Lijialou still recognized the need for training in writing, reading and accounting. From the late Qing Dynasty, the village produced two xiu cai and five teachers in private schools. As Fig. 1-1 and Fig. 1-2 show, in Lijialou in 1949, of 222 people, 26 had attended school, all of whom were male members of the Li Lineage. The educated population accounted for 8.5% of the whole population of Lijialou and 30.8% of the Li. Most of them attended private schools. Here "educated" indicates those who had entered old style private schools or new style schools. Nineteen of the educated people had attended elementary school, five had attended middle school, and two had graduated from college. However, girls were excluded from school education and civil examinations.

In pre-Revolutionary China, when there was usually only one educated man to every two or three villages, why was the education rate of Lijialou so high? It was partly because of their wealth and their tradition of respect for education, and partly because of the function of the schools. Historically, the lao si shu had played an important role in the examination system, because it was the first step to becoming an office-holder, which was the aim of nearly all the men. Therefore, the traditional idea of education was du shu zuo guan, reading books in order to be an official. Since reading played such an important role in people's lives, it was respected, just as in the popular saying wan ban jie xia pin, wei you du shu gao which means that everything else is inferior to book learning. Though the examination system was abolished, education, to a certain extent, could still provide people with the chance to enter the government, go into urban occupations, and to become socially important. Thus, they
still took education seriously.

What did the students learn in the lao si shu? Villagers who had experienced it told me that the instruction was exclusively literary. Some informants from Lijialou, who had become sixth-grade pupils of a lao si shu told me that a portrait of Confucius was hung on the wall of the classroom. The method of teaching was that of previous centuries. The teacher made the pupils memorize the classics and made no effort to
elucidate their meaning or interpret them in terms of the problems of their own lives. Compared with the western schools, traditional private schools had very few courses, and the teachers taught only in Chinese. The texts used here were in two groups: first, the Si Shu or the "Four Books", namely, Da Xue, the Great Learning; Zhong Yong, the Doctrine of the Mean; Lun Yu, the Analects of Confucius; and Meng Zi, the Works of Mencius. The second group were the Wu Jing or "Five Classics", Shi Jing, the Book of Songs; Shi Ji, the Books of History; Yi Jing, the Books of Changes; Li Ji, the Book of Rites and Chun Qiu, the Spring and Autumn Annals. Usually the teacher taught a paragraph and then asked the students to recite it. There was no break and the students could not go home until they had memorized the paragraph. The text for the seventh or eighth grade students was The Book of Songs, and for the ninth grade students it was The Spring and Autumn Annals. In private school, they learned various Confucian ethical teachings on obedience, loyalty to their families, respect for elders, veneration of ancestors through appropriate sacrifice, and other moral principles that buttressed the family social system and its culture.

After the Liberation, the educational system changed. Nearly all the children of school age, male and female, Li and non-Li, could attend schools and receive education. There have been two big changes in education. Firstly, the percentage of educated people is higher than before the Liberation. As Figs. 1-1 and 1-2 show, there are all together 172 educated persons accounting for 57.14% of the whole population, whereas the uneducated accounted for only 11.71%. The second change is that girls began to attend school. According to the statistics, in April 1991, educated women accounted for 40.70% of the educated population. Three of them have graduated from high school, and one of them has graduated from college.

I have given a general description of the region, including the population, geographic and ecological characteristics, and the socio-economic composition of Xiao County and Lijialou. Xiao County has a long history, dating back to the Xia Dynasty. Though agriculture, forestry, fruit planting and mining developed early in Xiao County, productivity was low. Industry has never become well established in the county, and so it has mainly remained a source of agricultural products and minerals. On the other hand, because of its position near the rivers and in the central plain, natural disasters and the chaos of warfare happened frequently and characterized this area as one of sparse population, low agricultural productivity, poor living conditions and frequent social unrest.

All these elements made the local political and social situation extremely complicated, and tended to reduce the level of economic development, especially commercial and industrial development. This was the kind of situation in which descent groups became popular, because they could provide people with a stable social structure. On the other hand, because of the poor state of agriculture, people tried to achieve higher social status through climbing the ladder of the examination system. All these general historical, ecological and social factors form dynamic elements in the development of the Li Lineage, with which I will deal in the next chapter.
Notes

1. It is 4–10 meters wide, 4–9 meters deep, and 100–150 kilometers long, running from the west of Shangqiu to the north of Huaiyin.

2. This dealt with soil improvement, the rational application of fertilizer, water conservation, improved seed strains, scientific intensive planting, plant protection, field management and the improvement of farm implements.

3. This table is based on my statistical figures, up to the end of 1990. In fact, I finished my long-term fieldwork in April 1991, and went back Lijialou for short visits several times thereafter. The population in Lijialou is always changing slightly, because women move out or move in when they get married, babies are born and old people die. The reason I use the data for the end of 1990 is that some of my important informants were still alive then.

4. Non-Li here means those who are not members of the Li Lineage of Longxi Tang. In fact, some households in Lijiaou also have the surname, Li. However, they are different from the Li Lineage of Longxi Tang. For the sake of convenience, I have put these Li into the category of non-Li.

5. The data in the two figures are based partly on my own investigation in the village and partly on the formal records of the village by their own account.

6. Ten of the 172 educated people received their education before the Liberation.
Chapter 2 The Li Lineage in the Late Imperial Period between 1369 and 1911

According to the records of the Li Lineage and the informants of the Li Lineage, from 1369 until the present, despite continual wars, floods, droughts, and epidemics, the Li Lineage has grown from two brothers to over 50,000 people living in hundreds of villages, and has become one of the most influential lineages in Xiao County. In this chapter, I will discuss mainly the processes of formation and localization of the Li Lineage from the early Ming Dynasty to 1911, the end of the Qing Dynasty, and discuss how it was able to survive so many wars and natural disasters, and what held the members of the lineage together.

1. THE LI LINEAGE AND THREE TYPES OF CHINESE LINEAGE

To understand the Li Lineage better, first it is necessary to analyze it within the wider framework of a discussion of lineages throughout China. Lineage formation was neither a "natural" nor an "inevitable" process in Chinese society. It was one of a number of organizational tools [Rawski 1986: 271] and one of a number of responses to social change. Therefore, different social and economic situations will certainly lead to variations in lineage. Wolf [Summarized in Goody 1990: 60–61] divided Chinese lineages into three types, according to their organizational features (Table 2-1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2-1 Organizational Features and Types of Chinese Lineages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>No.</strong></td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: After J. Goody 1990:61

J. Goody mentioned that these three types are referred to as: (1) holding corporate property (corporation lineages); (2) holding halls and gravesites and; (3)
having a genealogy (unincorporated). Type 1 is represented in studies of the lineages of the New Territories of Hong Kong by Potter [1968], Baker [1968], and J. Watson [1975] respectively. Type 2 is also found in the southeast, in northern Taiwan [Ahern 1973], while Type 3 appeared in southern Jiangsu, studied by Fei Xiaotong [Goody 1990: 60–61].

Hazelton [1986], using old data from imperial China, has provided a similar classification. However in his classification, he stresses a new factor: the role of the lineage elite. Hazelton divides Chinese lineages into three types according to their organizational characteristics: the southern type, the lower Yangzi type, and the north and northwest type. Here I summarize Hazelton’s argument as follows.

Type 1 can be found in the lineages of Guangdong and Fujian [Freedman 1958; Potter 1970; Potter and Potter 1990]. It is suggested that corporately owned land, or some other form of material property, is essential to hold people together.

The second type can be found in the lower Yangzi area, studied by Beattie [1979], Ebrey [1983] and Hazelton [1986]. Ebrey has identified this kind of lineage as the “Tongcheng type” lineage. The identifying and distinguishing features of lower Yangzi lineages are (i) Rent from corporately held property was only sufficient to meet the expenses of the group’s annual cycle of rituals, ancestral halls and gravesites. This is the sharpest point of distinction from the southern type of lineage. In the latter, vast corporate landholding gave the lineage a powerful influence over member households. (ii) Inside lineages, office-holders and their immediate descendants bore almost sole responsibility for preparing various editions of lineage and branch genealogies. This existence of an elite core of activities is also a feature of the Tongcheng type [Hazelton 1986].

The third type can be found in studies of lineage in north China by Uchida [1953] and Naquin [1986] and in the northwest by Rawski [1986], and its main feature is that it is unincorporated. Accounts from these areas are marked by the absence of strong lineages: lineages in the north and northwest do not own ritual land or ancestral halls. Though they have graveyards and genealogies, the opening of graveyards and the compilation of genealogies do not appear to have resulted from other forms of collective action. Their main concerns were relationship and status, not resources. They were conscious of a collective identity based on descent that was expressed through genealogies, through adoption of common elements in generation names, and occasionally through common gravesites.

There are some similarities and differences between Wolf’s classification and that of Hazelton. First, both of them take the lineages of Guangdong and Fujian as typical of Type 1 lineages. In Wolf’s Type 2 lineages, the property held in common is limited to the ancestral hall and gravesite, whereas in Hazelton’s Type 2, the lineages hold a certain amount of corporate land. Here Wolf takes northern Taiwan as the model, while Hazelton takes the lower Yangzi area, such as Tongcheng in southern Anhui, as the model. For Type 3, Wolf takes southern Jiangsu in the lower Yangzi area as his model. That means that, although southern Anhui and southern Jiangsu belong to the same lower Yangzi area, Wolf and Hazelton classified them as
different types. It is worth comparing the two provinces, and finding out whether the
difference lies in the perspectives of the anthropologists or the actual structures of the
lineages.

In my view, Hazelton’s classification provides a more effective framework for
the purposes of this thesis. First, Hazelton’s three models all come from Mainland
China. Second, Wolf merely differentiates between lineages with common corporate
property and those without, whereas Hazelton not only differentiates between the
two, but in the former case he also differentiates between lineages with a higher degree
of incorporation, and those which possess only enough land to meet the cost of
ancestor worship. This provides us with a more dynamic framework. According to
Wolf’s classification, lineages in northern Anhui should belong to Type 1, the
Guangdong/ Fujian model, but in fact, there are distinct differences between them.
Third, Wolf stresses the factor of incorporation, whereas Hazelton stresses, in
addition, the prominent role played by the bureaucratic élite in lineage integration.

Lineages in northern Anhui, including the Li Lineage in this research, are
similar to the second type in Hazelton’s classification. The Li Lineage as a whole has
a genealogy, graveyards for the first three generations of ancestors, and a generation
naming system. In former times, each year all the segments got together in the village
where the first ancestor settled, to worship their ancestors. In order to meet the
expenses of the lineage’s annual cycle of rituals and of the maintenance of the
ancestral halls and graveyards, they established 104 mu of land as corporately held
property. Since this land was only used to pay for the rituals, it was not usually leased
out, and there were no tenancy relations between the lineage and individual
households. In the case of Guangdong, however, lineages were corporate groups.
They usually held a large amount of common land, and their members worked on it
as tenants. As Chen Hansheng reported, one-third of the cultivated land in
Guangdong was owned by lineages [Chen 1936: 35, 37]. Most of the peasants in
Guangdong lived as tenants on common land belonging to their lineages. The
common land provided the funds for ancestor worship, education, healing the sick,
supporting widows, and financing court cases. In the case of northern Anhui, lineages
only held a small amount of common land, established for ancestor worship. Most of
the property was concentrated in the hands of each of the segments or families rather
than being held by the whole lineage. Each time segmentation happened, the property
was divided accordingly. On the other hand, between the early seventeenth century
and the late Qing Dynasty, the Li Lineage produced a number of degree holders and
officials. These élite members formed affinal relationships with those of other
lineages of the same status, and became an influential group in the local area. At the
same time, these officials and their immediate descendants bore almost sole
responsibility for preparing various editions of lineage and branch genealogies, and
for carrying out annual rites of ancestor worship. The rituals of ancestor worship, the
maintenance of the genealogy, the achievement of office through the examination
system and the development of affinal relationships with other lineages all help us
understand the integration and continuity of the Li Lineage. In the next three
sections, I will examine the Li Lineage, focusing on its formation, localization and integration.

2. THE HONGDONG LEGEND: LARGE SCALE IMMIGRATION DURING THE MING DYNASTY

When I asked my villagers when and whence their ancestors came to the present site, they told me that their old home was in the village of Laozhuangzi, about 20 kilometers away, in Tongshan County, Jiangsu Province, but they did not know when they came. Then, I asked them when and whence their ancestors in Laozhuangzi came, and many people began to tell me the same long story.

Our old home was in the village of Laoguowo (i.e. crow’s nest), near a large Chinese scholarartree, in Hongdong County, Shanxi Province. Our ancestors told us that in the Ming Dynasty, our Li Lineage members left Shanxi for Laozhuangzi. It was said that the Ming government gave official notice that people who did not want to emigrate should gather under the large scholarartree in three days time. Hearing this news, many people came to the tree. Suddenly officers and soldiers surrounded the peasants and declared that the imperial edict stated that people under the scholarartree should be made to emigrate. Thus, our ancestors came. It was also said that all the people from Shanxi had two toenails on their little toes, and so do their descendants.

In fact, this tale is widespread not only in the Li Lineage, but also in other lineages in northern Anhui, the northern parts of Jiangsu, Henan, Hebei and Shandong as well. So, to what extent can we believe the tale? What really happened in the Ming Dynasty, and what was the relationship between forced immigration and the history of the Li Lineage? In order to find out the answers, three times I visited the old home of the Li Lineage at Laozhuangzi, where I interviewed the villagers and consulted the old genealogies. In addition, I visited the editors of the local records of Xiao County and Suxian Prefecture many times and consulted the previous literature [Li 1929; Ma 1933; Makino 1985: 31–41; Zhang 1988]. Li Jinghan showed that in Dongting Zhen, Ding County, Hebei Province, out of 529 lineages, 217 lineages or 75 surname groups came from Hongdong County. Ma Changshou pointed out, however, that Hongdong County was the place of departure and not necessarily the migrants’ place of domicile [Ma 1933]. The most resent study about the immigration from Hongdong was carried out by Zhang Yuji, Lin Zhongyuan and Zhang Qing [Zhang 1988]. Finally, I developed a better understanding of the historical background of the movement of the Li from Shanxi to Jiangsu, and I found that the formation and development of the Li lineage has been closely related to the state and the mainstream of China’s history across the centuries.

About 600 years ago, at the beginning of Ming Dynasty, on the order of Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang, large-scale immigration took place throughout northern
China. For fifty years, people were sent from 51 counties of Shanxi to areas further east, including Beijing, Hebei, Henan, Shandong, Jiangsu, Anhui, Hubei and Gansu [Zhang 1988: 3] (Map 2-1). The reason for this large-scale migration was that the region had become seriously underpopulated for three reasons. First, during the 90 years of the Yuan Dynasty under Mongolian control, peasant uprisings against the Yuan government happened frequently. The wars between the Han peasants and the Yuan armies lasted for sixteen years. At last Zhu Yuanzhang, one of the leaders of the peasant uprisings, won the war, and established the Ming Dynasty in Nanjing, with Han Chinese rather than foreign rulers.

Second, during the Yuan Dynasty, the Yellow River and Huai River flooded many times, with serious loss of life. Third, and most important, there were many droughts and plagues of locusts, as well as frequent epidemics. For instance, during the first twenty-five years of the Zhizheng Era (1341–1366), there were eight sightings of plagues of locusts in the Central Plains area. Histories recorded the miserable fact that min shi huang ren xiang shi, "peoples ate locusts, and human beings ate each other" [Zhang 1988: 9]. When the Ming Dynasty was established, in the vast central plains along the middle and lower reaches of Yellow River, parts of
Henan, Shandong, Hebei and Northern Anhui, long-dead corpses had formed a mountain, and residents were rarely seen. The area had become a depopulated wasteland. In order to consolidate its authority, the Ming government adopted a suggestion outlined in a memorial to the throne by Su Qi, Liu Jiugao, and Song Na to stimulate migration into the area, so that garrison troops or peasants could open up the wasteland and produce grain. This was a policy often pursued by the feudal rulers of China from the Han Dynasty. Then why did the government decide to make people from Shanxi migrate, but not those from other areas?

While the Central Plains suffered from wars, floods and droughts, the people in Shanxi had very good weather for their crops, and they had good harvests for years. So many refugees came to Shanxi from neighboring provinces that Shanxi quickly became densely populated. I have not found any records about the population before the large scale emigration. What I can provide here is a record after the emigration in 1382, the 14th year of the Hongwu Era, Zhu Yuanzhang’s reign. After the emigration, the population of Henan had increased to 1,891,000, and that of Hebei had increased to 1,893,000, whereas Shanxi’s population was 4,030,454, more than the sum of the other two provinces [Zhang 1988: 11]. The density of population was about 11.81 person per square kilometer in Henan, 9.96 in Hebei and 26.86 in Shanxi.

Of the five prefectures of Shanxi, Fengyang Prefecture was the largest and the most densely populated, having twenty-eight counties under its control, so the immigrants were mainly from this prefecture. Of the twenty-eight counties of Fengyang Prefecture, Hongdong County was the most populous. At the same time, it was an important communications center, which linked Hebei and Beijing in the north, Shandong and northern Anhui in the east, Henan and Hubei in the south, and Gansu in the west. For this reason, the Ming government established a migration agency at Guangji Temple in Hongdong County, both because Guangji Temple was very big, and because it was situated at the edge of the county, with a government staging post nearby. Before the migrants departed, they were called together in Guangji temple. As they left their hometown, they felt very sad, and they turned back again and again. In the distance, all they could see was the large scholar tree and the many crows’ nests which, for this reason, became the symbol of their home town [Zhang 1988]. Over the past 600 years, this sad story has been passed on from generation to generation. The descendants of the migrants have not forgotten it. Now, most people think that the crow’s nest, Laoguowo, was the name of their old village.

3. THE FIRST ANCESTOR AND THE SIX SENIOR SEGMENTS

As a result of the large scale immigration, a pair of brothers, Li Qing (A1) and Li He (A2), moved from Hongdong County in Shanxi Province to northern Jiangsu Province (Map 2-1, Fig. 2-13). According to the general genealogy of the Li Lineage, the two brothers arrived in 1369, the second year of the Hongwu era.
1st Generation (Han Dynasty 206 BC - AD 220)

Legend

Δ = Dead male
Λ = Living male
= Descent
= Siblingship

Subscript:

b = Back Yard
c = Front Yard
d = West Yard
e = Northeast Yard

Fig. 2-1 Genealogy of the Li
Informants told me that, at that time in order to prevent immigrants from returning to their home areas, the imperial edict ruled that people with the same surname could not live in the same village. Because of this imperial edict, many families were separated. However, some of the migrants changed their surnames in order to remain together. The two brothers of the Li Lineage did not change their surnames, so the two brothers were separated. Li Qing settled in the village of Laozhuangzi in Tongshan County, northwest of Xuzhou, while the younger one, Li He, settled in the village called Chaobaji, to the east of Xuzhou and about 35 kilometers from Li Qing’s village, in Feng County of Jiangsu Province. The descendants of Li Qing told me that, after 600 years, the descendants of each brother now form a lineage of over 50,000 people, with detailed genealogies, though the two lineages no longer have any formal contact with each other. The rest of this account concentrates on Li Qing and his descendants.

According to the general genealogy, Li Qing married two women, Tian and Yuan, who bore him six sons. These six sons founded six “fang” which were later called lao liu fang, the “six senior segments”. “Fang” means “room” and refers to collateral divisions within a kinship unit, from nuclear families in a household to segments or branches of a lineage. According to the latest version of the genealogy, compiled in 1983, there are more than 50,000 descendants of Li Qing who live in hundreds of villages around the north of Xiao County. Here I will show the location of the six senior segments in detail (Map 2-2).

**Zhang Fang**, “the first segment”: this has been the segment that flourished least over the last 600 years. Now it consists of only a few hundred people gathered in Jinganji, in Pei County of Jiangsu Province, 8 kilometers north of Laozhuangzi Village.

**Er Fang**, “the second segment” now consists of 8,000 people living in forty-eight villages. Some live around Xin Village in the west, 19 kilometers from Laozhuangzi; others in Yingshang in the west, 1.5 kilometers from Xin Village; more in Xiaojizi in the south, 1.5 kilometers from Xin Village; and the rest in Weishanhu in Shandong Province in the north, 28 kilometers from Laozhuangzi.

Li Qing’s third son died young, so he had no descendants.

**Si Fang**, “the fourth segment” consists of two villages north of Hekou. One is Changzhuang in the southwest, 5.5 kilometers from Xin Village. The other is Tangwoya, 5 kilometers south east of Changzhuang and 4 kilometers to the south of Xin Village.

**Wu Fang**, “the fifth segment” consists of about 9,000 people gathered in Laozhuangzi, Pinglou, Fuzhuang, Qianwangmiao, Houwangmiao, Hanlou and Lilou. All these villages are close, from two to three kilometers from each other. Laozhuangzi is a single lineage village consisting of Li lineage members, with over 1,000 people. Now only the fifth senior segment remains in Laozhuangzi. Since it remained where the first ancestor settled, and where he was buried, this segment played an important role in the rites of ancestor worship, which were carried out every year, and this made the fifth segment central to the lineage as a whole.
Liu Fang, "the sixth segment" is the most flourishing and influential segment, gathered in the southwest of Xiao County and the south of Hekou, and Lijialou is part of that segment. The flourishing state of the sixth segment illustrates the correlation between success on examinations with fertility and influence, which I will analyze in the next section.

During the 600 years between the 14th century and the present, many members of the senior segments moved out of the region, but the core of the segments remained on the original sites and gradually covered the whole of Xiao County.

There were two big movements in the history of the Li after they settled in
Laozhuangzi, Jiangsu. The first happened perhaps a few decades after they settled in Laozhuangzi. Members of the second, fourth and sixth segments moved to Xin Village, and the first segment moved to the north. My informants in Laozhuangzi, the descendants of the fifth segment, told me:

Many years after our lao tai ye, Li Qing, settled in Laozhuangzi, some of our members moved to Xin Village, in the southwest, about 20 kilometers away. The evidence for this movement is that the tomb of Yuan, the second wife, is to the southwest of Xin Village, whereas lao tai ye and his first wife were buried together in Laozhuangzi.

Why did the first, the second, the fourth, and the sixth segments move out? In rural China, before the Liberation, there were usually three kinds of situations under which segmentation took place. First, people who were rich or office-holders bought some land outside their previous village, so some of their agnates moved out and established a new branch there. Second, one of them got married, and went to live uxorilocally, and his descendants remained in his wife’s village. Third, people were too poor to stay in the area, so they just moved out. Which of the situations is related to the segmentation of the Li Lineage remains unknown.

4. LI YAoba (J2) AND THE SEVEN JUNIOR SEGMENTS

With more historical materials available, the segmentation of the seven junior segments provides us with a hint of what kind of role the examination system played in lineage development.

The “seven junior segments” are the descendants of K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, K6 and K7, all of whom were sons of Yaoba (J2). The seven sons founded the seven junior segments in 17th century. As Fig. 2-1 shows, the seven junior segments were descendants of B6, who was the founder of the sixth senior segment, so the seven junior segments are lower order segments within the six senior segments. The Li in Lijialou are descendants of K6, so they belong to the sixth junior segment of the sixth senior segment. In order to understand the ways in which these junior segments flourished, it is necessary to trace the history back from Yaoba (J2)’s father. According to the genealogy, J2’s father, Yike (I3), was sheng yuan of Dangshan County, west of Xiao County, a successful candidate in the local examination which qualified one to attend the prefecture school. He had eight sons: the eldest one was sheng yuan of Tongshan County, Xuzhou Prefecture, and the second son was Yaoba (J2). Yaoba (J2) was a xiang sheng, a student at an official local school run by the prefecture or county during the period of the imperial examination system. According to the stone monument in front of his grave, he used to be an office-holder, shao ci shi, “a deputy governor of the prefecture” and he died in the early Qing Dynasty. As an office-holder, Yaoba (J2) had seven sons, all of whom were students at the official local school. Three of them were xiang sheng, and four of them were tai xue sheng,
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students at the Imperial College in the capital, Beijing. During the last 300 years, the seven junior segments have grown to include at least 5,000 descendants living in twenty-four villages around Lijialou, in an area all together 24 kilometers long and 18 kilometers wide. Here I will describe K1, K2, K3, K4, K5, K6 and K7, and the seven junior segments in detail (Fig. 2-1, Map 2-2).

Zhang fang, “the first segment”: Yue (K1), the founder was xiang sheng. His descendants live in Yangzhuang Village, in the northwest of Lijialou 4.5 kilometers away.

Xiao er fang, “second junior segment”: Wei (K2), the founder, was tai xue sheng. His descendants are in the village of Xulou 19 kilometers northwest of Lijialou.

Xiao san fang, “third junior segment”: Song (K3), the founder was xiang sheng. His descendants are in five villages to the southwest of Lijialou: East Lilou and West Lilou, eight or nine kilometers away, Anlou 5 kilometers away, Dongzhuang twelve kilometers away and Lijiudian, 10 kilometers away.

Xiao si fang, “fourth junior segment”: Qiao (K4), the founder was xiang sheng. His descendants are in three villages near each other: Yaozhuang, six kilometers to the northwest; Bianzhuang, seven kilometers to the west; and Laozhuang, five kilometers to the west.

Xiao wu fang, “fifth junior segment”: Qi (K5), the founder was tai xue sheng. His descendants are in four villages, Lilou, in the east, 1.5 kilometers from Lijialou, Yuewan, in the east, 1.6 kilometers from Lijialou, Duange, in the northeast, 3 kilometers away, and Dumazhuang.

Xiao liu fang, “sixth junior segment”: Lin (K6), the founder was tai xue sheng. His descendants are clustered in Lijialou, to the southwest 21 kilometers from Laozhuangzi.

Xiao qi fang, “seventh junior segment”: Cong (K7), tai xue sheng was the founder. His descendants are in Zhaozhuang Village, 0.5 km from Yangzhuang Village where the eldest segment lives. The seventh junior segment moved from Yangzhuang during the “O” generation, i.e. the 15th generation.

Whence and when did these seven segments move? Assuming a generation length of 30 years, it can be supposed that Yaoba (J2) separated around 1630 from his father’s village, a place called Chaojiialou, to Lijialou or Lilou. I cannot find Chaojiialou on the local maps of Xiao County. It may be situated in Dangshan County, west of Xiao County. As evidence for this, Yaoba (J2)’s father Yike (I3) was a sheng yuan of Dangshan County, and his tomb was situated in Chaojiialou. It is a custom here that when people die, their tombs are placed near their village. There is no evidence to show in which of the two villages, Lijialou or Lilou, Yaoba (J2) settled, however, because his tomb and those of his sons are situated between Lijialou in which the sixth segment lives and Lilou in which the fifth segment lives.

From the brief description above, we can see the factor of political success in the process of the expansion of the seven junior segments. I will deal with the examination system in a later section of this chapter.
5. INTEGRATION AND CONTINUITY OF THE LI LINEAGE

(1) Localization of the Li Lineage

Li is one of the three biggest surname groups in Xiao County. There is a popular saying that goes nan zhang bei li yao li wu, “Zhang gathers in the south of Xiao County, Li gathers in the north and Wu gathers in the middle”. In fact, this was true in the past and it is still largely true at present. Here Zhang, Li and Wu are surname groups, and they have been the most influential groups in Xiao County. My informant, Wu Yizhen, a cadre of Xiao County, told me that according to the census of 1990, Zhang, Li and Wu account for 76% of the population of Xiao County, which is 987,000. Of these, the Zhang account for 28%; the Wu for 23%; and the Li for 25%. That is to say, there are 187,530 Li, and within the Li surnamed group, 50,000 are members of the Li Lineage discussed here, accounting for 26.66% of the entire Li population.

Each of the three surname groups includes members of several lineages. This is reflected in another popular saying in this local area: “Nine Zhang, two Wu, eighteen Li”: there are nine Zhang lineages, two Wu lineages and eighteen Li lineages. What differentiate the lineages within the same surname group are the ancestors, the generation-poems and the genealogy. When I asked members of the Wu why Li, Wu and Zhang had such large populations in this area, they explained that there might be two reasons. First, according to the county records of the Qing Dynasty, Li, Wu and Zhang, the big lineages, had office holders in the capital. Their agnates remained in Xiao County. Their professional success provided their relatives with the motivation to unite as a lineage. The Zhang lived to the south, while the Wu and Li lived to the north, and it was said that they did not get on very well. Second, it was also because the three families had many servants who later changed their original surnames to those of their masters.

Within the surname group there is another kind of group, people that share the same tang hao. In China, most of the lineages have their tang hao, “name of the hall”. In some large lineages, every segment has its own tang hao. For example, the Wu lineage in Xiao County has two tang hao groups, called Yan Ling and Men Lin. People with the same tang hao must share the same surname, but they are not necessarily members of the same lineage. For instance, the tang hao of the Li, whom I am studying, is Longxi Tang. In Xiao County, besides this Li Lineage, some other Li lineages which have different ancestors or who use different generation naming systems also claim to be Longxi Tang. The tang hao group is a wider category than the lineage, but narrower than the surname group. Even now, people still use their hall names on the occasions of ancestor worship or a wedding. They stick a strip of paper to every piece of furniture for the dowry, on which they write inscriptions such as “Ji nian ji yue ji ri longxi tang feng” which means “Sealed by Longxi Tang on the lucky day, lucky month and lucky year”. Longxi was the name of an old prefecture and it is currently the name of a county in Gansu Province, in the west, about 1,200
kilometers from Xiao County. The genealogy records that the Li Lineage originated in Longxi during the Han Dynasty, later moved to Xian in Shaanxi Province, and later still to Shanxi Province. One informant in Laozhuangzi told me that he had been to Longxi, where there were many mountains, but had not been able find the old home of the lineage. He went there for other reasons, and not just to search for the origin of the Li Lineage. Besides him, no other members of the Li in this area have ever been there. In the recent ancestor ritual carried out in April 1991, they used Longxi Shi Jia as their hall name. Shi Jia means an aristocratic family that has received some privilege or other from the state, which it can pass on as a hereditary right to its descendants. They used it because their collateral ancestor in the 32nd generation was the famous founder of the Tang Dynasty.

(2) Graveyards, land, the ancestors’ hall, and the annual cycle of rites

In the northern corner of Laozhuangzi village are located the tombs of the first ancestor Li Qing, his five sons and ten grandsons. Li Qing had six sons, but the third one died young and he was not buried there. As is shown on Fig. 2-2, the tombs are arranged from southwest to northeast, a style that people call xie zi shang chao, “leading the children in procession to court”. The tomb of Li Qing is located to the southwest, with those of his five sons following behind to the northeast, and the ten grandsons following Li Qing to the south of their fathers. This pattern of arranging burials reflects the principles of descent and seniority. At the same time, by showing the process of segmentation, this pattern also stresses the unity of the group and its common origin, and symbolizes group identity.

![Fig. 2-2 Tomb Style of the First Ancestor and His Descendants](image)

According to a record in the genealogy, in 1772, the 36th year of Qianlong’s reign, Li Qing’s descendants established a stone monument, a stone table, an incense burner, two vases, two door pillars and four prism pillars in front of the tombs.

About 200 meters to the north of the tombs of Li Qing and his sons and grandsons, there used to be an ancestral hall which was called in local terms jia tang.
miao. It began to be used as the local government school after the land reform. Until then, the tablets and genealogies were displayed there. Each year, the Li gathered in Laozhuangzi once a year to worship their ancestors and consult other lineages about various affairs during the Qingming Festival. When I visited Laozhuangzi, many old and middle-aged men told me:

Before the revolution, a large gathering called zuo zhuang hui would be held in Laozhuangzi each year. All the lineage segments, whether near or far, sent their representatives to Laozhuangzi to worship their ancestors.
An informant in Laozhuangzi aged over 60 told me:
The representatives carried offerings in sedans decorated with flags of places from far away. In a vast space covering several mu, dozens of pigs and sheep were sacrificed to the ancestors. People stood in rows with the senior generations in front and the junior generations behind. Usually actors would come to put on a show. It was wonderful.

On this kind of occasion, the representatives from each of the villages were males who were degree holders, influential and had high social status. In case of Lijialou, the people usually sent Li Xiangdong (Qa3), a xiu cai scholar who had passed the imperial examination, to the meeting as their representative. After he died in the 1930s, nobody attended the meeting on behalf of Liji'alou. During Qingming, the whole lineage assembled for the annual ritual, and had a group feast afterwards. This was one of ways to overcome the distance between them. According to the genealogy of the 1930s, in order to meet the expenses for the group's annual cycle of rituals, ancestral halls and gravesites, the Li lineage had set aside 104 mu of land as corporately held property. The local term for it is lin di —“tomb land”. The people who took care of the tombs were members of other surnamed groups, as was common in the case of the tombs of rich lineages in this area.

Beside the ancestors' tombs and the annual ancestor worship of the whole lineage, each segment maintained its own ancestors' tombs, held corporate land and carried out own annual worship separately. The seven junior segments are a case in point. The tombs of the founders of the seven junior segments and their father, Yaoba (J2), are located to the northeast of Lijialou, about 1.5 kilometers away. There were three tombstones, several stone tables and stone lions moved to other villages during the commune period. One of the tombstones was re-established in 1948 by the descendants of Yaoba from all of the seven junior segments. People over 70 years old still remember the event. In order to maintain the worship of their ancestors, the seven junior segments held a total of 20 mu of corporate tomb land, which was worked by their own members. When I asked the reason for this, a man aged over 70 in Lijialou told me that “Our ancestor thought that it was a waste to leave our own corporate land to people with other surnames to look after.”

As a result, three members of the seven junior segments came to be in charge of the 20 mu of tomb land. They were Fanxiu (Ra1) of Lijialou who tilled 8 mu, Li
Leshu of "Q" generation in Lilou, a member of the fifth junior segment who tilled 10 mu, and Li Xianshu of "P" generation, from the third little segment, who tilled two mu. When the Qing Ming festival occurred on April 5th, they cooked for the people who visited the tombs and provided ancestral sacrifices out of the income.

Beside group ancestor worship, each household carried out its own ancestor worship by visiting the tombs three times a year, on Qing Ming, the lunar July 15th and lunar October 15th. These latter two days are called gui jie in local terms, which means "ghost festival". Although July 15th is also the Buddhist All Soul's Feast and in China October 15th is generally the Buddhist Lantern festival, they are never considered Buddhist celebrations in this area.

In most parts of the Han areas of China, there are usually three kinds of ancestor worship. The first is conducted before plaques or tablets at home; the second is performed at the graves outside; and the third one is performed in the ancestors' hall. All these three styles of ancestor worship can be found in one area at the same time. What is worth pointing out is that, in the villages of the Li lineage and other lineages in this area, even before the Liberation, there were no tablets at home, and ancestor worship was only conducted in the ancestors’ hall or at gravesites, but not at home. However, it was traditional here to put the immediate ancestors’ photos or pictures in the central room.

(3) Genealogy

Besides the residential concentration of agnates and annual ancestor worship, compilation and recompilation of their genealogy was another method and strategy by which the Li Lineage remained organized and united as a descent group. People continued to record their genealogy because knowledge of their remote forebears could enhance their prestige, especially in the case of those lineages that had produced numerous famous scholars and officials, like the Li Lineage.

The practice of compiling genealogies has existed in China for a long time. The earliest record can be found in Shi Ji, in which the author, Sima Qian, pointed out that he had read many genealogies from the time of Huang Di (2550BC). During the Zhou Dynasty, the practice of compiling genealogies was limited to emperors and dukes, and the genealogy itself was kept by the government. Since they were considered evidence in matters such as the inheritance of titles, and the control of land and slaves, genealogies were regarded rather like holy scripture throughout the country. After the Qin Dynasty, since the system of enfeoffing was abolished, it led to some changes in the practice of compiling genealogies. During the Han Dynasty, besides the families of emperors and dukes, families who had office-holders or wealth, and even commoner families, began to compile their genealogies. In the Wei (220–265) Jin (265–420), and Northern and Southern Dynasties (420–589), family status was most important, and was taken into account not only for the purpose of selecting officials but also for the purpose of arranging marriages [Chen 1984: 14]. From that time, compiling genealogies became popular throughout China.
The Li lineage in the Late Imperial Period

The Li genealogical record has an immensely long history, taking the Han Dynasty as its starting point. According to their genealogy, the first ancestor was Li Zhou, born during the Han Dynasty, who had two sons called Ziqian and Mingqian. From Li Zhou to the most recent generation, the Li lineage has lasted for on uninterrupted 110 generations. The two brothers, Li Qing (A1) and Li He (A2), who moved from Shanxi to Jiangsu were ancestors in the 90th generation. After they settled in Jiangsu, a new genealogy was started, in which they were taken to be the new first generation of ancestors.

According to the prefaces of the genealogies, the Li recompiled their general genealogies five times all together, over the last twenty generations, during the period of more than 500 years from the early Ming Dynasty until the revolution in 1949. The first time was in 1605, the 33rd year of the Wanli Era in the Ming Dynasty. The genealogy included the first ancestor of the Li Lineage in the early Han Dynasty. Though little of this version survives, information from it was included in the later genealogies. The second time was in about 1680 during the Kangxi Reign. Jimin (J1), a fourth degree office holder and the head of a prefecture, was in charge of the recompilation of the whole genealogy. The third time was in 1772, the 36th year of Qianlong's reign. One of the 11th, or “K” generation, called Li Huo, was in charge of this general genealogy. He was a jin shi, a successful candidate in the highest imperial examination. There were two big innovations at this time. First, for the first time surnames and the residence of the marital family, and the statuses of sons-in-law began to be recorded in the genealogy. This was very important and reflected the importance of affinal relationships during the Qing Dynasty. Second, the lineage members began to use ban hang zi, generation words, to regulate their generations. The generation words were as follows:

*Xing Yu Chuan Ji Guang, Zhao Xian Luo Fan Xiang.*
*Ling De Wei Chui Ybu, ein Zhao Nian Xian Yang.*

They mean “Prospering breed, handing down and carrying on extensively. Initiating constitution, the capital becomes prosperous and propitious. Virtues are blessings. Encouraged by the Emperor, keep recognition in mind.” They form a kind of wu jue, a four-line poem with five characters to a line. Most of my informants could recite the generation words, but they were unable to explain the meaning. This poem is in the classical style. Until then, brothers, cousins, even as far as third cousins were given names using Chinese characters with a common radical. Each of these twenty characters is the name taken by one generation. The tenth or “J” generation was selected to be the first row, and the eleventh or “K” generation would take the character “Yu”. Now, in Lijialou, the youngest generation takes “De” as part of their name, so they call themselves the “De” generation. When these twenty characters are used up, members of a lineage have to decide on another twenty characters to be used in future generations. In fact, the Li in this area have done this already, in 1983, with which I will deal in Chapter 7. This naming system not only created an easily
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recognizable generational hierarchy within the group, but also strengthened the unity of the group by providing criteria to recognize agnates from other groups of people with the same surname. They also established a stone monument, a stone table, an incense burner, two vases, two door pillars and four prism pillars in front of the tombs, as noted earlier in this chapter.

The fourth time the genealogy was edited was in 1886, in Xin Village, 19 kilometers from Laozhuangzi, where part of the second and sixth old segments gathered. A ba gong zi sheng yuan was in charge of the recompilation. According to the general genealogy in about 1853, Taiping armies came from Nanjing to the north, and stayed in this area for seven days, burning many villages and killing people wherever they went. The people all ran away in a hurry, and could not take the genealogy with them. As a result, they lost it in the chaos. After searching for some years, they eventually recovered it, and edited it for the fourth time. The fifth time the genealogy was edited must have been in the early 1930s. The general genealogy, consisting of dozens of volumes, is still kept in Laozhuangzi.

There were two common characteristics of the five recompilations. First, elite degree holders or office holders played an important part. The organizer of the second recompilation was Jimin (H1), who was si pin zhiju, a fourth degree office holder and head of a prefecture. The organizer of the third recompilation was jin shi, a successful candidate in the highest imperial examination. Second, the members of the sixth senior segment organized three of the five recompilations. The two organizers with offices and scholarly degrees were from the sixth segment. Perhaps we can say from this evidence that the sixth senior segment produced more degree holders and office holders than the other senior segments. We can also hypothesize that there is a correlation between success and motivation to compile genealogies.

As is hinted in the generation poem, the Li Lineage has produced emperors during its history, and this is one of the things that makes the Li proud of their family. According to the genealogy, the Li produced a great emperor who established the most prosperous dynasty in Chinese history. One of the ancestors in the 25th generation of descendants of Li Zhou was Zonglun, who had four sons. The third one was Yunhe, the direct ancestor of the Li who were my informants. The fourth one was Yihe, and one of his descendants in the 32nd generation was Li Yuan, who established the Tang Dynasty. This may be the reason that Li sometimes use as their tang hao or “hall name” Longxi shil’ia, as mentioned above.

In the genealogies, the Li Lineage recorded their first ancestors, transfers of residence or burial grounds, the name patterns they used to distinguish themselves, ancestor halls, tomb land which was set aside for ancestor worship, and the names of the various offices or degrees of their agnates and affines. During the last 600 years, many Li members achieved office through the examination system. People believed that the glory of the ancestors determined that of their descendants. By recalling the virtues of their ancestors, people not only encouraged their own descendants to continue their efforts but also benefited themselves. For example, by showing the long history of their lineage and the virtues of their ancestors, people could raise their
status in the local area, and this could be of benefit in the case of marriage. Beside their genealogy, Li members shared many legends about their ancestors and their group as well. All these strengthened their identity and prestige.

What should be mentioned here is that among the hundreds of villages, only two villages, Laozhuangzi and Houlizhuang in Xin Village, kept the genealogies. Other villages could not record their genealogies freely. All newborn babies had to be registered in Laozhuangzi. When ancestor worship was conducted during the Qingming Festival, representatives from these villages went to Laozhuangzi to take part in the rite, and at the same time reported changes in their own population in the last year, including marriages and births. Once their names were consented to by the committee, the new members could be recorded in the genealogy. By having his name included in the genealogy in this way, a male could become a real member of the Li Lineage. Otherwise, he would not be recognized as a member of the Li Lineage, even if he were his father's legitimate son. By maintaining its control over membership, the Li Lineage was able to continue for over six centuries.

(4) The bureaucratic and literate elite as leaders and promoters of the Li Lineage

During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the Li Lineage produced a number of members of the elite. These men not only played a leading part among their kinsmen, but also provided their kinsmen with a motive for staying together, because of the state political system.

The close relationship between the elite leadership and descent group formation is an important phenomenon in Chinese history, and it has begun to attract the attention of historians and anthropologists [Ebrey and Watson 1986]. In the Later Han, men were often praised for using their income to aid their kinsmen or neighbors. In the early years of the Song Dynasty (960–1279), the government set out to make examination success the chief criterion in its selection of civil servants. From then on, the hereditary elite of the past, commonly referred to as the “aristocratic families” or “medieval oligarchy,” gave way to a class of professional bureaucrats. To this end, the government strove to make education widely accessible by developing an empire-wide network of public and private schools. On the other hand, the Song political system was hardly “open”. Family background could have a much greater impact upon political success, because of two factors, “protection” and imperial favor. During the Song, the practice of “protection” permitted a restricted number of people to gain access to the civil service merely by virtue of their personal ties to ranking scholar-officials. Under ordinary circumstances, priority in the “protection” scheme was related to the wu ju, “five grades of mourning”. Sons and grandsons tended to benefit most frequently [Davis 1986: 62–66].

The examination system and protection institution lasted until the Qing Dynasty. According to the genealogy, during this period, many male members of the Li Lineage went to schools, took part in the civil or military examinations and became office-holders. At the same time, they established alliances with office-holders from
other lineages. The seven junior segments founded in about 1630 provide a rather
typical example of a family that rose by the examination system to high office, gained
wealth and honor, and became rich and influential. From this evidence, we can say
undoubtedly that the Li Lineage belonged to the gentry.

Here it is necessary to give an outline of the relationship between social strata
and scholarly degrees. Many scholars have thought of the gentry as a distinct social
group separated from the peasantry. However, Fei Xiaotong defined “gentry” as a
social and economic class [1953: 6] including scholars, office holders and retired
officers. It is a social stratum between senior officials and common people. The
gentry had recognized political, economic, and social privileges and powers and led a
special mode of life. During the later dynasties, the gentry’s position and
qualifications became formalized. A system of examination and degrees controlled by
the government determined membership in the gentry group [Chow 1966: 278].
Membership in the Chinese gentry was not hereditary; entrance had to be gained by
each member, and there was a considerable degree of social mobility as people moved
in and out of the group.

The gentry was differentiated into two subgroups within a community, the
lower and upper gentry, as Fig. 2–3 shows. The entrance examination that qualified
one for gentry status was called tong shi, meaning the examination of junior students
who were called tong sheng. Commoners, either rich or poor, could take part in the
examination. However, the underprivileged “mean people”, such as slaves, members
of prostitute and entertainer families, and the whole boating population were not
allowed to participate. Those who passed the tong shi became sheng yuan. The term
sheng yuan means government students, who were admitted through examinations to
each district or prefecture school. These sheng yuan could compete for advancement
through participation in provincial examinations. The graduates of the first
provincial examination would get the degree of gong sheng, “imperial student” and the

Fig. 2-3 Simplified Diagram of Gentry Groups
graduates of all the provincial examinations would get the degree of *ju ren*. The successful candidates of the highest imperial examination would get the degree of *jin shi*.

Besides the examination, there was another way of becoming a member of the gentry, through the purchase of an academic title, but the "irregular" route led only to an inferior academic title and lesser senior offices. For instance, the title of *jian sheng* was purchased, but the titles *gong sheng, ju ren* and *jin shi* had to be gained through examination, and government officials were selected only from the holders of these higher academic degrees. *Sheng yuan* were already members of the gentry, but they could not step into officialdom directly. The upper layer of the gentry was much smaller than the lower layer and was closely linked with officialdom. People who belonged to the upper gentry could be appointed directly to educational offices or sometimes to administrative offices. For example, some of the *ju ren* could become county magistrates and first-class assistant prefecture magistrates, and others county or prefecture directors of students [Chang 1955: 25].

According to the limited genealogies I have gathered, during about 60 years in the 18th century, the sixth senior segment alone produced sixteen *sheng yuan*; eleven *gong sheng*; one *ju ren*; six *jin shi*; and one *si pin zhi fu*, a prefecture official of fourth degree, among the 119 descendants between the ninth and tenth generations. Among the seven founders of the seven junior segments, four of the founders were *gong sheng* including the founder of the sixth segment including Lijialou. Besides, between 1370 and 1670, 82 women in ten different generations were recorded in the genealogy. Four of them were *gong ren*, and 27 of them were *gong ren*. *Gong ren* are one kind of *ming ju*, "women who have titles conferred by the court". During the Ming and Qing dynasties, the court conferred *gong ren* status on wives of fourth degree officials and *da da gong ren* status on grandmothers of fourth degree officials. On the other hand, most of their marriage partners were from families who had held the titles of *jin shi, ju ren, gong sheng, sheng yuan* or of office holders like *zhi zhou*, prefecture magistrates or *zhi xian*, county magistrates. There is no doubt that during the eighteenth century, the sixth junior segments must have been locally influential.

Similar cases can be found in the study about Tongcheng in south of Anhui in lower Yangzi area by Beattie. "At some stage, but certainly by the end of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century, Chang Ying's forebears were starting to acquire some education, and in 1568 his great-grandfather, Chang Chun (1549–1612), finally became a *chin-shih*, later rising to provincial office. His uncle and his father's cousin both held high office, the latter as president of the Board of Punishments and of the Board of War in the early Ching, and by the mid-seventeenth century the family must have been held in considerable esteem locally" [Beattie 1979: 3]. Like most of the influential lineages in other places, especially those in the lower Yangzi area, through the examination system, Li Lineage members became degree-holders and office-holders, and achieved a position among the well-to-do. They had some influence locally, and therefore they were able to control most of the land in the local area.
The political success of the Li Lineage was also reflected in the network they established with other members of the local elite through marriage. As mentioned above, women who had married out began to be recorded in the genealogy in 1772, the 36th year of Qianlong's reign, and perhaps the period of greatest prosperity for the Li. For the first time, surnames and the residences of marital families, and the statuses of sons-in-law began to be recorded in the genealogy. It is perhaps to be expected that the compilers would record women only in relation to matters of great significance to the lineage [Hazelton 1986: 158]. In the tenth generation, 110 daughters and their marital families were recorded, and forty-seven of the sons-in-law were degree holders or office holders. Among them, there were two xiang sheng, one ju ren, five jian sheng, twelve gong sheng, nineteen sheng yuan, seven office-holders in counties, prefectures and provinces such as Shandong, Henan and Jiangbei (the old name for the present Jiangsu Province). The remaining sixty-three sons-in-law just had their surnames recorded. There is no record or other evidence that the Li had a charitable estate with which to guarantee the security of widows and orphans. Rather, the increase in the attention being paid to women in the genealogy reflects a growing concern with the lineage's external relations. The pattern of Li marriages may provide us with some indication that they used to maintain a wide network of contacts with the local elite, and this in turn may reflect their influence in this area.

Having degree holders and office holders had four implications. First, the elite would be able to have the economic ability and social influence to keep their agnates together. Second, their political success would provide their agnates with the incentives to unite. Although the limited historical records contain no references to how Li members received “protection”, they did have many agnates and affines with high degrees and office. There is no doubt that the Li during the Ming and Qing Dynasties did receive some “protection” or privileges. Third, it strengthened the group identity, that lasted longer than its political influence or wealth. Fourth, their political success provided them with chances to enlarge their network of contacts with other local elites, which in turn would strengthen the cohesion of the Li Lineage.

In this chapter, I have analyzed the localization and continuity of the Li Lineage during the late imperial period. During the six centuries, twenty generations passed, and the Li Lineage expanded to over 50,000 people, and from one village to dozens of villages.

First, it is obvious that in two aspects the Li Lineage shares some similarities with those of the lower Yangzi area. In other words, this case study provides evidence of the existence of the Lower Yangzi River type of lineage [Beattie 1979; Ebrey 1983; Hazelton 1986] in the Yellow River area of northern Anhui, as well. The features of the lower Yangzi lineages are marked by the following: (i) Rent from corporately held land was only used to meet the expense of the group’s annual cycle of rituals. (ii) Inside the lineages, officials and their immediate descendants bore almost sole responsibility for the various affairs of their group.

We have seen that the Li Lineage as a whole maintained their genealogy, the
graveyards of the first three generations of ancestors and a generation naming system. Each year, all the segments got together in the village where the first ancestor had settled, to worship their ancestors. In order to meet the expenses of the lineage's annual cycle of rituals and of the maintenance of ancestral halls and graveyards, they established 104 mu of land as their corporately held property. Most of the property was concentrated in the hands of each of the households, rather than the whole lineage. On the other hand, a bureaucratic and literate elite played an important role in the lineage. Between the early seventeenth century and the late Qing Dynasty, a number of degree holders and officials came out of the Li Lineage. These officials and their immediate descendants bore almost sole responsibility for preparing various editions of lineage and branch genealogies, and for carrying out the annual rites of ancestor worship.

Second, the Li Lineage offers a contrast to the well-studied Guangdong and Fujian lineages. In the case of the Li, the lineage did not hold much land in common as a way of keeping its members under its control. However, as a historical fact, the Li Lineage was able to continue. This was achieved through residential concentration, ancestor worship, maintaining their genealogy and generation naming system, and continued emphasis on order inside the lineage, and its unity and identity. The case study of the Li Lineage shows that corporate landed property was not the primary goal of the Chinese lineage, but a secondary phenomenon, deriving from political and economic activities.

Third, the continuity of the Li Lineage was a historic result of the underlying motives and commitment that caused people to maintain and support its organization, both the elite and the commoners. What incentives lay behind these efforts? The prestige and protection of the lineage, coming from its degree and office holders, provided the motivation for people to strengthen their descent group ties. In addition, these elite members formed affinal relationships with those of other lineages of the same status, and they became an influential group in the local area. In turn, establishing ties with higher level élites became another of the motives for maintaining the unity of the lineage.

Notes

1. In the 1950s and 1960s, the production teams of Lijialou had a serious problem getting grass to feed the livestock, and the villagers were short of grass for fuel for cooking, as well. People of Lijialou went to Laozhuangzi where there were many lakes full of reeds, to get the grass back to Lijialou. Three men of Lijialou who went to Laozhuangzi at that time told me that the villagers of Laozhuangzi treated them kindly, providing them with food and giving them lodging in their own homes because they were the same Li.

2. Su Qi was the administrator of Zhengzhou Prefecture. Liu Jiugao was a high officer of the Ministry of Revenue. Song Na was a member of the Imperial College, the highest education administration in feudal China.

3. I made this figure of the genealogy, based on the general genealogy, the latest version of
the genealogy compiled in 1983 and statistical data I gathered myself up until April 1991. In order to show the relations among the Li lineage clearly, I use some marks after the name of Li. For instance, in the case of Li Fanzhen (Rb7), the first, capital letter, “R” indicates the generation that he belongs to, the second, small letter, “b” means yard, and the number refers to the seniority within the generation.

4. *Lao tai ye* in Chinese usually means your (my, his, etc.) father. Sometimes, it means an elderly gentleman as well. Here people use it as an honorific title for their ancestors from a long time ago.

5. The result of the census of 1990 was not published yet when I left Xiao County in April 1991. The total number of the population used here was published in 1985.

6. I found several versions of this generation poem, and each of them is slightly different from the next. I have asked some informants from different segments, and none of them can explain the poem very well. The meanings here are offered by me.
Chapter 3  Social Change during the Republican Period between 1912 and 1949

In Chapter 2, I mainly dealt with the organization and continuity of the Li Lineage during the late imperial period. We have seen that the development of the Li in this period was greatly affected by the old political system of the state. Entering the 20th century, great changes took place in China. "First was the foreign menace, which had produced four wars and four defeats for China through naval firepower on the coast... To this fact of foreign power was added the second undeniable fact of foreign skill, not only at war-making but in all the practical arts and technology of life" [Fairbank 1992: 226–227]. The fault of the Qing Dynasty lay in the superficiality of its administration, its constitutional inability to be a modern central government. Many reforms were carried out to change all this. For instance, the classical examination was abolished entirely in 1905. “This great turning point stopped production of the degree-holder, the gentry class” [Fairbank 1992: 243]. In relation to the economy, though it had been placed against its will in a weaker position, China increased its openness to foreign contact. The increasing trade with foreign countries changed the old self-contained economy. For instance in 1915, the French built the Longhai Railway, the biggest railway running between the east and west in China. Since the railway goes through the northern part of Xiao County, a village called Hekou became one of the stations on it. During the following years, peasants from nearby villages, and people from Henan and Shanxi began to settle here, and turned the village into the most flourishing urban center in Xiao County. Merchants from north and south, east and west gathered here. Hekou not only distributed goods from all parts of China, but also brought together the agricultural products of Xiao County for transport to other parts of the country. All this stimulated local economic development. The invasion by the Japanese between 1937 and 1945 caused economic stagnation and led to skyrocketing prices in agricultural products. This serious situation was worsened during the three years of civil wars. In these turbulent periods, how did the peasants arrange their lives, and what were the strategies they used to adapt themselves to the new situation? In Chapter 3, I want to look at the dynamics of the lineage by concentrating on segmentation and households in Lijialou, and the dynamics of the local economy and political structure during the Republican period from 1912 until 1949.

1. THE FIVE YARDS IN LIJIALOU

As I have described in Chapter 2, among the seven junior segments, the sixth segment is the smallest. All of its members are clustered in one village—Lijialou, whereas each of the other segments covers several villages. Lijialou consists of five yards. As I often heard from my informants in the early period of my fieldwork, the fang tou ("segmentary distance") between Back Yard, Front Yard and West Yard is
slight. East Yard is more distant, and Northeast Yard is much further away still.

As Fig. 2-1, the genealogy of the Li, shows, members of East Yard are N2’s
descendants; members of Back Yard, Front Yard and West Yard are descendants of
N3, so these three yards are the closest in terms of descent; members of Northeast
Yard are N7’s descendants.

East Yard is the most senior segment of the five. Members of East Yard are
gathered in the east part of Lijialou. The founder of East Yard was Li Guangyan (N
2). In 1938, the population of East Yard was 28, and by 1949, it had risen to 33. The
eight households owned about 145 mu of land, and the average was 4.4 mu. Most of
the households in East Yard were engaged in farming. When they talk about East
Yard’s history, people still mention its members, Li Xu (Pa2) and his son, Li
Xiandong (Qa3). They were both xiu cai, people who had passed the imperial
examination at the county level in the late Qing Dynasty. People said that Li
Xiandong (Qa3) was not an office-holder, but just a poor xiu cai teaching in a
traditional private school. At that time, a xiu cai wore a special uniform and cap. In
the old days, when people went to court, generally they had to kowtow in front of the
officers, but the xiu cai did not have to kowtow. Thus, the two xiu cai enjoyed high
social status in the local area and played an important role in the Li Lineage. Li
Xiandong (Qa3) had a son who received a very good education, and became a senior
officer in the army of the Zhili Warlord in the north. After the Japanese invasion, the
people of Lijialou lost contact with him.

Northeast Yard was the most junior and the smallest segment among the five.
It is also the most distant in terms of genealogy from the other four. My informants
from Northeast Yard told me that they used to be the richest segment in Lijialou in
the “N” generation, in the late Qing Dynasty. N7 not only owned a great deal of land,
but also engaged in commercial business, and had high prestige in the local area. In
villages up to dozens of kilometers away, people would recognize N7 in his cart by his
fur-lined jacket. However, when the yard was at the peak of its prosperity, an
accident happened. A poor man from another village came to Lijialou and died in
front of Northeast Yard. Later, the agnates of the dead man said that people from
Northeast Yard had killed him. The people of Northeast Yard did not acknowledge
blame, but they were worried that if the dead man’s agnates spread the rumor around
it would ruin their prestige, so Northeast Yard gave them a sum of money to keep
them quiet. They did not foresee that the agnates of the dead man would take this as
evidence, and bring a lawsuit against Northeast Yard in the Xiao County court. As
a result, Northeast Yard lost the case and had to pay heavy compensation. They said
that from then on the fortunes of the Northeast Yard went downhill. Though they
were not so rich, they were active in local politics. For instance, Luokai (Qe15) used
to be the secretary of the head of the xiang. Another feature of Northeast Yard is the
low fertility of its population. There were only eleven people belonging to two
households in this yard in 1950. Altogether, they owned 30 mu of land.

I will deal with the most closely related segments, Back Yard, Front Yard and
West Yard, in the following section.
(1) Building up the family fortunes—Guangying (N3) and his three sons

At present, the oldest ancestor the members of the three yards can remember is Guangying (N3). Between Yaoba (J2) to Guangying (N3) there is a span of four generations or about 120 years. There is little information about this period. As to Guangying (N3), he was just an ordinary peasant. Many men over 35 in Lijialou know the legend of how Guangying (N3) led his three sons to build up their family fortunes. They are very proud of this hardworking ancestor. Villagers often told me that:

He was a very diligent man. In the harvesting period in autumn, in order to get up early before dawn, Guangying (N3) never slept inside the room but outside on a cart without a quilt. One day, a servant woke up at midnight and was worried that his landlord would catch cold, so he found a leather coat to cover Guangying (N3). Covered by the warm coat, Guangying (N3) woke up late. When he found the leather coat over him, he got very angry with the servant, and told everyone that he would not allow it to happen again.

Guangying (N3) was not only hardworking, but also very thrifty. One day, he took some servants to thresh beans. He told the servants to take off their shoes. The servants said that they would hurt their feet. Guangying (N3) said: “You don’t know how to manage things well. If your feet get hurt, they will recover. If the shoes are torn they will not recover again”. Then he took off his shoes, and began to thresh the beans.

In this way, Guangying (N3) and his three sons accumulated a large family property with over 3,600 mu of land and nine draught animals. The division of work within the family was like this: the elder brother, Zhaotan (Ob5), was in charge of domestic matters at home, and the second brother, Zhaokun (Oc6), was in charge of relations with the outside. The youngest brother, Zhaoxi (Od7), died early.

(2) Fen jia—house divided

It was in about 1870 that Guangying (N3) divided his property among his three sons, Zhaotan (Ob5), Zhaokun (Oc6) and Zhaoxi (Od7), who founded Back Yard, Front yard and West yard respectively. Zhaotan (Ob5), the founder of Back Yard, got 600 mu of land and tile-roofed houses from his father. Zhaokun (Oc6) received 580 mu of land. Unlike Back Yard and West Yard, Front Yard did not inherit tile-roofed brick houses, because a member of the yard had committed a crime. As a punishment, the people of the yard continued to live in straw houses until the land reform. People also told me that, since Zhaoxi (Od7) was the youngest son, he got 600 mu of better land than that of his two brothers, and a tile-roofed brick house. Generally, Ob5, Oc6 and Od7 got equal amounts of land and other property from their father Guangying (N3). In terms of resources, the three yards had an approximately equal start.
From the division of the house in about 1870 until 1949, nearly 80 years elapsed, during which each of the yards developed in different ways. This can be understood against the historical background of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when the examination system was abolished in China. This event greatly affected peasant life because the cycle of education, office and property was broken. People who owned plenty of land lost their old means of increasing their property, since, during the Ming and Qing dynasties, education and office were the way to increase honor and wealth. In other words, education and the old examination system were the mechanisms of class mobility. How, then, did people adapt themselves to these new circumstances? What was social mobility like? The three yards show us different processes and strategies.

2. SOCIAL MOBILITY IN THE THREE YARDS AFTER THE ABOLITION OF THE EXAMINATION SYSTEM

(1) Back Yard

Zhaotan (Ob5), the founder of Back Yard got 600 mu of land and tile-roofed houses from his father in 1870. Zhaotan's (Ob5) only son, Xianbiao (Pb3) had two sons, Panting (Qb4) and Jingting (Qb5). The two sons each got 300 mu of land from their father, Xianbiao (Pb3). In the late 1930s, Panting (Qb4) divided his 300 mu of land, his titled-roofed house and his oil mill among his four sons. Fanzhen (Rb7), Pingfan (Rb9) and Difan (Rb10) each received 50 mu of land near Lijialou, whereas the second son, Fanyin (Rb8) received 150 mu of land in the village of Quanlou, 7 kilometers away. The reason that Fanyin (Rb8) moved out, it was said, was that his wife could not get along with the other wives and everyone hoped that he would leave. Fanyin (Rb8) lived in Quanlou until the land reform. At the same time, Jingting (Qb5) divided his land among his four sons and kept only 30 mu for himself. The first, second and the fourth son got equal 40 mu shares of land in Lijialou, while the third son got 150 mu of land outside Lijialou.

All the people of Back Yard lived in the same big yard. A yard usually had a tall wall around it, and everything—living rooms, kitchen, mill, and livestock shed—were inside. As Fig. 3-1 shows, Qb4, Qb5 and their descendants lived in the same compound yard, consisting of two smaller yards, an inside yard and an outside yard. It had a tall wall around it. Inside the yard, there were twenty-five bedrooms, five kitchen rooms, two mills, six livestock sheds, and two toilets for the women. The men’s toilet was located outside the yard. It was a typical traditional self-contained building and it gives some idea of the wealth and power of the Li Lineage before it split.

In 1950, there were ten households in Back Yard: three of them were extended families, two of them were stem families, and two of them were nuclear families. The other three were widows’ families. In the inside yard, in the east, lived Panting (Qb4), his sons and some of Jingting’s (Qb5) sons. In the outside yard, to the west of the
inside yard, lived Jingting (Qb5) and his other sons. The people here perceive east as superior to west, so Qb4, the elder brother, lived in the inside yard in the east. This principle has been strictly observed, to the present day. Since the house was too crowded, they built another three rooms for Rb9 outside the yard. The people of Back Yard called the three rooms the “west house”. Each of the nuclear families making up a separate unit had a degree of independence, and controlled two or three rooms of their own. However, the families still maintained very strong ties with each other, and retained loyalty of each family to the “yard”.

This living style lasted until 1958, when the people's communes were established, and a militarization campaign was carried out here. According to the campaign policy, small scale villages should be merged into big villages. As a result, all the people in Lijialou moved to a village called Yangzhuang, 1.2 kilometers away. Several months later, when the villagers came back, some of their houses had been demolished. For example, the seven rooms to the north of the inside yard had been demolished in order to build wells for the commune, and some of the bricks had been
used to build a school. After this, therefore, the people of Back Yard gradually moved out of the yard.

When the house was divided, Fanzhen (Rb7) got 40 mu of land. In addition he received an oil mill which his grandfather, Xianbiao (PB3), had left to his father Panting (Qb4). They hired labor to extract the oil from soybeans. My informant told me that their ancestor ran the oil mill in order to get fertilizer for agriculture, because they could use pressed soybean waste on their fields. For the peasants, fertilizer was extremely important to farming. This oil mill was collectivized after the revolution. When land reform began in 1950, Fanzhen (Rb6) was classified as a rich middle peasant, for two reasons. First, his family was a large, extended one, including two married sons. Altogether there were eight people in his family. Second, he had many hands to do the farm work, including a niu er duo, a "bull ear"—a person who exchanged his labor for access to draught animals. Fanzhen (Rb7)'s bull ear was a man called Liang, living a village one kilometer away. When the busy season came, Liang came to help Fanzhen (Rb7), and in return Fanzhen (Rb7) lent him bulls and horses. Fanyin (Rb8) moved to Quanlou, where he owned 150 mu of land. After 20 years, he had sold nearly all his land. Some members of back yard told me:

Fanyin (Rb8) was not good at farming. Besides, since he lost two wives, he spent a lot of money on funerals. He also had several daughters that cost him a lot to get married. When land reform began, he only had a few mu of land and a two-room house left. He was classified as a po lan di zhu, a run-down landlord. This was because he had sold just the usufruct of his land and not the actual title; in other words, if he had had the money he could have redeemed his land.

As for Pingfan (Rb9), when land reform began, he owned more than 40 mu of land and was classified as a rich peasant. His children were too young to work, and so he was short of labor. He had a servant working in his home who was named Ding Guangying, from Shandong. Difan (Rb10) who, like his brother Rb9, owned more than 40 mu, was also classified as a rich peasant for the same reason. He had a servant in his family, whose son was Pingfan's (Rb9) servant. Therefore, among the four brothers, Fanzhen (Rb7), Fanyin (Rb8), Pingfan (Rb9) and Difan (Rb10), though there was little differentiation in terms of class, there was a degree of polarization in terms of wealth, with Fanyin (Rb8) becoming the poorest one, largely because of the cost of his wives' funerals and his daughters' marriages.

As for Back Yard as a whole, I will summarize briefly the 80 years that elapsed between the formation of the yard in 1870 and the land reform of 1950. First, all of the households in Back Yard had been engaged in agriculture. In 1870, they had 580 mu of land, and in 1950, they still had 547 mu of land, about 220 mu of which was pawned. Over 80 years, therefore, the amount of land did not change much, but the population grew a lot. A female informant, Rc18's wife, who got married in 1938, told me that at that time there were thirty-four people in Back Yard. Twenty-two of
them were Panting’s (Qb4) descendants, while twelve were descendants of Jingting (Qb5). In 1950, altogether there were forty-three people in the Yard. They were well organized by their leaders, and the men worked hard on the farm while the women worked very hard at weaving. Thus, at the time of the land reform, they still had a self-sufficient and relatively comfortable life. Second, during those eighty years, four men held the position of chief of Back Yard: Zhaotan (Ob5), Xianbiao (Pb3), Panting (Qb4) and Fanzhen (Rb7). All of them organized the yard well. Under their control, every household or every person followed the family rules strictly. They were proud of the fact that in their Back Yard, nobody stole and nobody was engaged in a commercial business. Both they themselves and the people in the other yards said Back Yard consisted of “typical proper peasants”. Third, during those 80 years there was little social mobility or differentiation inside Back Yard.

(2) Front Yard

The founder of Front Yard, Zhaokun (Oc6) had two sons, Xianyin (Pc4) and Xianzhao (Pc5). The two brothers were both very well educated; however, they both failed to pass the civil service examination. Therefore, both of them taught at private schools in the countryside. People said that neither Xianyin (Pc4) nor Xianzhao (Pc5) were any good at farming, and they both took up opium smoking, and subsequently lost most of their land.

When we look back at the history of Front Yard between 1870 and 1950, there is one person who should not be ignored, Yunting (Qc6). He was a strong, tall man. He began to practice martial arts, namely archery, horsemanship and fencing, in childhood. An old man of Front Yard told me that:

Yunting (Qc6) wanted to have a good grasp of martial arts and pass the wu ju —the imperial military examination. At that time, the road from the north end of Lijialou to Zhangtulou Village, about 2 kilometers long, was his racecourse. Everyday, people could see him riding a horse along the road.

The military imperial examination began in the Tang Dynasty, and it was modeled on the civil imperial examination system. It was abolished in 1901, because new weapons became more important, and the old military skills became out dated. So, like many people, Yunting (Qc6) lost his chance to pass the military examination. However, he continued his practice of the martial arts. After the abolition of the imperial military system, practicing martial arts became for some people a method of defending one’s village and family. In Yunting’s (Qc6) case, though, he came in touch with bandits and sometimes joined them. All the members of the Li Lineage felt that it was shameful, and that it would ruin the Li’s reputation. Yunting’ s (Qc6) stepmother and his uncle, Xianzhao (Pc5), discussed the matter and decided to kill him. An old man of Front Yard told me:
One day, they called him to the central room of Front Yard to apologize for his crime. Entering the yard, Yunting (Qc6) saw his uncle seated in the central room, so he threw himself to his knees to kowtow. At this time, the chief servant, called Zhang Beidou, who was waiting on the side, suddenly hit Yunting (Qc6) with a stick from behind. Yunting (Qc6) died, leaving a wife, daughter and son. After that, Yunting’s (Qc6) wife went back to her natal home. Her relatives took the case to court. As a result, Yunting’s (Qc6) stepmother compensated his wife 100 mu of land, and his uncle, Xianzhao (Pc5), gave 50 mu in compensation.  

This event was explained as one of the factors that produced polarization in Front Yard. Land began to be concentrated in the hands of a few people, whereas most of the members were short of land. As a result, one member of Front Yard, Fansen (Qc12) had to work for Yuting (Qd14) of West Yard as a san ling, a long-term employee in charge of carrying water. Yuting (Qd14) paid him money, and provided him with food and two sets of clothes. As it turned out, Fansen (Qc12) died young of overwork.  

To summarize, when the three yards divided in 1870, Front Yard got 580 mu of land. By 1950, the amount of land was reduced to about 360 mu, 150 mu of which belonged to Rc15. The other 210 mu of land belonged to 64 other people, the average holding being about 3.5 mu. Thus, when the land reform took place, most of them were given the class status of poor peasants. There was only one landlord (Qc6’s grandson) and there were no rich peasants in Front Yard. Front Yard illustrates the process through which a whole yard can become impoverished, while at the same time there is polarization within it. There were four main factors to be considered. First, Yunting’s (Qc6) death and the court case led to an unequal distribution of land in Front Yard. Land began to be concentrated in the hands of a few people, whereas most of the members were short of land. Second, there was loss of land because of opium addiction. In addition, with the abolition of the imperial examination system, the well-educated men lost a chance to gain office, and to increase their honor and wealth. They had to teach in the countryside and it was impossible to make profit out of teaching. They were not good at agriculture, so they had difficulty even being self-sufficient. The last reason was population increase. During the 80 years period, the number of people in Front Yard had increased from one to 64.  

(3) West Yard  

Xianzhao (Pd6) was the founder of West Yard. Over his lifetime, he was married twice. The first wife bore him a son called Heting (Qd13). When his first wife died, he married again; that wife bore him another son called Yuting (Qd14). Heting (Qd13)’s grandson, Xiangjia (Sd54), told me that:
At that time, West Yard owned two pieces of land. One was around Lijialou, and the other was in the village of Quanlou, 7 kilometers away. When West Yard divided, the stepmother gave Heting (Qd13) the land in the village of Quanlou, and left her own son, Yuting (Qd14), good land in Lijialou. That's why my grandfather Heting (Qd13) had to leave Lijialou for Quanlou. We moved back to Lijialou in 1970.

When Heting (Qd13) left Lijialou, Yuting (Qd14) and his two sons remained in Lijialou. The whole of West Yard belonged to Yuting (Qd14). It was a very big yard with a high wall, as well as guards armed with guns. West Yard was the richest and most successful of the five Yards. When the land reform began, Yuting (Qd14) and his two sons had acquired 500 mu of land. In fact, there was another piece of property, about 200 mu of land, in Quanlou Village. People of the nearby villages were its tenants, and among them were some Li members from other segments. Yuting (Qd14) also had many long-term hired hands and short-term hired hands, who were refugees from famine-stricken areas. They lived in poor houses around the outside of West Yard that Yuting (Qd14) built for them. Among the long-term hired hands, there was one member of Front Yard. In 1938, there were eight people in West Yard, and in 1949, there were 20 people. Since the average landholding was about 30 mu, the three families were all classified as landlords. Yuting (Qd14) not only engaged in agriculture, but also trade and business. He also owned a big pear orchard, which was not only the biggest in Lijialou, but was also very famous throughout the whole xiang. He had many lipizi to take care of his orchard. Lipizi were tenants who took over the pear trees from the owners and looked after the cultivation and harvesting, and after the harvest, they shared the pears with the owners. Luokai (Qe 15), a member of Northeast Yard, was one of Yuting (Qd14)'s lipizi. Pears from Yuting's (Qd14) orchard were sold in Nanjing and Shanghai. In addition, Yuting (Qd14) also had a distillery in Lijialou. Since West Yard was the richest, he had a surplus of grain left for making spirits that he could then sell at a higher price than he could get for the grain. At the same time, his second son, Rd31, ran a shop in the township of Hekou, 11 kilometers away. In other words, West Yard increased their property in two ways, through commerce and agriculture, and thus became wealthier more quickly than the other yards.

Though Yuting (Qd14) was the richest man in the village, and was very famous in the xiang, people did not like him. Since he was a cripple, people called him liu que zi, the sixth cripple. Most of the Li did not like him, first because he never helped other members of different yards, despised the poor members of the Li Lineage, and treated them in the same way as non-Li. Second, people disliked his morals, an example of which was his ill treatment of his maid. People outside the village disliked him because he took advantage of his wealth and affinal relationships with members of the county government, and often brought lawsuits against other people. Heting (Qd13) and Yuting (Qd14) shared the same father but had different mothers. The father of Qd13's mother and her brother were governors of Xiao County. Before the
Liberation, people without money and connections could not hope to win in court, and so going to court meant losing a family fortune. People were all afraid of Yuting for this reason. He thus represented a new kind of commercial entrepreneur in the area, seeing everything in terms of moneymaking, utterly ruthless, willing to exploit his kinsmen in the new capitalist economy, and protecting himself and his enterprises through his political contacts and his bodyguards. Some people who offended him came to a bad end. People in Lijialou still remember a man called Luokai (Qe15) of northeast yard. Fanshan (Rc20) told me the terrible story:

Before the revolution, Luokai (Qe15) was a secretary of Yili Xiang. One day, some people came from Yanyi Test Factory in Xiao County. They wanted to buy pears in Yili Xiang and sell them in Shanghai to establish a Xiao County trademark. Luokai (Qe15) went to Yuting (Qd14) and asked to buy his pears, because his pear orchard was the biggest one around. However, Yuting (Qd14) refused his request. Luokai (Qe15) got angry at this and tried to pick a quarrel. Some days later, while Yuting’s wife and his son were picking pears in their pear orchard, Luokai (Qe15) passed by and interfered with them in some way. It ended by their having a fight in the orchard, during which Yuting’s wife was beaten.

That midnight, several people hired by Yuting came secretly to Luokai’s home, with guns and swords. They caught Luokai and made two holes in his shoulders. Then they put lamp wick in the holes and burned them. After that, they cut off Luokai’s hands, ears, feet and finally his head. This was during the Japanese occupation, and many of the villagers had run away, so nobody could do anything about it.

By killing his rival in this particularly brutal way, Yuting (Qd14) was demonstrating his influence, and telling people like Luokai, who might dare to offend him, that they, too, would come to a bad end. It was a political performance. The reasons that he dared to kill Luokai (Qe15) were threefold. He was rich and influential; he had close relationships with the county government through his affines; and though Luokai (Qe15), who was killed, was a government secretary, he was from Northeast Yard, which was a small segment, and in terms of descent the most distant from the other four yards. That was why Yuting (Qd14) was not worried that the other segments would get together against him. However, he did forget another rule of Chinese society—that good will be eventually be rewarded with good, and evil with evil. He did not foresee that Luokai’s sons would take violent revenge by burning him, 20 years later, during the Cultural Revolution, with which I will deal in the next Chapter.

As has been described above, Back Yard, Front Yard and West Yard show us three different patterns of social mobility (Table 3–1).

(i) Back Yard did not change much during 80 years. The first reason was that until 1949, they still maintained an economically self-sufficient way of life. Second, there was a personality factor: because they were the most senior segment, their chief,
Panting (Qb4), organized them very well: men worked hard on the farm, while women worked hard at weaving. As everybody in the village said, Back Yard people were “typical proper peasants”.

(ii) As for Front Yard, the ancestors Pc4 and Pc5 became teachers at private schools and did little work: they also took up opium smoking and subsequently lost much of their land. Since the population of Front Yard was large, it quickly became poor. In addition, as a because of the court case, there was economic polarization within it.

(iii) In West Yard, Yuting (Qd14) was not only engaged in agriculture, but also in trade and business. His unwillingness to help other people, the fact that he saw everything in terms of moneymaking, and the fact that he was willing to exploit his kinsmen and fellow-villagers ruthlessly, meant that West Yard was the most successful of the five yards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3-1</th>
<th>Land Holdings of Back, Front and West Yard in 1949</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yard</td>
<td>household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back Yard</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Yard</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Yard</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Of 547 mu, about 220 mu were pawned. This means the Li still held the ownership of the land.
** Of 377 mu, 150 mu belonged to Rc15; 227 mu to the other 60 persons (3.78 mu/person).

The processes of social mobility among the segments seem to be determined by a number of factors at different levels of analysis: the political economy, demographic factors and individual factors. First, there were changes in the wider political system, over which the local people had little control. In the old days, before the Chinese bourgeois democratic revolution led by Sun Zhongshan in 1911, peasants could compete for education, in the hope that this would bring them office, social status and economic benefits such as money to invest in land. We can find many examples in the Li Lineage during this period. With the abolition of the examination system, this suddenly became impossible. Education and the old examination system were no longer a mechanism of social mobility after 1905. However, as the old paths to social mobility vanished, new ones appeared. By the late 1940s, the political and economic situation in China was even more turbulent. Most of the gentry were caught in a spiral of rising prices and declining incomes. The new situation demanded that peasants change their self-sufficient traditional economy to a market-oriented economy, and led by Yuting the West Yard was the most successful at this. In comparison, Back Yard still held onto their traditional ideology and remained engaged in agriculture. Thus, though all of the members worked very hard, it was difficult for them to obtain more land or to increase their property. All they could do
was to maintain a balance between production and consumption. As for Front Yard, like Back Yard, they still continued their old strategy, in this case seeking education and office. As a result, they were not very wealthy, but were active in local politics, which I will discuss below. Second, within this wider framework, social mobility among the segment depended on demographic factors—whether they had sons or daughters, whether their wives or husbands died, and whether their affinal relationships and other social networks worked or not. Third, there were individual factors that could become important, as in the case of Qc6 who was killed by his uncle and step-mother, which led to nearly half of the land of Front Yard being given to his wife in compensation. There was also room for personal maneuvering and manipulation, as in the case of Yuting’s mother, who was able to arrange for better and nearer land to be given to her son than to his elder brother.

3. THE ECONOMIC BASIS OF VILLAGE LIFE

Since Xiao County is located in the transitional area between northern and southern China, many different kinds of agriculture and fruit planting developed there early on. There were 2,430,000 mu of land, 260,000 of which were hillside plots, and the rest consisting of dry farmland. The main products were wheat, sorghum, soybeans, millet and cotton. However, the annual harvest was poor, and no crops were exported from the county. There were several causes of the bad harvests and poverty. As mentioned earlier, the geography of the local rivers in Xiao County is very complicated, with rivers frequently changing course, causing extensive flooding and loss of life. Second, the soil is of relatively poor quality. Third, there had often been problems with bandits, so many villages were fortified against them. Fourth, because of its strategic position, the county suffered greatly during the rebellions and wars that swept across the region. Because of all these factors, the region has been characterized by a comparatively sparse population, low agricultural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Holding (mu)</th>
<th>Percentage of Households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>landless</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 10</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 – 20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 – 30</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 40</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 – 50</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 – 100</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 – 200</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 – 300</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;300</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

productivity, poor living conditions and frequent social unrest.

Before the Liberation, there was also economic polarization between the peasants. As Table 3–2 and Table 3–3 show, the average landholding of rich peasants and landlords was nearly six times that of the poor peasants, and twice as much as that of the middle peasants. Land and the means of production were controlled by the landlords and rich peasants, and more than half of the peasants who were short of land had to live by tenancy relationships, wage labor and borrowing money. In some xiang, the polarization was much greater. For example, in Wangzhai Xiang, there were all together 856 households owning 48,200 mu of land, of which 93%, or 44,500 mu of land was owned by 12 households who accounted for only 1.4% of the population.

Tenant farming was popular in Xiao County as in other parts of China before the revolution. It was the main means of livelihood for people who were short of land, and played an important role in the village economy. According to the kind of relationship between the landlord and tenants, tenancy arrangements could be divided into three main types: ding zu, dui ban fen zu and er ba fen zu. Ding zu meant that the payment was fixed ahead of time, so the tenants would pay the same amount whatever the harvest. Dui ban fen zu meant that landlords provided the land while the tenants provided labor. The landlords and the tenants shared the harvest equally. Er ba fen zu meant that the landlords provide the fertilizer, seeds and farm implements, and the tenants were in charge of sowing, spreading fertilizer and harvesting. Of the harvest, 80% belonged to the landlords, and 20% belonged to the tenants. The tenants were, however, free of an obligation to pay taxes; the land taxes fell on the landlord, because he owned the subsoil.

Some households did not have enough hands for farm work or housework, so forms of wage labor came into being. During the Republican period there were four kinds of wage laborers in Xiao County, called locally, da ling, er ling, san ling and ban fan. Da ling means the laborers who were in charge of doing farm work. Da ling were usually long-term employees, so they lived in the houses of their landlords, and were provided with food. Er ling meant employees who were in charge of odd jobs, such as preparing fertilizer, repairing implements and so on. Like da ling, they were
long-term employees, and were also provided with food and shelter by their landlords. San ling were in charge of carrying water. They were long-term employees too, but they usually lived in their own homes. Ban fan were in charge of cooking. Like da ling and er ling, they were also provided with food and shelter by their landlords. The employees were the poorest class in the village, because they had no land. Some of them could not even get married. Besides tenants and employees, there was another category of dependent, called niu er duo, “bull ear”, people who exchanged their labor for the loan of animals. The niu er duo usually held a certain amount of land, but they were short of livestock in the busy season.

Most of the villagers in Lijialou were engaged in agriculture. The main crops were wheat, soybeans, gaoliang, millet and cotton. According to an old informant in Lijialou, of the 1,545 mu of land, 60% was planted in wheat, the yield per mu of which was about 60 kilograms. Sorghum was planted on 20% of the land, with a yield of about 130 kilograms per mu. Millet and cotton were each planted on 10% of the land, with a yield per mu of 180 kilograms for millet and 60 kilograms for cotton. After the wheat harvest, people grew soybeans, on about 25% of the wheat fields. The yield per mu was about 50 kilograms. Another 10% of the wheat fields would be planted in sweet potatoes, the yield of which was about 100 kilograms per mu. Other food grains accounted for 15% of the wheat fields, and the remaining 20% of land would be left fallow after it had been plowed.

Besides agriculture, some of the villagers were engaged in sideline production and business. For example, Fanzhen (Rb7) owned an oil mill inherited from his great-grandfather and grandfather. He hired labor to extract the oil from soybeans. My informant explained to me that since the fee charged for extracting oil was low, they could not make much money out of it, and the purpose of running the oil mill was to get fertilizer for agriculture, because they could use pressed soybeans on their fields. In Xiao County, peasants preferred cake fertilizer made of soybeans to chemicals. In the 1930s, they once tried to use chemical fertilizer, but the county government soon stopped them, because the peasants did not know much about it, and used so much fertilizer that the wheat was killed. There was also the distillery belonging to Yuting (Qd14), who made spirits out of his surplus of grain.

The inhabitants in Lijialou could be divided into two groups, the Li members from the five yards and the non-Li members. As Table 3-4 shows, in 1949, there were

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Households</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Land</th>
<th>mu/person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Li</td>
<td>36 80.0</td>
<td>178 80.2</td>
<td>1,717 98.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Li</td>
<td>9 20.0</td>
<td>44 19.8</td>
<td>21 1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45 100.0</td>
<td>222 100.0</td>
<td>1,738 100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
178 members of the Li Lineage in 36 households. They owned 1,717 mu of cultivated land. The average holding of land per household was 47.69 mu, and the average per person was 9.65 mu. Most of the Li had enough land to support them and provide each of the members with an opportunity to work. However, for most of them the problem was shortage of labor, so they had tenants or farm hands of non-Li families from inside Lijialou or from other villages to work for them. Tenants and employees began to appear inside the Li as a result of poverty: Luokai (Qe15) borrowed a plot of pear trees from Yuting (Qd14), and Qc12 became a san ling, also for Yuting (Qd14). No Li members in Lijialou became tenants for members of other villages.

On the other hand, there were 44 members of non-Li in nine households in Lijialou, 25% of the population of the Li Lineage. They owned only 21 mu of land, accounting for 1.21% of cultivated land of Lijialou. The average land holding per person was about 0.48 mu. All of them were either tenants or employees of the Li. The three types of tenure, ding zu, dui ban fen zu and er ba fen zu, and the four kinds of employees, da ling, er ling, san ling and ban fan and niu er duo described above could be all be found in Lijialou.

In this sense, we can say that the economic units in Lijialou were not self-sufficient, but were interdependent in complex ways. The tenants of the Li could be divided into two kinds, tenants inside the village and those outside the village. Tenants who lived inside the village were people who had left a famine-stricken area. These refugees provided cheap labor for those who owned plenty of land but were short of labor. Some of the workers came from nearby villages, while others came from more distant places, such as Shandong, Henan and Jiangsu Provinces. By the land reform, many of them had lived here for three generations. I cannot give accurate statistics on the number of tenants, because most of them left Lijialou during the land reform, and the old people of the Li can not remember exactly how many there were. They lived in crude, simple shelters, most of which were provided by Yuting (Qd14), because he had the most employees and tenants. Another kind of tenant was the type that lived in the neighboring villages. Some of the tenants before the revolution, people from more than a dozen of the surrounding villages including Zhangtulou, Wuzhuang, Yangzhuang, Zhangji, and Chenyuan, were tenants of Lijialou. Tenancy and employment relations could also be found inside the Li Lineage, as we found in the case of Fansen (Qc12), Yuting (Qd14) and Luokai (Qe15). Besides these, there was another case, which also involved West Yard. A man of the fifth junior segment from another village became a tenant of Yuting (Qd14). People said Yuting (Qd14) treated his agnates as tenants or employees rather than kinsman. The relationships between the Li and their tenants or employees were contractual. In other words, the relationship was merely economic, and it could be ended by agreement. However the statuses of the Li and their tenants were unequal, as we can see from the attitudes and marriage patterns of the Li. Informants in the village who were tenants before the Liberation told me that:

The Li adopted a rather arrogant attitude toward poor people like us.
Sometimes they greeted us, and sometimes they did not. If they did not greet us first, we could not greet them.

There was no intermarriage between the Li and the tenant non-Li villagers. There were two popular ideas used to justify this. First, there was the belief that in marriage “doors” should match, as in the local term men dang hu dui, which means that the two partners should be of equal economic and social status. The other ideal was to find a marriage partner far enough away so that quarrels would not lead to trouble between the two sets of kin, but near enough for affines to be able to exchange visits. The first of these was the main factor that affected intermarriage between the Li and their tenants. However, the tenants both inside and outside Lijialou had great esteem for and fear of the Li in Lijialou. They admired the lineage’s wealth, its unity, its size, and its long and proud history. As for the Li, they were indeed proud of their family and property, but they did not maltreat the non-Li who were their tenants and did not create animosity within and outside the village. Even though there was no intermarriage, they were often considerate, for instance, in allowing non-Li nearby to glean grain from their fields after the harvest. This differs from the view of landlords to be found in official Chinese literature and propaganda material, that tended to represent landlords in pre-1949 China as greedy, treacherous villains, who lived off the blood and sweat of their poor, defenseless tenants. As a member of the new generation growing up in socialist China, I was rather shocked by the difference between the stereotype I had been told and the practice I had discovered through research. The stereotype of contradiction between landlords and tenants propagated by the government was based on Marxist class theory, in which the contradiction between exploiting class and exploited class was insoluble, so that there could be never harmony or friendship between these two classes. The case study in Lijialou shows that harmony between landlords and tenants was not only possible but also necessary to both sides. Landlords who lacked laborers and peasants who lacked land could establish an interdependent relationship. With good relations, landlords and tenants were able to achieve a strong alliance. It was this interdependence between the land-holding Li and the non-Li tenants that resulted in the Li suffering little after the Liberation.

4. THE FAMILY AND ITS COMPOSITION

In this section, I will deal with the family, and analyze how it functioned as a unit in the lineage and the village.

(1) Classification

Family studies have been important in Chinese studies for 60 years, and many scholars have defined the term in their own way. For example, Fei Xiaotong pointed out that, “the term family, as commonly used by anthropologists, refers to the
procreative unit consisting of parents and immature children. A Chia is essentially a family but it sometimes includes children even after they have grown and married. Sometimes it also includes some relatively remote patrilineal kinsmen. The members of this group possess common property, keep a common budget and cooperate together to pursue a common living through division of labor" [Fei 1939: 27–28]. Here, the family Fei mentioned is the elementary family and it seems that jia¹ coincides with what I call a household, but it does not include non-kin who are laborers. Kulp distinguished between natural families and economic families in his study of Phoenix Village in northern Guangdong. By the former term, he meant an elementary family, and by the latter term, he means what anthropologists usually call a household. For Kulp, the term “economic-family” covers not only a family in a house but also a non-residential extended family operating as an economic unit. The local term for family or household in northern Anhui is jia. When the peasants use the term jia, they do not make a distinction between family and household. The jia can be used to mean nuclear family, stem family or joint family, as the case may be. “In its extended meanings it can refer to patrilineal groups of very large size and depth, especially if they have some common assets” [Ebrey and Watson 1986: 8]. For the sake of convenience, I will use “family” here instead of the local term jia. The term “family” here means a domestic group formed on the basis of descent, which is at the same time the basic unit of production, consumption and residence. For instance, long-term laborers such as da ling, er ling, san ling or ban fan, though they lived with landlords, did not have membership in their landlord’s family.

The elementary social and economic unit in Lijialou is the family, rather than the individual. The larger social group is the yard, consisting of a number of families related by descent and living in the same place. The yard is the most important subdivision of the village, as has been described earlier in this chapter. There were 45 families in 1949. On the basis of their composition, these families could be divided into four kinds: single member family, conjugal family, stem family and extended family. Family size in Lijialou ranged from 1 to 12 and the average size was 4.7 persons. As Table 3-5 shows, the most common type in this village was the conjugal family, accounting for 57.77%. The stem family accounted for 24.44%, and the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stratum</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Conjugal</th>
<th>Stem</th>
<th>Extended</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landlord</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich peasant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich middle peasant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle peasant</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor peasant</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
extended family accounted for 8.88%. The percentage of extended families was not so high. Though most of the classic studies of China stressed the importance of the extended family system in China, the fact that the extended family is rare in China has been pointed by Fei Xiaotong, Freedman [1958: 19] and Nakane [1970: 22]. In the village of Kaihsienkung, the extended family accounted for less than ten percent of all families [Fei 1939: 28].

The reasons for the development of these different types of family were economic and demographic. The wealthier tended to adhere much more than the poorer to the ideal of the extended family, but in addition, these families were functional within a self-sufficient agrarian economy. Single-person families developed for different reasons. As Table 3–5 shows, there were four single member families in Lijialou, and all of them consisted of widows who owned land and who therefore became landlords. In poor families, if one of the parents died, the other one tended to join a son’s family. In the case of a rich family, after the death of her husband or when the family divided, a widow would get a share of the property, such as land and houses, so the widows of rich families were able to live on their own resources. Since they were not able to do farm work, their sons would do it for them.

(2) Residence and lifestyle

The description of residences and lifestyles will provide the background of the families, for our study of family structure and institutions. One of main characteristics of residences in Lijialou was that people who shared the same ancestor tended to live inside a big walled compound or yard, though some of them also dwelt in areas around it, as a result of population pressure.

As Fig. 3–2 shows, a typical yard, in general, consists of four houses, each of
which usually has between three and five rooms in a row. The house facing south is called tang wu, the house facing north bei wu, the house facing west xi wu and the house facing east dong wu. In the central room of the tang wu, the ancestors' pictures were formerly hung. It is also used for dining and for receiving guests. The kitchen room in the local terms is called guo wu. Men never went into this area. The toilet for women is situated inside the yard for the sake of safety, whereas the men's toilet is situated outside. In the center of the houses is a courtyard where the women do their sewing, the men repair their implements and so on. The layout of the residence should strictly follow the traditional rules. The north is superior to the south, and the east is superior to the west. Among the four houses, tang wu, the central house, is superior, while the east room next to the central one has the highest status, and is where the old people live. When the eldest son got married, people would usually build another house in the southeast, and when the second son got married, people would build another house in the west. Then when B's son D got married, he went to live in the west rooms of the central house, and so on.

(3) Chuan zong jie dai, “the continuity of descent”

For a man, his biggest duty was chuan zong jie dai, which means to produce descendants for the continuity of the descent group. There is a Chinese saying that bu xiao you san, wu hou wei da, which means there are three kinds of impieties, and the worst of them is to produce no descendants. When a man had a son, only half of his obligation was carried out. The idea of chuan zong jie dai involved a series of obligations. For example, the father had to arrange his son's marriage for the sake of the continuity of the lineage, and in order to make his son independent, he had to leave him some property. The older man was obliged to do these things not so much because he owed it to his sons, but because he owed it to their common ancestors. In this perspective, the series of family events, such as marriage, childbirth and inheritance provided the means for supporting the lineage system. Since the continuity of the descent group is regarded as the most important duty, the father-son relation is the most basic relationship within the family. In the Chinese family, both sexual inequality and the elimination of all erotic expression were means for subordinating the husband-wife relationship and enhancing the father-son relationship [Hsu 1971: 241]. For a son, his obligations to his parents were to support them when they got old, to worship them after their death, and to produce descendants to ensure the continuity of the descent group. He did all these not only because he owed it to his parents, but also because he was indebted to his and his father's common ancestors. In this sense, the meaning of having children in this first place can be explained first as the continuity of the line of descent, and second on ethical grounds—it is a concrete expression of filial piety [Fei 1939: 31-32]. The third point is that children can provide labor for the family. The last point is the idea of yang er fang lao, which means producing sons as insurance against old age. Underlying this was the truth that children were the insurance for the old, especially
in the case of the poor families.

(4) The position of the jia zhang, “family head”

The father was the supreme autocrat, controlling the use of all family property, income and having a decisive voice in arranging for children. On the authority of the family head in China, Nakane’s position is that the authority of the family head is based on the status of the father in the descent line. She has suggested that the Chinese saying, shen ti fu fa shou zhi yu fu mu, which means one’s body, skin and hair are all given one’s parents, shows the basis of the authority of the family chief [Nakane 1970: 63]. That is to say, if A gives birth to B, then A will enjoy his authority over B. This is not enough. The problem is why can A as a father enjoy these rights over B? In fact, A’s position and authority as the family head were recognized and affected by the political structure, such as the legal institutions in Xiao County, and in the nation as a whole. Here I will analyze the formation of authority relations from the perspective of law and class, both of which have been ignored in previous analyses of inequality by anthropologists of China.

One of the characteristics of the Chinese feudal system was the conjunction of monarchical power and patriarchy. The authority of jia zhang was not only inscribed in the ethical code, but also in law. For example, zu zai ze zu wei jia zhang, fu zai ze fu wei jia zhang means that if the grandfather is alive, he will be the family head. If the father is alive then the family head should be the father. Two things follow from this: one is that the family head should be male; the other is that he must be the eldest male. Until 1931, the Chinese Civil Code, Article 1123 and 1125 stated that each family should have a head and the family head should be in charge of the family affairs. It is clear that the authority of the jia zhang mainly came from the law that gave him rights over the other members of the family and commanded people to obey him. The jia zhang controlled the family economy. He had the ultimate responsibility and power in commercial decisions. All kinds of income were to be handed over to him, and no private property was permitted. In Li Ji, The Book of Rites it is stated that if the parents are alive, no private property is allowed for their children. Even in the Chinese Civil Code, 1088, it is stated that the property of children should be kept by their father, and if the father is unable to do it then their mother will do it instead; the parents have the right to use and keep the property.

The feudal court not only recognized the authority of the family head over family affairs, but also his right to punish other family members. Impiety was defined as an offence to be punished in all the feudal laws. For example, in the Qin Law, it was stated that, if a person was unfilial, his head could be cut off and hung up as a warning to all. In the early Republic period, two cases of punishment of members of the junior generation happened in Lijialou that give some idea of the strict domestic discipline and the authority of the family head. One of them was the death of Yunting (Qc6) who interacted with local bandits: as mentioned above, his stepmother and uncle thought his behavior would destroy the prestige of the family, so they killed him.
secretly. Another case was that of the punishment of Od7 in the late Qing Dynasty. It was said that Zhaoxi (Od7) was very lazy and seldom participated in work. One day his elder brother, Ob5, criticized this sluggard. Zhaoxi (Od7) did not accept his elder brother’s criticism, and quarreled with him. Their father Guangying (N3) got very angry at this and said:

What the elder son did was right. Our domestic discipline should be like this: if the elders are alive, obey the elders; if they are dead, obey the elder brother. Zhaoxi does not obey his elder brother even when I am alive. When I die, he will become wilder. Anybody, like him, who is against our domestic discipline, should be buried alive.

People said at that time, domestic discipline was strict and to have lax domestic discipline was a disgrace. The day of the burial came, and the coffin and grave were ready. Guangying (N3) began to hesitate, because he could not bear to kill his own son, but as a1'ia zhang, he felt he should keep his word, so he decided to give a symbolic burial to Zhaoxi (Od7). He told the people to put a stone roller into the coffin instead, and commanded Zhaoxi (Od7) to crawl into the grave from one side and crawl out from the other side. From then on, Zhaoxi (Od7) did not dare to contradict his elder brother any more.

(5) The status of women

In a patrilineally-oriented society, what was the position of women, and in what sense were women members of the families into which they married? As in most parts of China and among some groups of overseas Chinese, girls in Huai Bei Plain were considered pei qian huo, goods on which one loses. This expression was a reflection of social reality. First, when the girls reached four or five years of age, their mothers began to bind their feet, so they could never work in the fields, whether they belonged to rich or poor families. Since more money could be made by doing farm work than by cooking and weaving, girls contributed less to the household than their brothers, and thus had lower status in the family. Second, when a girl got married, her parents had to give her a large dowry, consisting of furniture, ornaments, clothes, and sometimes a sum of money and land. At the same time, her domestic service and her fertility were transferred to her husband’s family. For the Chinese, a married girl was like sprinkled water. This means that she, her labor, and her fertility would belong to her husband’s descent group, and would not belong to her father’s descent group anymore. Once married, a woman visited her natal home as a kind of guest, and she could go back only with the permission of her mother-in-law. In a word, girls were born in order to be married out, so their membership of their natal homes was a temporary one. For this reason sexual inequality arose between girls and boys. For instance, a girl was not able to go to school like her brothers, but only stayed home sewing, spinning, weaving and cooking. Since the main reason that their parents
raised them was to marry them out, their virginity was considered most important. For this reason, they were under much greater limitations than their brothers. The popular saying, da men bu chu er men bu mai, which means one should not go out the front door, was not only the ideal norm, but also a reality on Huaibei Plain. A woman over sixty told me that when she was young she could seldom go out. Once she and her sisters wanted to see a play very badly, so her brothers took them to the city in a cart and guarded them all the time. On the other hand, since marriage or establishing a family is a means of continuing the patrilineal descent group, a wife was obliged to help her husband to carry out his obligation of chuan zong jie dai. If she produced a son for him, then she acquired her full status as a woman or full membership in the new family. On the other hand, a daughter-in-law’s incapacity to fulfil her obligation was taken as strong grounds for repudiating her without compensation, though in Lijialou and other neighboring villages, I did not find any cases in which husbands repudiated their wives for their inability to producing sons.

There were many other sexual inequalities. Under the idea of chuan zhong jie dai, men were in fact encouraged to remarry, while for women it was a case of cong yi er zhong, “following one husband until death”. By remarrying, a woman seriously lowered her social prestige. In Lijialou, many men married twice, sometimes even three times, but no woman had ever remarried. For a man, the failure of his marriage was a temporary problem, because he was allowed to get over it by finding another wife, while for a woman, the failure of her marriage remained a problem for the rest of her life. This was partly why women tended to be more devoted to religion, and other spiritual matters, and was partly why the rate of female suicide was higher than that of males. Besides the obligation to produce descendants, one of the cardinal virtues of a woman was to obey her husband and parents-in-law. In the first few years of marriage, the bride had to go to greet her parents-in-law every morning and evening. My informant told me that, after the bride greeted her parents-in-law, she was not allowed to turn her back on them and leave the room quickly; she had to back slowly toward the door, facing her parents-in-law all the time. This was the same posture generally adopted towards the emperor.

However, the concept that wives should unconditionally obey their husbands and parents-in-law was an ideal which, on the level of fact, was not always achieved. We can see differences in the degree of subordination between women from rich and poor families. Here I will give two cases, which give some idea about to what degree, and under what kind of conditions women resisted the feudal norms. Rb14’s wife, Qian, was a pretty and clever woman from a landlord family. She came to Lijialou in the early 1930s through a “blind marriage”. Since her husband was the youngest of four brothers, they divided the joint family soon after the marriage. Her husband, Rb 14, received 30 mu of land. Qian did not like her incompetent husband. One day, her husband asked her for two silver dollars to go to market, but she refused. They had a quarrel, and finally the husband failed to get money from his wife. Thinking that he had lost his dignity as a man, he committed suicide on the same day. All the people of Back Yard thought this was a disgrace, so they circulated the story that the
husband had died of an acute disease. Even now, people of Back Yard still explain Rb 14’s death to me according to this cover story. A woman from Front yard told me the true story of Rb14’s suicide that I related above. She also said that when they buried Rb14, they put two silver dollars in his hands. The two silver dollars were found in the 1970s during the campaign of “leveling the graves”. After the incident, although the parents-in-law did not punish the bride, they did not allow her to remarry, either. However, Qian herself told me that it was her father who would not let her remarry. As a result, Qian became a widow at the age of 20, and was unable to marry again. She cried all day and complained that her fate was terrible. After awhile, she went to a shrine and became a Buddhist until the Liberation.

Another case concerned Rc18, who was lame and had an ugly face. Since the family owned land, a go-between introduced him to a nice, tall, healthy woman from a rich family and they soon married. Disappointed in her husband, the bride stayed most of the year in her natal home and seldom came back. She only bore him one son. What she did was against the local custom. It is said that before the Liberation, married women could not visit their natal home freely. Each time they had to obtain permission from their mothers-in-law. Usually their mothers-in-law granted a leave of absence for only a few days. If they did not come back on time, then they would be criticized or punished. However, to some degree the two women described above resisted the norms. They did so not only because of their personalities, but also because they had rich and influential natal homes to back them up.

(6) The inheritance of property

One of the biggest duties of a jia zhang was to leave property to his son. The expectation of inheriting property strengthened the links between parents and their sons. There were two or three chances for a young man to receive property from his parents: when he married, when a house was divided, or after the death of his parents. It was a popular custom in parts of China, including this area, for a childless man to adopt a son from a kinsman or sometimes from a different surnamed group, especially in the case of the poor. However, in Lijialou, there had been no adoptions of a son in the last hundred years. Here, if a childless man died, the widow could inherit all his property. If both of them died, then the son of the man’s brother would inherit the property. To inherit the property of a childless man is called in local terms qing jia dang. The reason that there was no practice of adoption in this village was that the village consisted of a single lineage, so each of the five yards could solve the problem by itself. There were some rules that controlled how this could happen. First, the childless man had no freedom to choose his heir. The heir had to be the son of the childless man’s brother or his grandson. Second, if the childless man was the eldest son, then the heir was ideally the eldest son of his eldest younger brother. If the childless man was the second or third brother, then the second son of his elder brother would be the heir. Since an heir was decided by seniority, people knew who would be their heir ahead of time. The man who was chosen as heir would take care of the
childless man in everyday life. After the childless man had left his property to the heir, the heir would take care of it and mourn for him, but the heir did not need to change his residence or position in the genealogy. The practice of *qing jia dang* prevented property from falling into the hands of other segments or into the hands of non-Li.

(7) Fictive adoption

In Xiao County, there is a custom through which people can create fictive parent-child relations for their children. This institution is of two forms: one is called in local terms *gai zui*, which means to change address, and the other is called *ren gan qin*, which means to be adopted by fictive parents. These institutions have played an important part in rural society. My informants told me that over 20% of the people in Lijialou had this kind of fictive kinship relationship before the Liberation.

A. Gai zui, “correcting oneself”

This means children in certain situations can “correct themselves” by calling other people their parents. There are four main situations under which a pseudo-adoption is traditionally carried out. In the first case, it happens when the destinies of the child and its parents are badly matched. It is the custom of Xiao County and the whole area of the Huaibei Plain that, after the birth of a baby, his parents will go to the fortuneteller. The fortuneteller will declare whether the destinies of the baby and his parents are well matched or not, according to *ba zi*, the eight characters defining the baby’s time of birth. In China, everybody’s time of birth can be expressed in eight characters, which are in four pairs, indicating the year, the month, the day and hour of the birth, and each consists of a Heavenly Stem and an Earthly Branch. If they are told that the destinies are not matched, the parents will ritually attach their child to a close kinsman to avoid the conflict between their destinies and that of the child. In the second case, people believe that evil spirits seeks those who are weak and sickly, or those whose siblings died before they were born. One of the methods of protecting such children is to attach them to fictive parents. Usually parents are chosen who have numerous children and are considered to possess stronger powers of resisting evil spirits. The third case occurs among those who have neither sons nor daughters and want to have a fictive one. The last case is the opposite of the third one. That is, people who have too many children want to attach some of them to somebody who can share the burden with them.

Of the four kinds of adoption, the first two are comparatively popular. There is no ritual act to mark the adoption. The formation of the relationship depends on the agreement of both sides. As for those who will be the most suitable fictive parents, the principle is to choose them from among close kinsmen. In case of Lijialou, they usually chose them from among close kinsmen from the same yard. As long as the relationship lasts, both the adopting parents and the adopted child acquire a set of
obligations. First, the adopted child will address his adoptive parents as father and
mother, and address his real parents as uncle and aunt. During festivals, he should go
to greet his fictive parents. He will participate in their ceremonial occasions, and
mourn for them when they die. This type of fictive adoption is no more than
metaphorical; the child will not cease his relationship with his real parents and will
still remain at home. He will acquire neither the right of inheritance from nor the
duty to support his adopted parents.

B. Ren gan qin, “adoption by fictive parents”

Besides gai zui, there is another kind of fictive adoption which is called in local
term ren gan qin. Ren gan qin is carried out in four different situations, the same as
those for gai zui. The main difference between gai zui and ren gan qin is that, in the
case of gai zui, the child should be adopted by close kinsmen in terms of descent,
whereas in the case of ren gan qin, the child should be adopted by somebody with a
different surname, who sometimes may live in a different village. My informant told
me that usually when a child gets ill and is cured by a shaman, he will be attached to
people whose surnames sound like the names of animals with four legs such as yang
which is a homonym of “sheep”, ma which a homonym of “horse” and so on. People
believe that by changing their names to ones that sound like the names of animals they
can fool the evil spirits who seek out the lives of their children. Beside this, ren gan
qin also happens when people have no sons or daughters, or the relation between gan
qin and the real parents is very good, and they hope to continue their friendship. In
this sense, the relation between the sides is usually equal.

One case in Lijialou is very interesting. Difan (Rbl0) possessed more than 40
mu of land and had a hired da ling to do farm work for him. Difan (Rbl0) attached
his only son to his da ling, who had several children. Though Difan (Rbl0) was a rich
peasant, he did not have enough hands in his family. His da ling was a refugee from
a famine-stricken area of Shandong. Though poor, he was able to provide labor for
Difan (Rbl0). Difan (Rbl0) and his laborer were in a relation of interdependence.
Besides the economic factor, their personalities also contributed to their fictive
kinsmen.

Ren gan qin sometime links those in a patron-client relationship. People use it
as a method of paying a debt of gratitude, or establishing a dependent relationship.
Unlike gai zui, ren gan qin is marked by a ritual act. The fictive father and fictive
mother will present the child with a set of tableware and cakes with which the gan qin
feeds the child, whereas the adopted child give his fictive mother cakes and trousers
which symbolizes that she has given birth to the child. At the lunar New Year, the
child should go to greet his fictive parents; in turn, the fictive parents will come to see
the child, bringing dumplings, cakes and ya sui qian—money given to children as a
lunar New Year gift. The adopting-parents will present money or bed clothes when
their adopted child gets married. As a fictive son, he should go to greet his fictive
parents during the festivals, and will participate in their ceremonial occasions, and
mourn for them. He will not marry their daughters. Compared with gai zui, ren gai qin lacks the element of protecting the child from evil spirits. The real significance of ren gan qin is to create a new wider network beyond the descent group and local area through this kind of symbolic method. In other words, it provides people with the resource of a new social network.

5. POLITICS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE

(1) Bao jia system

Here I will give a brief description of civil administration in this area during the pre-revolutionary period. During the Ming Dynasty, the province was the largest local administrative unit, the subdivisions being the prefecture, county, xiang and "natural" village. During the Qing Dynasty, the li was established as a unit between the xiang and village. After the Xinhai Revolution in 1911, the Qing Dynasty was overthrown, and the prefecture was abolished. Since then, there have been no changes in the administrative units above the county level, but there were some changes in the units below the county level. In 1929, the National Government in Nanjing promulgated the Law Governing the Organization of the District, based on the principle of local self-government of Sun Zhongshan. According to the law, five households formed a lin, five lin or twenty-five households formed a lü, four lü or one hundred households formed a xiang, and between twenty and fifty xiang formed a district. Several districts formed a county. The law created new territorial groups to facilitate self-governing administrative functions. All these units were to be self-governing through their elected headmen and councils. As communist influence grew, in August 1932 the headquarters of the Punitive Campaign against the Communists in Central China issued a decree about the bao jia system that was introduced mainly for military purposes. Under this system, members of a bao jia were held to be mutually responsible for one another.

In the case of Xiao County, in April 1934, the lü lin system was abolished, and the bao jia system was introduced in its place, which lasted until the land reform. According to the new decree, ten households constituted one jia, and ten jia constituted one bao, which usually meant two villages were included in this unit. During this period, for administrative purposes Lijialou was part of Jiangsu Province, in the eighth district, Yili Xiang, which literally means area suitable for pear planting. The headquarters of the eighth district was situated in Hekou Township, 11 kilometers away to the northwest, and the headquarters of Yili Xiang was situated in Wudaokou Village, 4.5 kilometers away to the southwest. A traditional standard market was located there that served 36 villages. Lijialou was subdivided into three jia, and it formed a bao together with a neighboring village called Dongzhuang, one kilometer away. The chiefs of xiang, bao and jia were mainly in charge of levying taxes and collecting grain, and they seldom intervened in agricultural production, consumption, health, education, migration or the private affairs of households, such
as marriage or divorce. Compared with the system after the Liberation, the earlier village government was concerned with a narrower range of activities, among which the most significant ones were defense, the maintenance of internal order and security and the payment of taxes. Headship of the bao jia was not hereditary and the head was paid in grain, not money. Women were completely excluded from public affairs. One of my informants, aged over sixty, told me that:

Before the revolution, around the time of the lunar New Year, the head of the jia would organize people to patrol the village at night. I was twelve at that time. I joined the patrol and beat the clapper around the village.

So what kind of person could be chief of the bao jia and how were they appointed? What was the relationship between the lineages and the government? In his study of Ihsu in Fujian Province in 1936, Lin Yaohua pointed out that for the purpose of common defense a bao jia organization was set up under the control of the ancestral hall. In the case of Kaihsienkung, both of the heads of the bao were well-to-do people, and one began his career as a schoolmaster and the other as an assistant in a silk factory. In the case of Lijialou, from 1934 until 1949, there had been three bao heads, and several jia heads. Two of the bao heads were members of Front Yard, Huaiting (Qc11) and his nephew Fanlin (Rc23). The other man was called Wu Zhonghua, who was a long-term hired hand of Yuting (Qd14) and lived in Yuting’s home.

Huaiting (Qc11) began his career as a teacher in a private school. He had taught in three villages, including Lijialou. He had been bao head both under CCP and GMD control. At the time of the land reform, he was classified as a poor peasant, since there were twelve people in his family, which was the largest in the village, and their average landholding was small. The fact that he held office under both governments suggests that he had a good reputation, and his nephew, Fanlin (Rc23), was also a capable man, who later became the chief of Yili Xiang. Difan (Qb6) had been the jia head during the period of the Japanese invasion. He told me that only people who had good reputations and good relations with the higher authorities could be selected as chiefs. Here wealth, reputation and education were the main factors. Rc23, Qc11 and Qb6 were all well-to-do and well-educated men with good reputations in the surrounding villages. It was difficult for a man from a poor family to attain that position at that time, because the headmanship had no direct economic reward. In local government, the gentry usually played an important part. Wu Zhonghua was an exception. Though he was not a well-to-do person, he had Yuting (Qd14), the richest landlord, as his sponsor, and in turn he would certainly obey and serve his master.

(2) During the Japanese invasion

In 1938, the Japanese invaded this area. My informants still remember the day. An old man told me that:
The Japanese came on the 17th of April, 1938 according to the lunar calendar, when I was 19. At first, everyone ran away. Later, the Japanese established their government here. One night, in 1945, they suddenly disappeared completely.

Since Xiao County was near Xuzhou, it was an important strategic point, so all the parties wanted to control it. During the Anti-Japanese War from 1938 to 1945, Xiao County was divided between three different governments, the CCP, the Guomindang and the Japanese, in a tripartite confrontation. The CCP controlled the southern part, the Guomindang the northern part and the Japanese the town seat and some areas in the north. Lijialou was under Japanese control. The Japanese founded the Peace Preservation Association (PPA), a local puppet organization, which consisted of both Japanese and Chinese in all the areas under its control. In Hekou, there was a big PPA that operated as the county government and that consisted of 30 Japanese and 100 Chinese. There were also many PPA in the neighboring villages. The nearest PPA to Lijialou was in the neighboring village of Zhangji. My informant, Fanshan (Rc20) (Photo18), told me that:

At that time, there was a PPA in Zhangji and some guards, and the ordinary peasants could not come and go freely. People with identity cards issued by the PPA would go into Zhangji within the designated time. Those without cards could never go into Zhangji. However, Fanlian (Ra3) and I were exceptions. We were able to go into Zhangji freely, first because we both cooked for the troops settled in Zhangji, and second because my affine was the head of a xiang, so they did not dare to provoke me.

In that turbulent period, none of the three governments was firmly established, so the areas over which they had jurisdiction changed all the time. All these elements made the local political and social situation extremely complicated. My informant, Difan (Rb10), a jia zhang during that time, told me that:

At that time, the three governments all imposed the rationing of grain, straw, vegetables and cloth according to land area. There were several jia heads in Lijialou. I was one of them and I was in charge of Back Yard and West Yard. I got no payment. It was difficult to do this kind of work. The Japanese often asked us for chickens or liquor, and we had to collect them from each household, and send them by cart to Hekou immediately.

With the complicated situation, people in Lijialou adopted different attitudes and actions. Most of the people kept silent just continued their farm work. A few of them joined the communist guerrillas against the Japanese, some joined the Guomindang troops, and some helped the PPA and sent food or acted as guides for the Japanese. Three men, Fanhong (Ra6), Fanqian (Rc22) and Fanlong (Re33) joined the Guomindang troops. Fanshan (Rc20) told me that, he knew officers in the
GMD army, and introduced Fanhong (Ra6) and Fanqian (Ra6) to the GMD. Since Fanhong (Ra6) was an opium-smoker, and Fanqian (Rc22) had become a thief, people hoped they would give up their bad habits in the army. That was why the local saying said hao tie bu da ding, hao ren bu dang bing which means “good iron will not be made into a nail; a good man will not become a soldier.” However, that was not always true. In the case of Fanlong (Re33), a member of Northeast Yard, he was very honest. His father was a secretary of Yili Xiang and he himself graduated from a famous school in Xiao County and later became one of the graduates of the Reijin Branch of the Huangpu Military Academy, run by the GMD. Having studied there for three years, he joined the anti-Japanese War as an officer of the GMD, and came back to the village after the GMD left the mainland in 1949. During that time, he had been to Shandong, Henan, Shanghai and many southern provinces, and experienced many battles. During this period, another well-educated man, Xiangjia (Sd54), joined the communist guerrillas. His father was a rich landlord and he graduated from the Teachers College of Xiao County. His mother’s father was Shao Shien, who was a magistrate of Xiao County under Japanese control. His mother’s brother was Shao Jingsheng, who was also a magistrate of Xiao County under Japanese control. The two Shaos actively helped the Japanese, so the people of Xiao County called them traitors to China, and hated them. Though a close relative, Xiangjia (Sd54) chose a different road. He joined the communist army fighting against the Japanese, and worked there as a culture teacher. When he was wounded, he came back home.

After the eight years of the anti-Japanese war, a civil war between the CCP and the GMD followed. During the civil war, from 1948 to 1949, Xiao County was divided between the CCP government, which controlled the north, and the GMD government, which controlled the south. Since Lijialou was situated in the north, it was under the GMD’s control. The last magistrate of Xiao County was Li Gongda, who was a member of the senior segment of the Li Lineage. His real name was Li Fanshu. Xiangjia (Sd54) was a close friend of the magistrate Li Gongda. The Huaihai Campaign (November 6, 1948-January 10, 1949) between the Guomindang and the CCP, which was the second of the three decisive campaigns in the Chinese People’s War of Liberation, began and ended in Xiao County. The end of Huaihai Campaign meant the liberation of the north Yangzi River area, and soon the communists liberated the whole mainland. In the end of 1948, the last governor of Xiao County, Li Gongda, took his subordinates to Taiwan through Xuzhou. Most of the people of Xiao County knew little about the CCP and so were afraid of it. At the end of the civil war, many people, GMD troops, teachers, students, landlords, and other rich people left Xiao County for Taiwan. From Lijialou, only Yuting’s son, Fanchang (Rd31), went to Taiwan. I asked Xiangjia (Sd54) why he had not gone away to Taiwan in late 1948. He said:

There were three reasons. First, I did nothing bad. Second, my family had been descended in a direct line with no collateral line for three generations. I am the only son of my parents. If I went away, who else could take care of
them? Third, I thought living outside would not be any better than being at home.

Most people, like Xiangjia (Sd54), remained, but they worried about what life would be like under the control of the CCP, and some, especially those from well-to-do families, hoped that the GMD would come back some day.

Chapter 3 deals with patrilineal groups in Lijialou. Here yuan, “yard”, is an important term, about which little has been said in the literature. The “yard” is essentially based on patrilineal consanguinity and residence in the same village. Lijialou consists of five yards, among which Back Yard, Front Yard and West Yard are closest in terms of patrilineal descent. The three yards divided in about 1870. In the 80 years until 1949, the three yards chose different paths and show us three different patterns of social mobility. Back Yard did not change much over the 80 years. They still engaged in agriculture, and maintained an economically self-sufficient way of life. The heads of Front Yard were teachers at private schools and did little farm work: they also took up opium smoking and subsequently lost much of their land. Since the population of Front Yard was large, it got poor quickly. In addition, because of a court case, there was economic polarization within it. West Yard was not only engaged in agriculture, but also in trade and business in the township.

The processes of social mobility among the three yards are determined by various factors at different levels of analysis. First, social mobility among the three yards can be considered in a wider political system. During the imperial period, education and the old examination system had been the main factors of social mobility, so peasants could compete for education, in the hope that this would bring them office, social status and economic benefits, such as money to invest in land. However, after 1905, with the abolition of the examination system, this suddenly became impossible. By the late 1940s, because of the turbulent political and economic situation in China, most of the gentry were caught in a spiral of rising prices and declining incomes. Confronted with this new situation, West Yard changed self-sufficient traditional economy to a market-oriented economy, whereas Back Yard just held on to their proper peasant ideology of working hard on their farm. However, it was difficult for them to obtain more land or to increase their property. Front Yard, like Back Yard, still continued their old strategy, in this case seeking education and office. Second, social mobility within the segment also depended on demographic factors, such as the number of sons or daughters, the life span of wives and husbands, affinal relationships and other social networks. Third, individual factors could cause social mobility as well.

Although there were clear differences in social status, wealth and economic benefits among the different yards, the Li generally controlled most of the land around Lijialou. The Li as a whole tended to lack laborers, while the non-Li peasants lacked land. This established an interdependent relation between Li and non-Li. With land in their hands, the Li also dominated the neighboring villages in politics.
Below the yard, the basic unit in Lijialou was the family. Since the continuity of the descent group was regarded as the most important duty, the father-son relationship was the most basic and elementary of the relationships within the family. The series of family events, such as marriage, childbirth and inheritance, provided the means for supporting the lineage system. Property was transferred from parents to sons. There were two or three chances for a young man to receive property from his parents: when he married, when the house was divided, or after the death of his parents. It was a popular custom in China, including this region, for a childless man to adopt a son from a kinsman or sometimes from a different surnamed group, especially in the case of the poor. However, in Lijialou, no sons were adopted in the last century, perhaps because the village consisted of a single lineage, so each of the five yards could solve the problem by itself. Here, if a childless man died, his widow could inherit all his property. If both of them died, then the son of the childless man’s brother would inherit the property.

The history of Lijialou was greatly affected by the new political and economic system of the state and the world. In the early 20th century, the Qing Dynasty was abolished because of the superficiality of its administration, and its constitutional inability to develop into a modern central government. China increased its openness to foreign contact, and as a result, the previously self-contained economy in some rural areas began to be integrated into the world market. One of the results of the economic expansion by imperialists was the outbreak of the war with Japan, which lasted eight years. In order to use China as a base in the struggle against Japan, the Americans supported the Guomindang regime with extensive aid. On the other hand, communism also began to grow rapidly in China after the establishment of the first socialist country, the Soviet Union. The CCP came into being and soon had its own troops. After the anti-Japanese war, a civil war began between the GMD and the CCP. Three years later, the CCP won the war. Since Lijialou and nearby villages had been in GMD controlled areas, the villagers knew little about the communists, and nobody knew what would happen to them.

Notes

1. Here jia and chia express the same Chinese character. Jia is based on the new pinyin transcription system.

2. The bao jia system was not a new idea of the National government. Wang Anshi, the great reformer of the eleventh century in the Song Dynasty (960–1276), first instituted it in 1069 –1070. In fact, the bao jia system, i.e. the self-governing body, has an ancient origin earlier than Song. In the Warring States (220 B.C.), it was Guan Zhong, the Prime Minister of Qi State, who introduced the bao jia system, which could control the whereabouts of people, particularly prisoners, fugitives and vagrants. In Qin State, this system exercised a great control over families as well as individuals. It could prosecute criminals, but could not edify the people. In the Han Dynasty, the bao jia system operated to report seducers and hinder robbers, so its functions resembled that of police. In the Tang Dynasty, the
same system served to keep watch for any unlawful acts and to enforce tax payments. Such a system is similar to the bao jia system, which was organized after the Song Dynasty.

3. After I became acquainted with Xiangjia (Sd54), he told me a lot about Li Gongda: Li Gongda’s home area is in Yuanlou Village Xiao County, and he is a descendant of the second senior segment of the Li Lineage. He had held five administrative posts, three times in Hunan Province, once in Jiangxi Province, and the last time in his home area, Xiao County. He was the last administrative officer of Xiao County for the Guomindang government. Li Gongda did not smoke nor drink. He knew a great deal about traditional Chinese medicines, and he could also do Taijiquan very well, a kind of traditional Chinese shadow boxing. He concentrated on his work, and lived a simple life. Though born in a poor family, he studied very hard, and he first became an office-holder when he was only 20. He had great prestige among the people of the Li Lineage and the people in Xiao County. In the first place, he publicly burnt up opium and had smoking sets confiscated. This, to a certain extent, checked this unhealthy habit in the area. In the second place, on many occasions he tried to suppress banditry and re-educate the bandits. Even at present, many people of the Li Lineage still remember this governor.

4. Li Gongda now lives in San Francisco. Li Xiangjia’s (Sd54) daughter-in-law told me that it was Xiangjia, her father-in-law, that helped Li Gongda leave Xuzhou for Taiwan, and that because of this Li Xiangjia was criticized many times during the Cultural Revolution.
Chapter 4 Socialist Collectivization in Rural China

Subsequent to the military defeat of the GMD government in 1949, the CCP carried out a nationwide program of land reform. Why was land reform necessary? Liu Shaoqi pointed out that, "in a nutshell, it is because the original ownership system in China is extremely irrational... Landlords and rich peasants, who constitute less than 10 per cent of the rural populations, possess approximately from 70 to 80 per cent of the land and brutally exploit the peasants by means of their land... Poor peasants, farm laborers, middle peasants and others, however, who make up 90 per cent of the rural population, possess in all only 20 to 30 per cent of the land" [Liu 1950: 68]. He emphasized that the purpose of land reform was to introduce the system of peasant land ownership, in order to free productive forces in the rural areas, develop agricultural production and thus pave the way for the industrialization of the New China. "Land to the tiller" had been put forward as a slogan a long time before, during the peasant rebellions. The difference between the traditional slogan and the CCP's land reform was that the aim of the latter was not merely to give land to the landless; it was intended to be a basis for increasing production and industrialization.

1. LAND REFORM

Land reform took place in Anhui during 1950 and 1951. First, the CCP Committee of Anhui and the prefecture formed a land reform committee. Then, each county formed many work teams consisting of cadres or teachers who received training for one or two months. The CCP secretary of Lilou Xiang, who joined the revolutionary work in 1952, described his experience to me:

Every cadre of the work team was educated with a document drawn up by Chairman Mao in 1933, "How to Analyze Class in the Countryside". We learned the policies and methods for determining class status.

After short term training for several weeks, they went into the villages to lead the land reform. Land reform was carried out twice in Xiao County. The first time was between the winter of 1950 and September of 1951. In the end of December 1951, land certificates were awarded. Land reform in Lijialou was also carried out during this time. The second time was between October 1951 and March 1953. In June, the peasants got their land certificates.

The Villagers told me that the work team first came to Lijialou in the end of 1950. They still remember that the team consisted of four members, Da Lao Zheng ("Big Old Zheng"), Li Lingyong, Da Lao Li ("Big Old Li"), and Xiao Lao Li ("Little Old Li")². All of them were from different villages. Zheng was xiang zhang, the head of a township and at the same time the leader of the team. Li Lingyong was in charge of surveying land. The work team had two main tasks: to redistribute the land and to
Social Change and Continuity in a village in Northern Anhui, China
demolish the old structure of power and influence in the villages and establish a new one. To accomplish these aims, first they had to raise the class consciousness of the peasants and help them realize the exploitative nature of the pre-Liberation social order. The fulfillment of land reform went through four phases: establishment of a new administration, ascertaining class status, struggle against the landlords, and redistributing land.

(1) Establishing a new administration in the village

The new government was established in Lijialou. At that time, the bao jia system was abolished and instead the "cun" or "village" unit was used. Lijialou and Dongzhuang together became one village. As soon as the work team settled in Lijialou, they began to establish the new government. However, many of the villagers held back initially from cooperating with the work team. Nobody wanted to take a leadership position in the new administration. First, because the peasants were traditionally suspicious of outsiders. Second, because they had been under the control of GMD for a long time, and they had no experience with the CCP, so they were worried that the GMD would soon return. Fanshan (Rc20) (Photo18) told me that:

At that time, the work team came to ask me to make recommendations from Lijialou for the positions of village chief and other cadres. I talked about it with some people, and nobody wanted to take the positions, because they thought that the GMD would come back. For example, I once asked Pengxiang (Sb22) who was young, honest, and well educated, and was held in high repute. However, his mother was afraid of the GMD, so she refused absolutely. I could do nothing about it, so I went to Dongzhuang to suggest it to Dong Guangyi, a poor peasant, and he accepted my suggestion. Then, I asked Wang Anheng who was a tenant of Fanding (Rd30), to be the president of the peasant association (a mass organization led by the CCP), and he accepted, too.

In order to understand the process of establishing the new government, it is necessary to understand Fanshan's (Rc20) position in the village. Li Fanshan was born in 1919. His father used to be a private school teacher. Li Fanshan (Rc20) knew a lot about local history and concerned himself with the affairs of the Li Lineage, and the village, xiang, county and state. He had a wide network in the local area and some of his affines were very influential. For example, he and the xiang head were affines, and his wife's uncle was a fictive relative of Liu Reiqi, who was a big landlord, holding 2,600 mu of land and also an administrator of the GMD government in Xiao County. When he was a boy, he helped his father, who was in charge of weighing cotton at Zhangji market, so he knew a lot of people outside the village. Inside the village, he was in charge of marriages and funerals. He was good at public speaking and acting for the injured party in disputes, so he enjoyed a good reputation all around. On the other hand, the economic condition of his family was
not so good, so the work team had some trust in him.

Dong Guangyi, who was selected as village head, told me that:

At that time, nobody wanted to work in the peasants' association, and neither did I. I was a tenant at that time. The work team came to ask me to be the head, and I felt awkward about refusing it, so I accepted the position.

In order to locate reliable leaders for the peasants' association and the militia, the work team asked the villagers, especially influential ones like Fanshan (Rc20), for the names of the poorest and most oppressed. With the recommendations of the villagers, the work team soon organized the peasants' association and set up an armed militia unit that was to enforce and support both the peasants' association and the women's association. As a result, nine people were selected as leaders: one village head, one chairman of the peasants' association, one militia head, one director of the women's association and five group leaders. Eight of them were poor peasants, and one was *xiao tu di chu zu zhe*, "small landowner" which I will discuss later in this section.

Dong Guangyi, the new village head, lived in Dongzhuang, one kilometer away. He used to be a tenant of Lijialou. When he joined the CCP after the land reform, he was the first party member. The new chairman of the peasants' association, Wang Anheng, whose father had settled in Lijialou, was a good carpenter and a good farmer. Fanshan (Rc20), whose classification was poor peasant, was the militia head. Fanfang (Rc16) and Fande (Ra2), classed as poor peasants, served as group leaders. Li Jindi, another tenant of Yuting (Qd14) and Ding Guanying, who used to be a long-term laborer of Difan (Rb10), were also selected as group leaders.

Qian Zhihong (Photo 16), the widow of Rb14, was the only female cadre in the village. After her husband had died, her mother-in-law sent her to a Buddhist temple. However, after the Liberation, she returned to secular life, and because her husband had left her 27 *mu* of land, she was classified as a small landowner within the landlord class. On the other hand, because of her bitter experience, the work team trusted her. Advised by the work team of land reform, she became the first director of the women's associations of both Lijialou and Lilou Xiang.

We can find three characteristics in the new administration. First, as we have seen above, the main leaders were non-Li, and more than half of the leaders were non-Li, whereas before Liberation, the rich Li controlled the village completely. Supported by the new government, tenants for the first time controlled politics in rural area. In this sense, the CCP made the poor *fan shen*, "turn over" or "stand up". Second, as people said, the villages were full of energy. Many kinds of organizations were established. Men took part in the peasants' association and militia unit; women joined the women's association; girls joined *jie mei tuan*, the "sisters' corps", and boys all took part in *er tong tuan*, the "boys' corps". At that time, the leader of the sisters' corps in Lijialou was Wang Anheng's daughter, Wang Suyin. Li Wanxiang (Sb12), my landlord and Li Nanxiang (Sc30) were in charge of the children's corps. My
landlord, the leader of the boys' corps, told me that:

All the boys and girls of Lijialou often gathered together to learn new revolutionary songs, and they sometimes had singing contests with children's corps from other villages. In addition, they often helped the work team with all kinds of work, such as accounting.

By establishing these kinds of organizations, the CCP intended to increase its influence in the rural areas. The third characteristic of the period was that women were encouraged to leave the house, and they began to take part in public affairs for the first time in the rural areas. They took an active part not only in land reform, but also in the resistance to the U.S. and in aid to Korea (1950–1953). They made shoes for the soldiers at the front. The director of the women's association even changed her name from Li Qianshi to her present one Qian Zhihong, during the land reform. In her old name, Li Qianshi, Li was her husband's surname and Qian was her father's surname. The old name symbolized that she was a woman who had married from the Qian Family into the Li Family. In her new name, she took her father's surname as her surname, and for the middle and last characters, she used Zhihong which means "a person with high aspirations". This was not merely a change of name. It symbolized her independent personality as a woman. It also showed a woman marking her change of identity by changing her name, as well. There is no doubt that land reform marked a turning point in the liberation of women.

(2) Ascertaining class status

Once the new administration was set up, they began to classify the local people in terms of class status, according to the national guidelines. According to the CCP secretary of Lilou Xiang and other cadres or villagers who experienced land reform, the criteria were mainly based on two factors, the degree of exploitation and the amount of land holding. Here the degree of exploitation means the amount of income a family got from other people and the number of laborers a family hired. The criteria in this area were described in detail as fellows:

a. Landlord: Landlords were defined as those who were not engaged in production, who received 50 percent of their income from exploiting others, and whose average per capita landholding was more than 10 mu.
b. Rich peasant: This referred to those who took part in productive labor alongside their hired workers, and who obtained 20–30 percent of their income from exploitation. The average per capita landholding was between 7–10 mu.
c. Rich-middle peasant: Rich-middle peasants were those who were moderately exploitative. The average landholding per capita was 7 mu.
d. Middle peasant. Middle peasants were those who owned enough land to make a living and did not exploit people except for hiring some short-term labors during the
busy seasons. These were just self-sufficient. The average landholding per capita was 5 mu.
e. Lower-middle peasant. Lower-middle peasants were those below self-sufficiency, with an average landholding per capita of less than 5 mu.
f. Poor peasant. Poor peasants were those whose average per capita landholding was less than 3 mu. They did not have sufficient means of production, so they had to sell their labor to make a living.
g. Xiao tu di chu zu zhe, or small landowner. This was an additional category which referred to households in which the average landholding per capita was more than 10 mu. However, for some reason, such as poor health, or the death of a husband, they could not work the land themselves, so they rented their land to others. Although theoretically they were landlords, their special circumstances meant their exclusion from the landlord category.

Unlike Zengbu in Guangdong, described by the Potters, and Magaoqiao in Sichuan described by Endicott, the differentiation of class status in Lijialou was not carried out openly, though the criteria for placing families in a given class was explained publicly. According to the principles of The Agrarian Reform Law of the People's Republic of China, the determination of class status “shall be determined by democratic estimation and decision in village peasant meetings and peasant representative conferences under the leadership of the village people's governments, by the method of self-assessment and public discussion. If any person concerned is not a member of a peasant association he should nevertheless be invited to participate in the estimation and decision at the meetings and be allowed to argue his case [Liu 1950: 68–69].” In the case of Lijialou, ascertaining class status was not carried out in public. The leaders of the peasants' association assigned class statuses to all the families, under the leadership of the work team.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Status</th>
<th>Households of Li</th>
<th>Households of Non-Li</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landlord</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich peasant</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich middle peasant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle peasant</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor peasant</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a result, as Table 4–1 shows, 12 households were classified as landlords. Four of them consisted of widowers who were classified as small landowners. Then,
there were two households of rich peasants, one household of rich middle peasants, 11 households of middle peasants and 19 households of poor peasants. The attitudes of the Li cadres and non-Li cadres were different. One of the non-Li leaders told me that:

To assign the class statuses of the Li was very difficult. At first, we cadres were disunited. Whenever we made a secret decision, it would spread all over the village the next day. For example, if all the leaders of the our peasants' association classified “A” as a landlord at the meeting, then, after the meeting, a rumor would spread like this it was “B” in the peasants' association who had classified “A” as a landlord. Then people would hate “B”.

Since the Li was a big lineage with a large population, the non-Li cadres were afraid of incurring the hatred of the Li. Li Cadres often tried to protect their agnates. Fande (Ra2), another group leader told me that:

At that time, we Li cadres tried to assign the Li lower status than their real ones. For example, if “A” should have been classified as a landlord, we tried to make him a rich peasant, and if “B” should have been a rich peasant, we tried to make him a middle peasant.

Though only four of the nine cadres were from among the Li, they had a big influence in making decisions. At last, the Li cadres told me that, in fact, two households of the Li that should have been classified as landlords according to both criteria, the degree of exploitation and the amount of land holding, were classified as rich peasants, and five households that should have been classified as rich peasants were classified as middle peasant households. Those Li who served as bao jia or xiang heads under the GMD government received no punishment at all, and their classification was merely based on their holdings of land.

(3) Struggling against the landlords

After the classification, the work team and peasants’ association began the “struggle against the landlords” and “bitter speaking”. The biggest and worst-natured landlord in the village was Yuting (Rd14), but he took his wife, sons and grandsons and ran away to the north before the land reform. The other landlords who remained were almost all small landowners and widows. However, the work team still demanded that the village cadres and villagers must struggle against the landlords. Li members were not active in struggling against their relatives. The other non-Li did not dare to struggle against their masters, either. People told me that they were in a dilemma: on the one hand, they did not want to struggle against their agnates and relatives, and on the other hand, they were worried that, if they did not appear to be active, then the work team would criticize them. Forced by the work team to do so,
they had to put on a show. The class struggle here was not as violent as that reported by Potter and Endicott in Guangdong and Sichuan. No landlords in Lijialou were sentenced to death or to prison terms. Qian Zhihong, who was the director of the women’s association, told me that:

In the daytime, the work team held meetings to organize the peasants to criticize the landlords and educate us to make clear class distinctions. My mother-in-law was classified as a landlord. She complained that it was I who had classified her in this way. At the meeting in the daytime, we were active in criticizing the landlords, including my mother-in-law. It was nothing more than a show put on for the work team. When it got dark, we went back our yard, and I still greeted my mother-in-law respectfully, and talked with her as usual.

Judging people according to their class status was completely new, so that the peasants could not accept it immediately. Because the pressure was so severe, villagers just did as they were told by the work team on the surface, but their links, especially with their patrilineal kin and affines, were not that easily broken.

(4) Realizing the policy of “land to the tiller”

After the meetings for struggles and “bitter speaking”, the peasant association cadres began to confiscate wu da cai chan, “the five main categories of property” of the landlords, namely their land, houses, farm animals, farm implements, and surplus grain and furniture. As for the rich peasants, the government proposed that their economy should be preserved intact, in spite of the land reform. This was because “the existence of a rich peasant economy and its development within certain limits is advantageous to the development of the people’s economy in our country” [Liu 1950: 68]. Exactly as the central government directed, the peasants’ association in Lijialou organized the masses to redistribute the five kinds of property of the landlords. The property of the rich peasants was not to be confiscated unless they were classified as reactionaries, in which case the five main categories of their property would also be confiscated. However, according to the report of the Potters, the land and fishponds of rich peasants in Zengbu, Guangdong were confiscated [Potter and Potter 1990: 44]. This may have happened because of dense population. Li Jindi, a leader of a different Li family during land reform, described to me how they confiscated the property of landlords. He said:

We distributed the five kinds of the landlords’ property in the yard of Yuting. At that time, both the cadres and masses were afraid of confiscating the property of the landlords, because we thought the GMD would come back. I was afraid, too. Whenever people were called on to receive their share, they were afraid to come up to receive it.
Xia Benjie, a tenant living in Dongzhuang village gave me an example, to show how timid the poor peasants were,

Yiting (Qc9) was a coward. He was classified as a poor peasant. According to the criterion, he was short of 1 mu and 2 fen of land. When he was called to receive his share, he said he had enough, and refused to receive the land. Seeing that, we non-Li became even more cowardly.

However, with the help of work teams, the peasants' association finished distributing the land. Most of the property of Yuting (Rd14) was distributed to the Li or non-Li, but also to people from Zhangji, Yangzhuang, Qianhezhuang, Wuzhuang Zhangtulou and Chenzhuang, the villages around Lijialou. After the land reform, the landholding per capita in Xiao County was about 3 mu. Most of the tenants or long-term laborers, who had lived in Lijialou, went back their home areas during or after the land reform. A few of them moved to Dongzhuang, in which most of the villagers were tenants. Only five households remained. Though the amount of land per capita was not so large, its significance was much more political than economic.

The significance of the land reform can been seen as both political and economic. Politically, first the new government established a class system, which provided a basic framework for local political, economic and social life. As Huang Shumin has pointed: “Liberation was a complete reversal of their previous social positions. The landlords lost their landholdings and their status, and former tenants and farmhands were proclaimed newly honored citizens of China” [Huang 1989: 42]. The assigned class status was inherited in the patrilineal line from one’s father, like a surname. The inheritability of class status lasted until 1979 when the government decided to “take the caps off the landlords” and end the discrimination against them. Landlords had not only been subjected to criticism at meetings, and to the confiscation of most of their property, but they had become a despised group, subject to many restrictions. The descendants of landlords could hardly continue to go to high school; they could not join the Communist Youth League or CCP, nor could they serve as cadres or enter the army. Thus, nearly all the avenues of social mobility in the new society were closed to this group. Their landlord status even affected their getting married. Middle peasants were not considered politically suspect, but they were officially defined as being less trustworthy than poor peasants. During land reform, a new symbolic order was created and legitimized by the work team and peasants’ association. It was a new social order that gave those who used to be in a lower economic status a higher social status and greater political rights. Second, the power vacuum created by the destruction of the landlord class was filled by the new cadres and by the cooperatives, the women's associations, and other state organizations under cadre supervision. These organizations enabled the state to control the peasants more directly, rather than via the landlord-gentry class [Potter and Potter 1990: 56]. Third, to a certain degree, women were liberated, and they
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began to take part in political activities for the first time. There is no doubt that land reform marked a turning point in the liberation of women. Economically, land reform did reduce the polarization between landlords and poor peasants, by distributing landlords' property to the poor. However, rich and middle peasants still held more land, tools and livestock than poor peasants did. The polarization between rich or middle peasants and poor peasants continued to remain a problem.

2. THE FIRST STEP OF COLLECTIVIZATION

Having consolidated its political control in the rural area through land reform, the CCP began the economic transition to collectivized agriculture and Soviet-style industrialization. The problem was how to realize this aim. Liu Shaoqi and other leaders believed that the attainment of a collectivist socialist or communist society in rural China would not be possible until the technological and economic base was developed and modernized. On the other hand, Mao Zedong stressed that collectivization was the way to mechanization and the creation of a scientific agriculture. The former thought collectivization would result from mechanization, while the latter saw it as a channel of mechanization. However, Mao won. Immediately, he and the party decided to accomplish the plan of creating agricultural cooperation in China. On the other hand, from the point of view of the peasants, it was necessary to solve the problems of the rural areas. After land reform, one of the increasing problems was the widening gap between the rich and the poor. Many poor peasants were still short of labor, money, draught animals, fertilizer and tools, with some in debt and others selling or renting out their land. In his account of Sichuan, Endicott described how, “one family had already pawned its fields, and six or seven sold their crops to rich peasants in advance at a heavy discount, because they were short of food before the harvest and lacked money to buy it [Endicott 1988: 31].” If things had gone on in this way, polarization would inevitably have been aggravated day by day, and there would have been a return to the miseries of the old society. In order to stop the polarization and to realize the economic transition to socialism, the central government launched collectivization in rural China.

(1) Hu zhu zu, “mutual aid groups”

The first stage of collectivization was to get the peasantry into hu zhu zu, “mutual aid groups”. It had been traditional to exchange labor, tools, and draught animals among kinsmen, friends, and especially close patrilineal relatives, during the busy seasons, but the work team pushed this mutual aid concept further than had ever been practiced before. In the organization of “mutual aid groups”, individual families continued to retain their own means of production, but some economic decisions were made on a collective basis, with the aid of a leader and an accountant. Land could still be bought and sold privately, and therefore a better-off peasant class could continue. In Lijialou, encouraged by the new government, mutual aid groups were established.
Each of the mutual aid groups included five or ten households. The land and farm implements remained private, but people from different households worked together and shared their tools and draught animals. After the harvest, the crops produced on a farmer’s land still belonged to that farmer.

(2) Lower-level agricultural producers’ cooperatives

In this phase, mutual aid groups were organized into lower-level cooperatives, which were semi-socialist organizations. There were three major differences between lower-level cooperatives and mutual aid groups. First, in this more highly socialized unit, the members put their land at the collective’s disposal, along with their farm equipment, cattle, and labor. Second, member households were paid rent for the land shares they contributed. Approximately 30% of a household’s income was calculated based on the land it had contributed to the collective. The remainder of a household’s income was determined by the work its members performed, which was measured by the number of workpoints they accumulated during the year. Third, workpoints were the measure of labor performed for the collective. The specific value of a workpoint could not be fixed until the collective’s income had been calculated; then the profits made by the collective were divided by the total number of workpoints earned by all the members to establish the current value of one workpoint. The lower-level agricultural producers’ co-operative was semi-socialist. This designation is appropriate because, on the one it made unified use of land and rational use of farm tools, organized labor collectively, practiced distribution according to the work contributed, and controlled a fair amount of common property. On the other hand, the members still retained their private ownership of the land and other means of production, and received dividends on their land shares and certain payments for the pooling of their farm tools and draught animals. This kind of cooperative was a transitional form on the road to a fully socialist cooperative with collective ownership.

The first cooperative in Xiao County was established in July 1952. It was a completely new experience for the peasants. At first, people handed over their land and farm implements to the cooperatives and became shareholders in them. Work was recorded. One cooperative was an accounting unit. After harvest, except for the national agriculture grain tax and the accumulation fund, people received grain according to the amount of labor and the shares of land or farm implements they had contributed. In order to increase initiative, the amount based on labor was greater than that based on shares.

All the peasants in Lijialou and Dongzhuang were organized into two cooperatives, which were established between July and August 1953. Qian Zhihong (Photo 16) was selected as the head of one of the cooperatives. Most of the members of her cooperative were poor peasants, and four households in her cooperative were from the neighboring village of Zhangji. Though they had good class status, they did not have enough production materials. Li Jindi was selected as the head of the other. All the members in his cooperative were in Lijialou, and self-sufficient households
accounted for 50% of the members. So the total property contributed to their cooperative was much more than that in Qian Zhihong’s cooperative. The senior cadres therefore took more care of Qian’s cooperative than Li Jindi’s. For instance, the only oil mill, which used to be the property of Back Yard, was given to Qian’s cooperative. Moreover, this cooperative got more funds from the higher-level authorities. Li Jindi told me that:

Since Qian Zhihong was a female cadre, the higher authorities treated them better than us, so their cooperative got on better than ours did.

In the early period, the rich peasants and landlords were not allowed to join the cooperative, but later they were. Middle peasants were slow in joining, because they had enough land, labor, carts and farm implements. However, after the revolution, hiring labor was prohibited, so the middle peasants who were short of hands gradually began to join. Villagers told me that the lower-level cooperatives were really effective. Even middle peasants found that under the system of collective labor, for the first time they raised their yield of grains and increased their incomes. Around this time, the government not only guided peasants in adopting new farm methods and tools in production, but also enlarged its control at the grass-roots level. For instance, each xiang in Xiao County began to establish a party branch of the CCP and Youth League branches, both of which could develop their membership. Within the cooperative, one of the important changes concerned the labor of women. The women of Xiao County began to participate in agricultural labor for the first time. There was a popular saying widespread in this area, geng di bu yong niu, di li tao zhe jian fa tou, “plowing land did not need cattle; in the field short cuts were harnessed”. Here “short cut” refers to women, because for the first time women cut their hair short. Traditionally, unmarried women wore pigtails, and married women coiled up their hair. At that time, people were short of draught animals, so women pulled the ploughs instead of cattle. One important social consequence of this was that women’s work had a measurable economic value, and the workpoints they earned demonstrated their economic worth, even though their work within the household, such as cooking and weaving, tended not to be measured. Making the measured value of women’s work public tended to enhance their status, both within the household and in the community as a whole.

(3) Higher-level agricultural producers’ cooperatives

Lower-level agricultural producers’ cooperatives were soon transformed to higher-level cooperatives; this occurred between 1953 and 1958. There were mainly three differences between lower-level cooperatives and higher-level cooperatives. First, all the means of production, including land and equipment, were sold to the advanced cooperatives and were collectively owned. Second, the scale of higher-level cooperatives was much greater than that of the lower level institutions. They usually
consisted of several lower-stage cooperatives covering several villages. More and more people came to join the cooperatives, including the rich peasants and landlords. Third, all peasants worked for wages, regardless of their input of property, tools, animals, and land. Distribution was based entirely on the socialist principle of *ge jin suo neng, an lao fen pei*, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work". As a result, the four present administrative villages of Sunzhuang, Gaozhuang, Yangzhuang and Zhangji—in which Lijialou was included more than ten natural villages in all were merged into one higher stage agricultural producers' cooperative in 1956. The high-level cooperative was now the basic unit of agricultural management, production, and accounting. However, families were allowed to retain the ownership of small plots, and small farm implements, all of which were confiscated when the People's Commune was established in 1958. On the small plots they were allotted, they usually grew vegetables and other crops, such as cotton and peanuts for their own consumption.

(4) Establishing *gong xiao she*, “supply and marketing co-operatives” and social mobility

At the same time, the government began a campaign to change the traditional marketing system in the rural areas. Until then, private traders allied to the more prosperous peasants, had controlled the marketing of grain, cotton, tobacco, fruits, cooking oil and other crops, and prices floated up and down as a result of their calculations. Under the existing system, the government found that it could not secure sufficient products to support the urban industrial revolution at prices that it could afford. So the government established *gong xiao she*, “supply and marketing co-operatives” in every township, to compete with the petty capitalist traders. The *gong xiao she* had two main functions: to buy agrarian products from peasants and sell them to the state, and to buy industrial products from the state and sell them to the peasants. The prices of both industrial and agrarian products in the *gong xiao she* was decided by the central government.

To establish *gong xiao she*, the local government needed a lot of well-educated personnel. For this reason, five men and one woman in Lijialou were selected by the authorities to be clerks of the newly established *gong xiao she*. The five men were Sa 5, Sb12, Sb23, Sc30, Rc24, all from the Li Lineage, with good educations from private schools and of medium class status: one was a poor peasant, and the other four were middle peasants. The woman was the daughter of the new village head, Wang Anheng. Though she did not have a good school education, she had good class status and her father was village head, so she was selected as a staff member of the new formed *gong xiao she* of the district. It was clear that these six members were selected because of class status and education. When they began to work, they did not expect that this job would improve their social and economic status, or provide a source of social mobility for themselves and their relatives. In fact, all six of them improved their social status, and three of them have even become state cadres. All this made
them influential in their segments and in the village.

Wang Anheng’s daughter was soon chosen by the higher-level gong xiao she of Lujing District. She later married a man who was working in the commercial bureau of the county government. Now her husband is the head of the bureau, and she holds an important position in a mine. At the same time, she is an important patron for her relatives and other villagers in Lijialou. She has helped them find jobs in the township and the mine, buy cheap coal and fertilizer, and has helped them get interest-free loans. Xiangfei (Sa5) worked in the gong xiao she until the middle 1960s. His eldest son, Ta7, joined the army and became an officer. Now his son is the head of Hekou Town. His second son, Lingxian (Ta8), has been a team leader for twenty years. Xiangfei (Sa5) himself is running a grocery shop in the village. Wanxiang (Sb12) is my landlord. He began to work in the gong xiao she of Lujing District in 1953. Soon he was transferred to another gong xiao she in Yanglou Town, the only move during the 37 years of his career. At first, he was a shop assistant, and then in 1956 he became a cadre and a party member. He managed to avoid making any political mistakes, and has never been officially criticized. His uninterrupted career is famous in the local area. Even the commune cadres pay him respect. One day, I asked him how he had avoided “making mistakes”, despite experiencing so many political campaigns. He answered:

I became a cadre in 1956. Being a cadre, I had access to a lot of information, and was able to know about the party’s new policies earlier than the masses. I avoided saying the wrong things. At the beginning of each campaign, I tried to make sure what its essence was and what kind of people would be the target of the campaign. The principle is this: the higher one climbs during the campaign the harder one falls afterwards. Therefore, during the campaigns, I said very little.

At the end of 1989, he retired as a chairman of the co-operative of Yanglou Town. Now three of his daughters are working in his gong xiao she. People of Lijialou respect him, not only because of his position in the gong xiao she, but also because he is generous and helpful to the members of the Li lineage, especially to the people of Back Yard. For example, he helped people get married, arrange funerals, and buy good fertilizer at a cheap price. He also organized loans from the cooperative for Lingxian (Ta8) who wanted to buy a tractor, and for Fanlun (Re34) who used the money for his son’s marriage. He also helped people get temporary jobs in his gong xiao she. In the early 1980s, the birth control campaign began in Lijialou. A woman of Back Yard who had borne two children was persuaded by the leaders to be sterilized at a clinic. She soon died from a postoperative infection. Her husband was Lingwen (Tb12), a common peasant. When she was seriously ill, Lingwen (Tb28) came to Wanxiang (Sb12) for help. Wanxiang immediately found a car and sent her to the county hospital. After her death, Wanxiang (Sb12) went to the CCP secretary of Lujing District to ask for financial help for Lingwen, and the secretary agreed.
People said if Wanxiang (Sb12) had not gone to the district secretary, Lingwen would not have gotten the subsidy. Wanxiang (Sb12) has thus been a patron not only of Back Yard, but also of the whole of Lijialou. Fanmin (Rc24) began to work at a supply and marketing cooperative in 1950. Then he transferred to the fireproof material factory, and finally he moved to the Wuqi mine, where he became chief accountant. He retired in 1990. Now all his sons and daughters are working in the mine and his grandsons are studying in the mine school. He is an important patron for the people of Front Yard. Of the six, Nanxiang (Sc30) and Pengxiang (Sb23) are thought by the villagers to be less successful. Both of them gave up working for the cooperative fairly early, but afterward, both worked as clerks in the village for about twenty years.

The new social order gave those who used to be in a lower economic status a higher social status and more political power. As we have seen, the gong xiao she needed staff with education. Because the poor had seldom had a chance to go to school before Liberation, and the formerly rich had no chance to get work after the Liberation, well-educated middle peasants benefited from the revolution and formed an important part of the local élite. Therefore, the Li still have members in the élite stratum. On the other hand, those who, like Wang Anheng's daughter, were illiterate, but had good class positions, could also enter into the élite stratum. From this case, we can see that the new élite consisted of two categories: members of the younger generation with good class status and those with good education from better-off families. These new power-holders paid lip service to ideology, while they shared any resources they could get with their kinsmen and relatives. As a new local élite appeared, a new kind of patron-client relationship was established in the countryside.

(5) Tong gou tong xiao, "unified purchase and unified sale"

A basic problem of the Maoist era was how the CCP could secure the grain supply to feed the growing cities and help finance industrial expansion. In 1954, the central government began to develop a state monopoly for the purchase and marketing of grain, cotton, etc. The new policy meant in practice that all the surplus grain produced by the peasants had to be sold compulsorily to the state at prices set by the state. This kind of grain was called shang pin liang, "commodity grain", which is different from nong ye shui, "the agricultural tax", or gong liang, "public grain". According to the new policy, privately managed shops were not allowed to purchase or sell grain for themselves but could only act on behalf of the state's grain-control agencies, and peasants were not allowed to sell their surplus grain to private merchants but could only sell to state agencies or cooperatives or in state-established markets. Until then, surplus crops were bought and sold freely.

At that time, the village head of Lijialou was Wang Anheng, who used to be a tenant of Li Fanding (Rd30). Wang Anheng was dismissed in the first half of 1954 because of his disagreement with the quota imposed by the authorities. Li Yindi, an old cadre and party member told me:
At that time, the authorities forced our villagers to sell more surplus grain, but in fact, our situation was very bad. Except for the grain ration and seed for the next year, there was nearly no surplus grain to sell. The cadres from above did not believe it, so they came to the villages digging everywhere to find the grain. Wang Anheng sided with the villagers and did not want to force the villagers to sell “surplus” grain. In a village meeting, he criticized the party. As a result, he was arrested and taken to Lujing District. Some days later, he came back to Lijialou, but he was dismissed from his post. He was a good man.

The quota fixed by the officials was arbitrary. During this period, villagers were forced to sell their grain according to the quota, and since they sold most of the grain, they did not have enough to eat. As a result, there were several incidents of people seizing government grain stores in rural areas.

3. GREAT LEAP FORWARD TO SOCIALIST COLLECTIVIZATION

The structure of agricultural collectivization was finally completed in 1958, when the People's Communes were established. Several factors lay behind the Great Leap Forward and the establishment of communes. Perhaps the direct reason was the serious political situation in the regions around China. Between 1953 and 1958, America threatened China with nuclear attack seven times during the crises in Korea, Indo-China and the Taiwan straits. In response to the new situation Mao, along with most of China's top leaders, proposed a self-reliant “great leap forward” to mobilize the vast reserves of peasant labor and revolutionize agriculture through communes and militarization. On the other hand, Chairman Mao was also attempting to move rural China directly to the communist stage of development. Using ideological appeals and political power, Mao hoped to build the social and cultural superstructure first and then to create the substructure that would support it [Potter and Potter 1990: 68]. The Chinese government believed that the commune would become the basic social unit of the future communist society, as many utopian socialist thinkers, including Marx, Engles, and Lenin had predicted. The government hoped that simply by transforming the agricultural cooperatives into people's communes it could advance to the next stage of China's history. Collectivization was to be brought about by administrative measures, rather than by market forces. For the leaders, the higher the degree of collectivization in society, the nearer to the communist society it would be. There is a philosophical problem here in the relation of superstructure to economic base. A basic tenet of Marxism is that the superstructure depends on the economic base. Though Chinese leaders accepted this model, their strategy was to develop the superstructure and established communist ideology and institutions without waiting for the establishment of the economic and technical base that Marx had always considered a prerequisite to such development. As to the relationship between the material base and ideology, the Chinese leaders believed that correct ideology or theory could mobilize limitless material forces. This was expressed in a
speech by Chen Boda at Beijing University in 1958,

Karl Marx said: "Theory, once it has a grip on the masses, is instantly transformed into a material force." This is most strikingly borne out by the present situation of the great leap forward in China. Once Comrade Mao Tse-tung's thought has a grip on the masses, or conversely, once it is grasped by the masses, it becomes a weapon of the masses to open the road to the development of productive force [Chen 1958: 68].

This theory was one of the reasons leading to the later man-made disaster.

(1) Establishment of the People's Communes

In June and July of 1958, Qiliying People's Commune was started in Henan Province. Chairman Mao visited it, and declared it a success. From then on, the experimental "People's Commune" began to be held up as a model for communes in general and all the cooperatives began to be changed into communes. By the fall of 1958, more than 26,000 communes had been created. This was done by amalgamating about 680,000 collectives, consisting of over 123 million households, or ninety-nine percent of all peasants households in China [Hinton 1980: 674]. In the case of Xiao County, by September 1958, twenty-two communes were established, later reduced to nineteen through mergers. The explanation given by the state was that the people's commune was a basic unit of society, in which the working people united of their own free will under the leadership of the Communist Party and the People's government. Its task was to manage all industrial and agricultural production, trade, cultural and educational work and political affairs within its own sphere. The cooperatives were primarily agricultural production units, in contrast, the establishment of the commune made two big changes in production relationships and organization.

In production relationships, a very important feature was that private livestock and plots, on which peasants had been growing sideline products (vegetables, fruits, poultry, etc.) for their own consumption or for sale, were turned over to the common ownership of the commune. In terms of organization, the commune was much more complex. As well as being responsible for agricultural production, it managed all other administrative functions, including political, social, educational, commercial, industrial and military. The new organization produced a new kind of relationship between the central government and the village. The system of people's communes integrated government administration with commune management. The previous xiang was abolished, and instead, the commune dealt directly with the administration of the county. For ease of management, the commune was subdivided into production brigades, then production teams. The commune as a whole was the accounting unit, and the brigade and team were merely units for the assignment of labor.
In Xiao County, the district and xiang were abolished, and in their place, a people's commune was established in 1958. Three previous xiang, namely Lujing, Zhuji and Lilou (in which Lijialou was included) were merged into one big commune called Big Lujing Commune. Under the commune, there were 15 brigades. In order to meet the call to liberate production forces, each commune set up through the brigades community canteens, nurseries and sewing teams to free women from household labor. To facilitate management, these canteens and nurseries were to be set up by each brigade, and members did not have to use their services if they did not want to. In addition, the government also decreed that in accordance with the principle of facilitating production and leadership, smaller residential quarters might, gradually and in a proper way, be merged into bigger ones. In the case of Xiao County and Lijialou, however, this project of militarization was carried out immediately and in a less than proper way.

In the summer of 1958, the Lujing Commune opened community dining-rooms in each village or brigade and began to carry out the process of militarization. The team, brigade and commune were transformed into platoon, company, battalion and regiment. Lijialou belonged to the tenth battalion, and Fei from Yangzhuang was its party secretary. The tenth battalion controlled five companies or five villages, namely Yangzhuang, Dongzhuang, Wuzhuang, Luozhuang and Lijialou. At the same time, small villages began to be merged into big villages. As a result, Lijialou and Dongzhuang were merged with the big village of Yangzhuang, about three kilometers away, and Luozhuang was merged with Wuzhuang in the summer of 1958. All the livestock of the five villages and stockmen were gathered in Dongzhuang, and formed a livestock raising platoon. Villagers called this process da ban jia, “big moving home”. My landlady told me that:

I still remember the moving day. It was August 15 on the lunar calendar, the mid-autumn festival. The canteen made vegetable balls for dinner. After the dinner, suddenly gongs sounded throughout the village, and the cadres came to announce that we should move to Yangzhuang in order to achieve militarization.

Another informant told me that:

Fanju (Rc17) was blind. On the evening of August 15, his family moved to Yangzhuang in a hurry and forgot to call him. The next day, at lunch time, his grandson went back to Lijialou, bringing Fanju’s share of food from the canteen. On the way, he found his grandfather, who had hanged himself from a tree. He was too late.

During the GLF, just as they had been during the Taiping rebellion (1851-1864), nuclear families were destroyed and men and women were segregated in order to build a military order capable of carrying out work. Many villagers described to
me how they lived in the "long house":

In Yangzhuang Village, men of the same age lived in the same room, and so did women. We lived there for three months. On the night of November 15, most of the people came back to Lijialou. Just as we fell asleep, brigade cadres came in. They asked us who told us to come back, and we said we wanted to come back, since in Yangzhuang we only ate carrots, and it was better to eat carrots at home. The next day, the cadres called all the villagers together and asked who had led the mass return. The villagers thought that since Rc18's wife (a woman known as "Fourth Grandmother") was old, the cadres would not maltreat her, so we all suggested that she should own up. The grandmother agreed and told the cadres she was the leader. As a result, the cadres detained her in a room for a whole day.

During the period of "big moving home", people in Lijialou and Dongzhuang operated one canteen, so that nearly five hundred people ate from the same big pot. When the "big moving home" was over, each village opened a canteen. Later, the canteen of each village was divided into several smaller canteens. In order to force people to eat at canteens, cadres came to the peasants' houses to look for grain many times a day, digging the ground with sticks or spades. If they found anything, they would not only beat the person who hid the grain, but also confiscate it. In addition, all the old women were gathered together to take care of the children of the whole village. Though peasants were organized into collective organizations, their ideology and social institutions did not change that quickly. At that time, most of the village cadres tended to favor the peasants of their own villages, and did not want to let their fellow-villagers suffer. In order to carry out the party's policy more quickly, the authorities replaced the local cadres for cadres from outside. Between 1958 and 1960, four out of the six cadres in Lijialou were replaced by outsiders. Dong Guangyi from Dongzhuang, and Qian Zhihong from Lijialou were the locals who remained cadres.

The characteristics of the commune were expressed as: yi da er gong, "first bigness, second selflessness". That is, first they were large in size and collective in nature, and second they involved a higher degree of public ownership than the cooperatives. In Xiao County as in other parts of China, the Great Leap mobilized manpower as never before, and some gigantic projects which had failed before Liberation, such as building dams and reservoirs and digging canals, were carried out during this period. From a long-term point of view, these projects were valuable, but the immediate results were chaotic and uneconomic. These projects affected the agricultural production of the brigades and teams, and led to many problems, including the later disaster. People took part in hydraulic work during the day, and did farm work at night. Many informants who experienced the GLF told me that:

All the laborers were mobilized to dig rivers by day, and to harvest sweet
potatoes and peanuts at night in order to contribute to the speed of the GLF. We just moved on quickly, collecting the sweet potato and peanut plants without digging up all the actual potatoes and peanuts. We were too tired. Therefore, many potatoes and peanuts rotted in the field.

Peasants were forced to overwork, but they could not get enough food or sleep. In this situation, peasants had to adopt some strategies to survive, such as chu gong bu chu li “turning out for work, but making little effort”. If they saw the cadres coming, they would call out slogans and brandish their spades for a while, but when the cadres went away, they would stop working.

Some of the projects during this period were badly planned. For example, in 1958, Xiao County’s main work was water conservancy. The CCP committee of Xiao County issued a clarion call: shi nian ji hua yi nian wan, ku gan san nian gan jiang nan, “ten years plan, to be finished within one year; work hard three years, to catch up with the southern Yangzi area.” Historically, Xiao County had belonged to the predominantly wheat and coarse grain producing region of China, while in the southern areas of the Yangzi River basin rice is dominant. The rice yield per mu is twice or three times more than the wheat. Therefore, in order to raise the yield, the government of Anhui Province intended to “change the northern Yangzi areas into southern Yangzi areas” which meant planting rice like the south part of Yangzi instead of wheat. The peasants told me the soil here could not retain water, and therefore was unsuitable for planting rice, but the high-level leaders believed that, with the correct revolutionary spirit, people would be able to do anything they wanted.

Alongside this new collective agriculture was an emphasis on industrial development. In industry, the call was to catch up with England in 15 years or sooner. In most parts of China, each commune, or even the brigade, was encouraged to establish its own steel furnace. In the case of Lijialou and the commune, they did not build a furnace, but most of the able-bodied men were assigned to work on the steel furnace of Xiao County. All this led to a serious shortage of labor for planting and harvesting. The party secretary of the Tenth Battalion, Fei, told me that:

During late 1959 and May 1960, many people went away. Beside the boom in iron and steel-smelting and digging the rivers, thirty or forty men were transferred from our company (administrative village). We were short of labor. At that time, only women and children did farm work in the fields. However, twenty men came back to the village later, as a result of the bankruptcy of the iron and steel-smelting factories.

The shortage of labor made agricultural production fall. However, while trying to maintain the flow of grain to the state, in spite of falling output, officials resorted to exaggerating the reported crop yields. This was one of the factors causing the food shortage to turn into a man-made famine. Under pressure from higher-level
authorities to reach their production targets, the brigades and teams had to fabricate their production data. One of the most common strategies was that when the senior officials came to the villages, the village cadres would make villagers harvest wheat from several plots, and then combined the crops in a single "model" plot to make it look as if this densely planted field had indeed tripled or quadrupled its yield. To make their fraud appear plausible, the team and brigade cadres had to fabricate production data on paper too. Based on these falsified reports, commune or county authorities assigned even higher procurement quotas to buy the supposed surplus crops from brigade and teams. It resulted in a vicious circle. Qian Zhihong, a previous head of the co-operative and later a cadre in the commune, told me that:

I didn't agree with the cadres' proneness to boasting and exaggeration. However, I could not stop them. You know they transplanted the ripening crops from several fields into one field and claimed that the yield of this plot was the average. Sometimes in order to show how much we had harvested, they even put down straw inside a warehouse and then covered it with grain. The cadres reported a large figure to the higher authorities, but in fact we did not have that much grain. I had foreseen that if the situation continued people would die of hunger. I asked to be allowed to resign many times, but this request was refused. The senior cadres even said they would have a meeting to criticize me. Unavoidably, I made an excuse that I was ill and gave up my post in 1958.

The villagers told me that after the commune was established, pressures from different levels were put on their cadres and people. They said that cadres who were previously good people all became different people. At the same time, as they experienced this kind of radical revolution, the villagers gradually learned to pander to the higher authorities' tastes in order to defend themselves, and developed strategies in the process of negotiation with the government. For example, when the higher-level cadres asked them whether 385 jin (192.5 kilograms) of grain per person was enough to eat or not, a rich peasant said it was not enough, for which he was sent to the commune headquarters for days. From then on, nobody dared to tell the truth.

(2) Artificial or natural disaster?

In the early 1960s, as a result of the Great Leap Forward, the villagers were dying of hunger. There were three main reasons. In the first place, without long-term planning, the commune canteens used up the food quickly. Second, most of the able-bodied men were assigned to hydraulic works or to work at the steel furnace of Xiao County, so this led to a serious shortage of labor to plant and harvest the crops. In the third place, under the pressure from higher-level authorities to reach the production targets, the brigades and teams had to fabricate their production data. Villagers told me that edema was the most common symptom of hunger. People's
limbs became swollen like inflated balloons. Women had no periods, and men produced no sperm, so that in the group of nearby villages, no children were born during this period except in families of cadres such as Dong Guangyi, because he could obtain food. Li Xiangjia (Sd54) wrote a poem which described what he experienced during that period:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{She nan she bei qi sheng ai,} \\
\text{fu ji tian chang nan ren ai;} \\
\text{ji pi mian huang shao ren xing,} \\
\text{cun zhong dao lu cao cong sheng.}
\end{align*}
\]

The south of the commune and the north of the commune wail in chorus; the more hungry the stomach, the longer the day. It is unbearable; the hungry skin and yellow faces lose their human shape; in the village road the grass grows thick”.

At that time, people considered many ways of overcoming hunger. The best way was to escape from this area. At that time, the government did not allow the peasants to move out of the village. If villagers who escaped were caught, they would be captured and sent back. However, in Lijialou, many people, especially from Front Yard, successfully went off to their agnates or affines, who in the early 1950s, before the restrictions on the rural population flowing into urban areas had moved out and settled in the cities of Shaanxi Province. One old lady of Front Yard told me that:

Between 1958 and 1960, the people of Front Yard who were able to run away all did so. Only a few people from Front Yard who remained in Lijialou died of hunger. Most people of Back Yard starved to death, though, because they remained in the village. So more died there, than in the other yards.

She was right. Since Back Yard did not have kinsmen and relatives in cities, all the members of Back Yard stayed. As a result, nearly twenty people in Back Yard died of starvation. In Lijialou, out of a population of 205, thirty-nine villagers died of starvation. Similar sad events happened in other villages, too. In the neighboring village of Zhangji, a bigger village, more than eighty people died. However, in Dongzhuang, with which Lijialou once operated a canteen, only one old lady died. The reason was that during that time, there were more cadres from this village with access to resources. These cadres favored their villagers, who were in fact their agnates, as a result of it being a single lineage village. Here the relationship between Lijialou and Dongzhuang was interesting. Since the distance between them was only one kilometer, they had always belonged to the same administrative unit, even before the Liberation. Since most of the people of Dongzhuang were poor tenants, it was the Li of Lijialou who took the leadership in the bao. After the Liberation, the poor people “turned over their body” and were given higher social status. They began to take over the local leadership from the Li, even though the people of Lijialou still
looked down on Dongzhuang. They even jokingly called its people the "third junior segment of the Li". At that time, Lijialou and Dongzhuang were in the same brigade: Lijialou was divided into Team 1 and Team 2, and Dongzhuang was Team 3. Since Dongzhuang got the uncultivated land from Lijialou, Li call the people of Dongzhuang the adopted sons of the Li. By calling Dongzhuang "the third junior segment of the Li", the Li were able to at least recall their previous prestige, even though they no longer had control over the political and economic resources.

Because of the strict control, few villagers succeeded in escaping, and most of them remained. However, there was still room for them to overcome starvation. A popular saying spread all over at that time reflected the reality. "Cadres steal in the canteens, villagers steal in the fields". The cadres controlled the canteens and stores, so they took food from there. The villagers had no chance to get more food from the canteen, and the only place from which they could get food was the fields, even though they were collectivized. Stealing from the fields became routine, and villagers told me that at that time, stealing was not considered immoral, because they were too hungry. As housewives, women were in charge of the food for all the members of the family. When the land was enveloped in a curtain of darkness, women began to "steal" in the field. Four or five women usually formed a group, because they were extremely scared. The people who died of hunger were ordinary villagers; whereas cadres, cooks and laborers working on the wei xing tian, "satellite fields" had enough to eat. "Satellite fields" meant higher yield land established by the commune. During this period, each commune held several plots. In order to raise the yields, the commune had gathered five or six very able laborers from each platoon (team) and put them to work on the satellite land. People who worked there could eat better food in the commune canteens. They looked much fatter than the other villagers did. As for the cooks, the villagers made up a satirical verse about them: yi tian chi yi qian, er bu si chui shiyuan—"even if each commune member was delivered only five grams of food a day, cooks would not die of starvation". The cooks were in charge of delivering food, so not only the cooks themselves, but also their kinsmen or relatives could get a larger share than others. Those who had no connections with the cooks had to bear starvation or else they had to think up other ways of getting food. During the starvation period, many astonishing things happened. People told me many sad stories, for example: Li Pingfan (Rb9) stole the wheat seed, ate it raw and died. Li Fanjia (Re19) was a strong man and had an enormous appetite. He always felt hungry, but his wife and sons never shared their food with him, so he died. On the other hand, in the case of Li Fande (Ra2), his daughters always gave him even shares, so he did not die of starvation. Li Fanying (Re32) lost two daughters: one was eight and the other was seven. After the two daughters died, he and his wife did not report the deaths to the commune. They put the two girls in bed to make it look as if they were asleep. Thus, they were able to continue to get the two shares of food from the canteens.

Now, most Chinese have realized that what happened in 1960 was an artificial disaster caused mainly by bureaucracy. The central government also admitted its
responsibility. However, the peasants explained 1960 in their own way. A woman nearly 30 from another village told me that the deaths from starvation were the result of the sudden decision of the Soviet Union to cancel its scientific and engineering aid to China. The problem was that the Soviet Union had forced China to settle its debt to the USSR. Her explanation was shared by most of the younger generation, including myself ten years ago. When she mentioned the deaths from starvation, it seemed that she hated the Soviet Union. The senior generation judged history from their experience rather than from ideological education, so they know very well that it was mainly a man-made famine. However, the villagers just criticized their local cadres, who mistreated them, rather than Chairman Mao or other leaders in the central government. They had believed that Chairman Mao and the party were their emancipators, and could not be wrong. Only one man of about 50 said to me that:

Maybe Chairman Mao was a little bureaucratic. In 1958, he established the system of people's commune and started the GLF. If he was not a bureaucrat, why did he not come to the countryside to have a look at our real life, and to have a look at the effects of his policies?

(3) A letter that saved the lives of thousands of people

Whenever they talked about the three hard years from 1958 to 1961, many cadres and villagers would say, “If Yang Wenhao had not written the letter, more people would surely have died of starvation”. I visited this man twice. He lives at the eastern side of Lilou Village, 1.7 kilometers from Lijialou. He told me that:

In 1960, I was a teacher at the workers and peasants' teaching institute. I was so busy with the literacy campaign that I had not returned home for months. One day, soon after the wheat harvest, my wife came to me. She said that she could not live there any more, so she wanted to go to the west with some other villagers. I was surprised, and I asked her how about the children. She answered that I could take care of the elder one, and the young one could be adopted. I asked her what had happened in the village. She told me briefly. Realizing the serious situation, I went back home.

Even before entering the house, I found it had completely changed. The doors had disappeared, because people had used them as fuel for cooking. My mother, thin as a lath, lay on the bed and there was very little breath in her. Villagers told me that though the wheat harvest was just finished, they did not have enough food. The brigade delivered only 100 grams of food to each person. I could not work it out. I had believed that the construction of socialism should make our life better and better, but ten years had passed since the new China was established, so why was the present situation so hard? I wanted to write a letter to the higher-level officials. However, I hesitated. I had heard that a cadre of Xiao County had reported the difficult situation to senior officials, but the report was stopped on the way, and the cadre was put
into prison. I could do nothing and just went back to Yanglou to continue my work.

Then one day, I went to Xuzhou on official business. Finishing the business, I went to the station. Sitting at the station, I once again thought about whether I should write the letter or not. Finally, I decided I should write a letter to the secretary of the party committee of Anhui Province, because I believed in the communist party. I immediately found a sheet of telegram paper in the nearby post office and wrote a short letter. "At present, the masses are living a hard life. Each person can have only 100 grams of food a day. After the wheat harvest, the government should let the masses have more to eat." I thought that the senior cadres might not know this, so I wrote this letter.

Now soon after I sent the letter, it was said that the work team from the provincial government came to Lujing Commune to make a secret investigation. I did not realize it was related to my letter. In fact, on receiving my letter, the provincial government did send a work team to check up. One day, all the people who were educated and who lived and worked in Lujing or near Lujing were asked to write down their thoughts. I certainly did, myself. By looking at these papers, they recognized my handwriting. Then, one day, the director of the propaganda department of Lujing Commune and the director of the public security bureau of Anhui Province came to me and said: "You wrote the letter, right? Now the leading cadre is in Lujing, and he wants to see you right now". I thought disaster was imminent, so I said I should go back home for lunch first, and I would go to Lujing later. There were two reasons for wanting to go back home. One was that I thought I would be taken far away, so I needed bedclothes. The other reason was that, I wanted to let my family know where I was. The two men did not want me to go back, and I had to go with them immediately.

Entering the room, I just sat there without looking at them. One man said to me, "It was said you were scared. Why are you scared? What we have found was much more serious than what you wrote in the letter." Hearing the words, I felt a bit more at ease. Then the leading cadre asked me why I wrote the letter. I said: "Leading cadre, we have built our socialist state for ten years. Our soldiers, workers and peasants have been sweating and bleeding in order to build communism. But, is the present situation a natural disaster or artificial one? I was a PLA man for years, and I believe Chairman Mao is a wise leader. The problem is that the cadres at the lower levels are not working well. "The leading cadre said: "You wrote very well. You helped us to overcome our bureaucracy."

In September, the secretary of the party committee of Anhui Province stayed in Lujing for a period. He took his work team, consisting of more than 100 cadres, to Lujing Commune, sending seven or eight cadres to each brigade. Entering the village, the work team immediately called out, "Save the people first". They commanded the
brigade to open the store to deliver some soybeans to people who were suffering from dropsy. With the help of the work teams, starvation was soon ended. On the other hand, the work teams put many commune, brigade and team cadres into prison, and they even sentenced a party secretary in Lujing Commune and a brigade head to death. Villagers welcomed the work teams and thanked the provincial cadres for sending good work teams. Cadres at the lower levels did make mistakes during the GLF. However they made all these through acting in accordance with the directions from higher level cadres. It was provincial cadres or cadres at a higher level that should have been responsible for these mistakes. When the provincial leaders realized their mistake in the late GLF, and were trying to solve the problem, the letter of Yang Wenhao arrived at the provincial government. The letter provided provincial cadres with a chance to shirk their responsibility and shift the blame onto the cadres at the lower level. Thus, the provincial cadres immediately sent work teams to the villages and punished some local cadres as scapegoats. In July 1962, the previous judgment was rescinded, and the sentences were considered to be in error [Xiao Xian Difang Zhi Bianzhuan Weiyuanhui 1989: 27].

(4) The responsibility system

Following the GLF, Mao Zedong had lost some influence among the masses and Liu Shaoqi and his colleagues, who paid attention to material incentives for the peasants, had gained more influence. We can understand the situation from the popular saying, san tian bu xue xi, Mao zhu xi gan bu shang Liu Shaoqi, “if Chairman Mao stopped to study for three days, then he still could not catch up with Liu Shaoqi”. In 1961, in order to help the economy recover, economic planners like Chen Yun called for a revival of motivation in agriculture by two sets of reforms, in production management and in the administrative system of the rural areas. First, in regard to the economy, in order to improve the peasants’ life, each member of the brigade could obtain one or two fen of land as a private plot, which they could hold for 30 years, and the farm output quotas were fixed on a household basis. After the harvest, peasants would get the surplus amount of grain if they completed their quotas. The contract plot for each household changed each year. At the same time, rural markets were once more allowed to operate. Peasants grew vegetables and raised pigs and chickens. All these soon brought greater prosperity to the rural economy. The biggest difference between the two responsibility systems of 1962 and 1980 is that the former was adopted by the central government in order to help national economic recovery while in the latter case it was adopted by peasants in order to better their lives. As for administration, in 1962 the central government issued a 60-point document on the people’s communes from the central party committee. According to the document, the structure was redefined as a three-level system, namely commune, brigade and team. The new system stressed the production team as the lowest level, and the basic accounting unit as well, whereas in the previous system, the commune was the basic unit of production and accounting. Now each team was given a proportion of land
and its own draught animals, tools, and buildings, and it controlled the labor of its members. Each team had a formal team leader appointed by the brigade party committee. The brigade, the middle level of the three levels, became the unit of administration dealing with party organization, the women's association, rural light industry, medicine and education. The commune was the third and highest level of administrative, economic and political organization. It organized and funded projects that would benefit the commune level as a whole. It was the lowest level of organization that directly administered the laws and policies of the state. At the same time, big communes were divided into smaller communes. In the case of Xiao County, nineteen big communes were divided into sixty-two little communes, and the district was reconstituted again as the administrative unit larger than the commune.

With the responsibility system, the opening of the free market and administrative reform, the economy recovered immediately. It also caused a migration back from the urban to the rural areas. Those who had fled to the urban areas gradually went back their home villages, and many of them even gave up their jobs in the urban areas. However, Mao believed that if the system of contracting land to individual households gained momentum, it would represent a defeat for the agrarian revolution and would lead to the emergence of a new rich peasant class capable of exploiting others. Therefore, two years later, in 1964, the responsibility system ceased, and instead Mao called for renewed ideological effort through class struggle, which led to the Cultural Revolution.

4. CULTURAL AND IDEOLOGICAL CHANGE IN RURAL AREAS

(1) Cultural Revolution

In the beginning, the goal of the Cultural Revolution was to avoid the restoration of capitalism in China, as had happened in the case of revisionism in the Soviet Union, and to start a new and deeper stage of the socialist revolution, emphasizing proletarian culture. Compared with the GLF, launched to achieve a purely communist economic form, the Cultural Revolution was launched to achieve a purely communist cultural or ideological form. Different from the GLF, Cultural Revolution was unprecedented in the socialist history of the world. Therefore, the Chinese leaders had no models to draw upon. As for how to go about creating proletarian culture, Mao believed that the masses had to discover it for themselves. In its pure form, the Cultural Revolution lasted roughly from 1966 to 1969, while in a broad sense, it lasted ten years from 1966 to 1976, which the later government has called “ten years of chaos”.

In Xiao County, in June 8, 1966 after da zi bao, “the big character poster” by Nie Yuanzhi of Beijing University was published, and the fire of the Cultural Revolution was lit among middle school students. In August, 200 Red Guards went to Reiyun Temple in “the Emperor Hiding Valley”, and destroyed many stone monuments and other cultural relics. The Reiyun Temple was built during the Liang
Dynasty (502–557). It was the biggest Buddhist temple in Xiao County. The Red Guards even extorted a confession from the head of the temple by torture. Feeling hopeless, the Abbot committed suicide. In November, hundreds of Red Guards, organized by the CCP committee of Xiao County, went to Beijing. They were received six times by Mao Zedong in Tiananmen Square. In January of 1967, affected by the “January storm in Shanghai”, the rebel factions seized power from the CCP committee in Xiao County and established the preparatory committee of the revolutionary committee, which was called xiao ge for short. According to their different attitudes toward this new government, the mass organizations divided into two groups, bao pai, the “supporting faction” and ti pai, the “opposing faction”. As in the other great cities, these rival factions raided the military arsenal and took up arms. The whole county was in turmoil. As a result of the terror, in the autumn of 1967, 6408 Troop of the PLA came to Xiao County and went into action.

The Cultural Revolution in Lijialou began in the end of 1966. Lingxian (Ta8) said:

I still remember the beginning of Cultural Revolution. My elder brother left Lijialou to join the army one day in December. The next day at dawn, all the commune members except the landlords, rich peasants and reactionaries were called to gather in front of the brigade headquarters in Zhangji Village. That was the first meeting of the Cultural Revolution, and after that, the Cultural Revolution began at our brigade.

However, in the rural areas, things did not go as far as in the cities. Violence was minimal. The main events during the Cultural Revolution in the rural districts consisted mainly of the purging of a small handful of “capitalist-roaders” in authority within the party and the “five black kinds”, namely landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements, and misguided rightists who used to express political views opposed to those of the party. The present head of the administrative village, Wu Guangmin, told me that:

Each village had its Red Guards, called zhan dou dui, “fighting teams”. Some of them were students studying outside, and some of them were commune members. A fighting team could consist of one person or a dozen people. The Red Guards came to each house to search for old books. In addition, they wrote big character posters to criticize the leaders of the brigade and xiang.

Though the present leader said that each village had its fighting team of Red Guards, I did not hear about Red Guards in Lijialou. However, the rural schools played an important part in spreading the new socialist culture, a movement that started in the urban areas. Lingxian (Ta8) and his wife told me that:

At that time, we were both in school. As you did in the city, we recited lao san
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"pian" the three constantly-read articles" by Mao, "Serve the people", "In memory of Norman Bethune", and "The foolish old man who removed the mountains" at the beginning of class. We had two music lectures a week. In the music lesson, we learned to sing revolutionary songs and revolutionary model operas, and dance the "loyalty dance" as well.

As they talked about all these, they began to sing the popular revolutionary songs and performed the loyalty dance for me. I was surprised because, even though television was not popular then, the melody and style were the same as the songs and dances we performed in Shenyang, a city in the northeast. A married women who was a pupil in her natal home area told me that:

At that time, I was in Wudaokou Village. All the students who had been chosen as shao xian dui yuan, “advanced pioneers”, or members of the Communist Youth League, went to the commune headquarter to attend a long meeting, lasting three days and nights. Then we came back to village with red flags and began to search the landlords' houses, and destroyed all the furniture with dragon or phoenix designs on it.

Also, religious books and old classical Chinese books, including lineage genealogies, were taken as symbols of superstitious feudal thinking as well. Worried peasants started burning or hiding their genealogies. Traditional weddings, funeral and ancestor worship were forbidden for the same reason. Instead, the sayings of Chairman Mao were popular throughout China. The “Little Red Book”, a book consisting of short excerpts from Mao's writings, mostly from before 1949, played an extremely important role during those ten years between 1966-1976. Millions of copies were printed in China, and it was the Chinese equivalent of the Bible. In Lijialou, the villagers often learnt the three famous articles, which illustrated some of the new values of the proletariat, and they often applied the sayings of Mao to their production and administrative management. In this sense, the Cultural Revolution was a major event in the rural areas as well. The Cultural Revolution had an important meaning for the peasants. One of the results of the Cultural Revolution was that a modern national culture spread in the form of the cult of Chairman Mao. In the rural areas, through education in the schools and the propaganda of the administrative organizations, a new socialist culture was introduced into the villages. This culture included various political rituals, new rites of passage, and a new collective ideology.

During the Cultural Revolution, the central committee once again pointed out that hei wu lei, the “five black kinds” namely, landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements, and rightists were the targets of the struggle. These five kinds of people were often put on the stage, and in “struggle meetings”, people were again publicly reminded of the crimes of these five kinds of people. In Lijialou, landlord Yuting (Qd14) was often taken to Zhangji, where the brigade
headquarters and market were located. Previously, during the time of land reform, he and his family had run away. One of his wife's relatives, who was a cadre of Xiao County, gave him an official letter of introduction, and with this they went to Kaifeng, the capital of Henan Province. They changed their surname from Li to Zhu, which was the surname of Yuting's mother. In Kaifeng they claimed to be poor peasants, so the government provided them with relief, and people took pity on them and even gave them jobs in an orchard. People found that his grandson was very clever and sent him to learn how to repair watches. Later, they introduced the young man to the female manager of the watch factory, and they got along very well. They then got married. She was a party member and a state cadre. During the time of the "four clean-ups" campaign, the situation became serious. The couple worried that if they continued to keep Yuting in their home, and if people found out the truth, it would be all over for them, so they decided to get rid of their grandfather. They sent Yuting back to Lijialou before the beginning of Cultural Revolution. At that time, among West Yard only one man, Xiangzhong (Sd56), one of Yuting's grandsons, remained in Lijialou, working in the agriculture bureau of Xiao County. The other members of West Yard had all run away from the village. Villagers told me that Yuting was very scared of being denounced and that whenever he saw people come toward him, he would ask tearfully whether there was a "struggle meeting".

One day early in the morning, people found that the old man had been burned to death. Fanshan (Rc20) told me that:

At that time, Wu Delin was the team head. He was so frightened that he did not know what he should do. I went to the xiang headquarters, and reported the incident to the party secretary Wu. Secretary Wu said, "Since Yuting was burned to death, just dig the body out and bury it". At that time, Xiangzhong (Sd56) and his family were all in Xiao County, so I could not find anybody from West yard. The other people were afraid to dig. I called Reixiang (Sb20), Lingyou (Tb35), and each of us brought a dozen pails of water. When the water was poured on the dead body, it hissed and there was a terrible smell. Yuting's entire body was burned, except for his two wrists that were bound by rope. He had been tied up and drenched in petrol. People said that before the house had started to burn they had heard Yuting shouting. Seeing this, everyone in Lijialou realized that the people of Northeast Yard who had done all this, because thirty years ago Yuting had killed Lekai (Qd15).

In order to bury the body, I went to Zhangji to buy a straw mat. The shop assistant of the supply and marketing cooperative refused to sell one to me, because Yuting was a landlord. Finally, we found an old straw mat in Lijialou, bound up the corpse, and buried him in the northern part of Dongzhuang, in the site of his family graves. The villagers of Dongzhuang wanted to stop us. However, I told them it was the secretary of the commune who was letting us bury the body, and in the end, they agreed.

After that, Xiangzhong (a grandson of Yuting)’s wife came back from Xiao
County. Hearing about the incident, she bought some liquor and pork to express her thanks to the villagers who helped to bury Yuting. At that time, I was a stockman, and I lent her one of the rearing rooms. Xiangzhong's wife secretly prepared a feast there. I did not join in the feast, because I had been responsible for burying Yuting and I had lent them the room. If I had drunk with them, it would have looked suspicious.

This mystery of Yuting (Qd14)’s death has never been formally solved. None of the leaders of the commune, brigade or team have made detailed inquiries about the facts. People of West Yard have never asked for the murderer to be found, either. Although it was suspected that three brothers from the Northeast Yard, Re15, Re16 and Re17, the sons of Lekai (Qe15), had killed Yuting (Qd14) in revenge for the murder of their father, there were no witnesses who could prove that they had done it. Since Yuting belonged to the enemy class, so that his life at that time was considered valueless, the three brothers have never been charged with any crime. Perhaps people thought that since Yuting (Qd14) killed the father of the three brothers before the Liberation, it was fair for them to take violent revenge on the murderer. In this sense, the Cultural Revolution provided some peasants with a chance for personal vengeance. In other words, the death of Yuting (Qd14) was not because he was a landlord, but because he had antagonized others.

(2) Learning from Lei Feng and learning from Dazhai

Since the Cultural Revolution began in 1966, all kinds of political campaigns were carried out one after another in Xiao County, until 1977. One of these was the campaign of learning from Lei Feng, calling on the villagers to take more care of collective interests rather than private ones. For instance, at that time, each household tried to avoid delivering their precious fertilizer to the collective fields; they preferred to use it on their family plots to increase their income. Instead of “serving the people”, which Mao’s writings put forward as a prime tenet of proletarian culture, most of the peasants were still primarily concerned with their own interests. However, some people of the younger generation seemed to have accepted the socialist ideology: they collected fertilizer and sent it to the team without any reward. My landlady said that:

Some young men in our village, such as Nanxiang (Sc30), cut straw for the brigade’s stores without work points. They quietly put the straw in front of the collective storeroom. They invited me to join them. I refused, because I had children and old parents to take care of. I was busy enough with my housework, so how could I have time to be altruistic? The young people did not have families to support, so they could be altruistic for the team.

The campaign of learning from Dazhai began in 1964 in Xiao County. In 1968,
a model unit was soon identified in Xiao County. It was Guozhuang Brigade, famous for treating saline-alkaline soil. The party secretary of Guozhuang Brigade, Guo Hongjie, was selected as the alternate member of the Central Committee in the Ninth Central Committee of the CCP. The next year in 1970, the Revolutionary Committee of Anhui, the provincial government, made a decision to xue Dazhai gan Guozhuang, “learn from Dazhai and catch up with Guozhuang”. At the same time, Guo Hongjie became the director of the Revolutionary Committee of Xiao County, analogous to the present governor or secretary of the CCP committee of Xiao County. Guo was dismissed from this post in 1977. During his tenure of office, he was mainly engaged in the “learning from Dazhai” campaign. Dazhai was an ideological model rather than a model of collective production. First, during the six years between 1970 and 1977, Guo launched “socialist education” campaigns on six occasions. He dispatched his work teams to each of the villages, and the work teams remained in the villages until the overthrow of the gang of four, Wang Hongwen, Zhang Chunqiao, Jiang Qing and Yao Wenyuan, in 1976. During this period, a work team of ten people came to Zhangji Brigade. Villagers said that:

Since there were many of the “five black kinds” in Lijialou, the work team stayed at our village. As had been done in the early period of the Cultural Revolution, the work team first put members of these groups on stage. They used many methods to humiliate the five black kinds. Cixiang (Sc43)’s mother’s brother committed suicide after he was criticized for the first time.

In 1975, as a key element of the campaign, the process of flattening graves, was started. As a result, many old graves in Lijialou were flattened. Villagers said that, at that time, Li Laixiang (Sc40) was team leader and in charge of the work. He commanded seven girls to flatten some of the graves. They found some golden bricks and many silver or golden ornaments in the coffins. After that, the cadres commanded the girls to destroy more graves in order to find more gold or silver. Nobody knows exactly who kept this stuff, but the villagers think it must have been the cadres.

Another key element of socialist education was to launch a “commercial revolution” in the rural area. The work teams abolished the free markets in order to “cut off the tails of capitalism”. Villagers told me that:

Zhangji market was abolished as well. However, we used to go there to sell or buy the goods we needed, so when militiamen arrived in a cart, we would run away. When they left, we would gather in the free market of Zhangji again.

The work team overstressed grain production and de-emphasized commercial crops. During this period, many pear trees were cut down. Another aspect of learning from Dazhai campaign was to build water conservancy facilities. In 1974, everyone went to the Dashahe River and for a whole year worked on digging a
channel. As a result, the yield of grain that year was reduced. Since ideological struggle was stressed, production was underestimated, especially the production of cash crops such as cotton, so the peasants' standard of living was extremely low. For instance, in 1977, each person was allotted 16 chi (about five meters) of cotton cloth coupons a year. Because of low yields, the production team had less fuel to deliver among the commune members, so most of the households were short of fuel for cooking. The brigade often sent laborers to collect grass from the bends of rivers. Women often went to the railway 3 kilometers to collect the partly-burnt briquets of coal dust. Sometimes, the railway people confiscated the dust that the women had collected. The wife of Wu Delin told me that:

> During the commune period, the women of our three households, the wives of Li Jindi and Li Xiangzhong (Sd56) and I, shared only one suit of cotton cloth. We tried to avoid wearing the suit, and wore it only when we went visiting affines. This was because we didn’t have enough coupons to buy cotton cloth. Certainly, there were other fabrics that we could have bought without coupons, but they were too expensive for us to be able to buy them.

5. ORGANIZATIONS DURING THE COLLECTIVE PERIOD

(1) The arrangement of the three levels of collectives

During the collective period, Lijialou belonged to Zhangji Brigade, Lilou Commune. Lilou Commune included nine brigades and thirty-three natural villages. The commune was the same size of administrative unit as the xiang before Liberation. It was the lowest-level unit of state administration. Cadres above the level of commune authorities were called guo jia gan bu, “state cadres”, which meant they were paid by the state. Here we can find a big difference between revolutionary China and the old China before Liberation. In the imperial state, the bureaucracy reached only to the county level. Commune cadres were also called tuo chan gan bu, “cadres not able to engage in production”. The commune owned its elementary and middle schools, and a health clinic. Commune members could enjoy these facilities with little payment.

Under the commune was the brigade. Cadres beneath this level did not receive payment from state, but got their income from the collective economy. The brigade cadres represented the teams and peasants to the commune, and represented the commune to the teams and villagers. All the work of brigade was under the leadership of the party branch. This was one of the factors that distinguished the revolutionary state from earlier ones. Party organization, which paralleled the formal apparatus of government at every level, stretched down to the production brigade, where the party branch committee took over for the state. The brigade was also a corporate group with its own property, income and administrative staff, and its own headquarters. The brigade was the level at which basic social services for the peasants were
Socialist Collectivization in Rural China

administered. First, it owned a branch of the state trading and supply organization, which was usually located near the headquarters. This was a department store, selling manufactured goods to peasants and buying local products from peasants. It was a key unit of the local commerce. The Brigade also owned elementary and middle schools.

The production team took on a number of functions. It provided the economic, political and social framework within which peasants organized their lives. It was also a corporate group. It had exclusive rights over its share of land, and it owned the instruments and means of production, including tractors, other agricultural machines and implements, orchards and storage buildings. It controlled the labor power of its members. The basic organizational principle of the team was that it should maintain strict economic equality among its members and households. After the harvest, the team usually first set aside seed for the next year. It then paid the national tax, delivered its compulsory crop quotas to the state, and finally distributed the profits to its members. A team usually had the following functionaries: team leader, deputy team leader, accountant, storehouse keeper, workpoint recorder and livestock man. Like the head of a household, a team leader had the greatest authority. He had a number of functions: economic management, political education and deciding changes of personnel. The team leader had to resolve conflicts, not only within his team, but also between teams and upper levels of the bureaucracy. The election of team leaders was comparatively democratic, and the peasants had the right to choose their immediate heads. However, it was possible for the brigade to influence the process.

The team accountant was a vital figure in team management. As the accountant, he was in charge of everything involving accounting, such as rewarding labor, distributing workpoints, calculating the value of production, and lending grain or money to the villagers. In fact, the work of the accountant provided the basis for the team head to make decisions. Each team accountant was under the immediate supervision of the brigade accountant, and contributed his own team’s records to the aggregate reports, which were in turn sent by the brigade accountant to the commune. The team storekeeper was in charge of the team’s grain, machines, fertilizer and tools. The workpoint recorder as an assistant to the accountant, evaluated people’s work and allotted workpoints once a day, and reported to the accountant. The posts of accountant, storekeeper and workpoint recorder were decided by the team leader. If a certain amount of money or crops had to be used, the accountant had to write a brief informal note, then the team head gave his approval, and finally the storekeeper could hand over the money or the goods.

In the middle 1960, Xiao County once adopted a workpoint system on the Dazhai model. The Dazhai Brigade in Shanxi Province rewarded its labor on the basis of a personal rating and time worked rather than by the piece of work. The name of the Dazhai system was "fixed-rate, flexible-assessment". In this system, the team members classified themselves on the basis of strength, skill, diligence and work attitude. This system was once adopted in Lijialou. Villagers began to evaluate their
own workpoints by themselves. As a result, commune members disagreed with each other and quarreled all the time, and it was soon stopped. Instead, they created a new method, in which the workpoint recorder of the team evaluated people's work according to attendance, punctuality and labor contributed. Among the three factors, attendance was the main one. In Xiao County, a young able-bodied woman could theoretically receive eight workpoints, two points before breakfast, three points in the morning, and two points in the afternoon. A man could get ten points for a full day's labor, three points before breakfast, four points in the morning and three points in the afternoon. This work point system lasted until 1980.

According to the system of labor management in Lijialou, a bell was rung three times, announcing the beginning of work every day. If commune members were late once, they would be criticized, if they were late twice they had to make a self-criticism, and if they were late three times, they would lose two workpoints. To succeed, the new workpoint system, which was mainly based on the rate of attendance, depended on a high level of social or political consciousness among the members. If the team cadres were ineffective, lazy members could stand in the fields for half the day without doing much and still get their points, since rewards were not directly linked to quantity and quality. They went out to work on time, but did not work very hard. Some of the women brought needlework to the field. There was a verse which described the situation in the field at that time: "Go to work at half past nine, just stand at the edges of the field, men smoke tobacco, while women do needlework. As soon as the bell sounds, people leave immediately". As a result, at the end of the year villagers received many workpoints but very little money. The total workpoints for one day were worth about 1-2 jiao. In order to save time and raise production, in the 1970s villagers were not allowed to go back home for lunch. Women sent meals to the field three times a day. The villagers said that in fact they did not do any more work than before, so having their meals at the edge of the fields was simply a formality.

Under the collective economic system, every household received a guaranteed distribution of grain, cotton and other goods twice a year, in summer and autumn, each time according to directions in documents from the county. In the summer, wheat was distributed and in autumn it was other staples like sorghum, sweet potatoes, maize, peanuts, and pears. Pengxiang (Sb22), a team accountant told me that:

The principle of the distribution was that 70% was allotted according to the number of people, and 30% was allotted according to the amount of labor. This method lasted until the introduction of the responsibility system, in 1980. However, during 1963 and 1964, grain was allotted according to age. The CCP made this decision because at that time many laborers worked outside the rural areas. At that time, the population was divided into four age groups: the first included those who were one year old to five years old; the second included children from six to ten; the third included those from eleven to fifteen; and the
fourth included those who were older than sixteen.

If the family did not have enough workpoints to pay for their basic food-grain it would owe a long-term debt to the production team. In any given year, nearly all the families went into debt to the collective. In addition, the villagers often borrowed straw and stalks to build or repair their houses. If the villagers had no grain to eat, they could borrow these from the production team as well. The principle of lending was that everybody had the right to borrow but that the good laborers had first priority. Villagers said that in fact, some people were able to borrow and some were not. It depended on their relations with the cadres. On the other hand, since the yield of grain was low there, the teams often did not have enough grain to distribute, so they usually bought grain from government at a very low price. For example, in 1979, three teams of Lijialou all got grain from government. Each of the villagers could receive 31 kilograms per person. In addition, ten poor households got five more kilograms. At that time, Fanhong (Ra6) and his son divided their house, and the team distributed to each of the new households more than the average share, in order to support them. This impressive system of social security—a guaranteed income through interest-free loans for those temporarily short of food or short of cash—represented the egalitarian principle of socialism.

In addition to a share of the collective production, there also existed the incentive of a private plot for each family. Private plot land was distributed on a per capita basis to individual households, for their private use in growing their own vegetables, cotton, peanuts, or for building new houses. Private plot land was also distributed according to the number of pigs in each household. This kind of private land was called zhucai "pig food plot", and as the name suggests it was used for growing pig fodder. The size of the "pig food plot" for one pig in Lijialou was about two fen (about 130 square meters). The produce generated here was tax-free, creating an additional inducement for individual effort. In Lijialou, nearly half of the family income was derived from the private plots. Some people planted melons in their private plots and sold them in Xiao County, Hekou or Xuzhou to make money. As one of the results, the supply of labor for the team was reduced. For example, in the west team there were at most 20 laborers a day. Many people were engaged in work on their private plots or in selling their produce outside.

(2) Patron-client relations between cadres and commune members

As a result of collectivization, peasants became commune members, losing their autonomy in the economy and their social lives. They no longer owned or rented land or disposed of their own labor and production, but were obliged to participate in labor, in meetings and in other political activities. They had no choice but to work in the collective fields under the direction and authority of their team leaders and local party cadres. In addition, peasants were separated from urban residents by legal restrictions, creating a caste-like barrier against both geographic and social mobility.
They were bound to their team, and any geographic or social movement had to be approved by the local cadres. Therefore, to a certain extent the fate of the villagers depended on the relation between leaders and the peasants. The cadres had great control over the lives and fortunes of the villagers. If a peasant annoyed a local cadre, he might give him worse work assignments, or ensure that he and his family members never received coveted opportunities, ranging from joining the army to going outside the village for higher education. This was the background of the development of a patron-client relationship between cadres and commune members.

As Table 4-2 shows, Lijialou was divided into two teams, West Team and East Team, or the first team and the second team, between 1958 and 1970. From 1970 on, the East Team was divided into two teams, the second team and the third team. In 1984, when the people's commune was abolished, the three teams were merged into one village. The key leaders of Lijialou had several characteristics. First, there was little change in the accounting personnel. Ra3's daughter was replaced by Nanxiang (Sc30), because of her marriage, and Li Fanshan (Re20)'s daughter, Li Suying, was replaced by Pengxiang (Sb22), because she was promoted to be brigade accountant. On the other hand, there were more changes in team leadership. In the early period of collectivization, all the posts of team leader were occupied by people who were not members of the Li lineage. However, the Li gradually took over these positions.

In Lijialou, Li Yindi and Li Lingxian (Ta8) had the longest careers as team heads. The term of the former was twenty-four years, between 1958 and 1984, and the term of Lingxian (Ta8) was eighteen years, from 1970 to 1987. Li Yindi and Lingxian (Ta8) were of different types and they were rivals. Li Yindi is in his late fifties. Although his surname is Li, he and the majority of people of Lijialou are from different lineages. His grandfather, his father and he himself used to be tenants of the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start of tenure</th>
<th>Team 1</th>
<th>Team 2</th>
<th>Team 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>head</td>
<td>accountant</td>
<td>head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Wang jixian</td>
<td>Li Suying (Rc20'sD)</td>
<td>Li Yindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pengxiang (Sb22)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Wu Delin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Xiangkuan (Sb21)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Village Citizens' Group (Teams 1, 2 and 3 merged together)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>head</th>
<th>accountant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Lingxian (Ta8)</td>
<td>Pengxiang (Sb22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Xingguo (Sc34)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Li Lineage. With this background, he was more trusted by the authorities. He is also a party member. However, he is illiterate. Lingxian (Ta8) is in his early forties. He was born into the East Yard after the Liberation, and he attended middle school. His class status was that of middle peasant.

In the way they treated the villagers, the two team heads were completely different. Li Yindi neither favored the villagers nor did he ingratiate himself with the authorities. As a result, neither the villagers nor the higher-level cadres of higher level liked him. Some villagers said he was a real party member, while some complained he was too strict and even mistreated people.

Qian Zhihong told me that:

My third brother and his wife were landlords. They died and left an orphan. The orphan was in his early teens, and had to work in the team. Once, the orphan made a slight mistake and Yindi almost beat him to death. Li Qingyun (an old non-Li lady) and I could not keep silent any more, so we quietly found a teacher in the brigade-run elementary school and asked him to write a letter to the county government. The teacher's class status was landlord too, so he helped us. In the letter, we lodged a complaint that Li Yindi had established a private court and beat people willfully. Then the authorities soon dismissed Li Yindi from his post. However, he was reinstated later.

Lingxian (Ta8) told me how Li Yindi prevented him from attending the middle school in the late 1960s.

Between 1967 and 1968, schools in our brigade were all closed. In 1969, the schools were reopened. I wanted to attend middle school. At that time, without the agreement of the team head, nobody could attend middle school. I went to Yindi several times, and each time I was refused. Finally, I asked him why. Yindi said that the history of my family was not clear. It was nonsense. Hearing his words, I got angry. He was bullying me. How could I bear this? I picked up a spade to beat him. Finally, I got to attend middle school.

People said that, since Yindi had authority over the villagers, his wife often quarreled with other people. There was hardly a single household that she had not quarreled with. As a result, some villagers tended to curry favor with Yindi and his wife. For example, in order to keep good relations with Yindi, some of the members of Li Lineage often sent him all kinds of food or did sewing work for his family. These people could achieve a kind of protection from Yindi, whereas others would eventually suffer. However, some villagers said that Yindi was not so bad, he was just simple-minded, and was controlled by his partner, the accountant Nanxiang (Sc30), who had bad intentions.

Unlike Yindi, Lingxian (Ta8) is always loyal to the villagers and on their side. All the villagers, either old or young, either Li or non-Li, all said that he was the
fairest team head, because he is not selfish and always has the interests of the masses in his mind. He himself said that the villagers had believed in him and selected him as team leader, so he should not let the villagers suffer. He and his wife told me how he prevented the land of his team from being taken by the commune.

At that time, the commune wanted to establish a middle school in the southern part of Lijialou, where our pear orchard is situated. All the brigade leaders agreed, but I did not, because, I thought if they built a school there, then, the pupils will pass through our orchard frequently, and it will be very difficult for us to manage it. Since the land belongs to our team, the team head has authority to make the final decision. One day, cadres from the commune and brigades gathered in the commune headquarters to have dinner. They invited me, too. They asked me to yield on the issue of the orchard. I got angry and said firmly that it was no use asking me to give up the land. I would not give the land to them. After saying that, I left the dinner.

As a result, the brigade had to find another site for the school in another village. After that, the brigade cadres hated Lingxian (Ta8) more and more. However, the villagers liked him and trusted him. That is why when the three teams were merged into one village in 1984, Lingxian (Ta8) was selected as village head.

During the period of socialist collectivization, one of the new institutions introduced into the village was the concept of class. How did it work in the relations between the villagers, and between cadres and villagers? The data from Lijialou shows that although after the Liberation, the CCP adopted the concept of class, the villagers still see relationships based on consanguinity or marriage as important. Members of the same yard helped each other, irrespective of class status. For instance, Wanxiang (Sb12) helped one of his kinsmen of Back Yard who was rich peasant to get a job in his cooperative. With the help of the Li, a landlord of in West Yard moved back to Lijialou from the village of Quanlou. At that time, transferring registration from one village to another was very difficult, even for the poor and lower middle peasants, let alone the landlords. The landlord was Xiangjia (Sd54). His grandfather moved to that village, where half of the land belonged to him. After the Liberation, they remained there. In 1971, Xiangjia (Sd54) lost his wife. Many Li from Back Yard and Front Yard went to Quanlou Village to help Xiangjia (Sd54) with preparing the body for burial. However, people from East Yard and Northeast Yard did not send their representatives, because the relationship between the kinsmen of East Yard, Northeast Yard and Xiangjia (Sd54) was beyond the wu fu⁴. Losing his wife, Xiangjia (Sd54) lived an increasingly miserable life with his only son in a village where he had no kinsman at all. Xiangjia (Sd54) told me that:

At that time, life was really terrible. I was kept under strict control as a result of being a landlord. Some of the relatives suggested that I should let my only son be adopted in order to provide him with the means to live, but kinsmen in Lijialou, such as Xiangyun (Sb11), Nanxiang (Sc30) and Yingxiang (Sb13) did
not agree with this idea. Instead, they suggested that I should come back to Lijialou, so that people could take care of my son and me.

At that time, only one household of West Yard remained in Lijialou. This was Xiangzhong (Sd56)'s wife. She went to Fanshan (Rc20), whose second daughter was clerk of the brigade, the most powerful person in Lijialou. The brigade clerk immediately wrote a long letter to the team head of Quanlou, who was her friend. Reading the letter, the team head of Quanlou tore it up and agreed to the transfer of registration for Xiangjia (Sd54). Beside the agreement of the team head, there had to be agreement by the poor and lower-middle peasants. A meeting was held among the poor and lower-middle peasants of Quanlou. They all agreed to Xiangjia (Sd54)'s transfer. However, without the agreement of the team heads in Lijialou, Xiangjia (Sd54) would still not have been able to transfer. Xiangjia (Sd54) told me that:

At that time, the East Team leader of Lijialou was Yindi, and the West Team leader was Wu Delin. Even though the chiefs were different Li or non-Li, our Li people made up most of the population, so the cadres had to agree.

With the help of Fanshan (Rc20) and his daughter, clerk of the brigade, Xiangjia (Sd54) finally moved back to Lijialou. It was just during the socialist education campaign launched by Guo Hongjie, party secretary of Anhui Province. For a short period after Xiangjia (Sd54) came back to Lijialou, the authorities came to Lijialou and tried to find out who had allowed the transfer of the landlord from Quanlou to Lijialou. They called Fanshan (Rc20) many times, and Fanshan (Rc20) asserted emphatically that he knew nothing about it. If he had confessed, all the members of his family would have been out of luck and his daughter would have been sacked from all her posts.

As a result of the extent of the control of local cadres over the peasants, making fictive relationships with local cadres became popular during this period. Those who had no cadre connections among their agnates tried to find patrons from other lineages by establishing fictive relationships. In Chapter Two I explained that there had been three kind of fictive kinship relations in this area: gai zui, finding fictive parents for the baby who are agnates; ren gan qin, finding fictive parents from among non-agnates; and establishing fictive brotherhood among non-agnates. Traditional custom was adapted to the new situation. Here a description of the establishment of fictive parenthood will help us understand how the peasants' strategy worked. Lingxian (Ta8)'s wife told me that:

Our elder brother, Lingchang (Ta7), was going to be promoted from common soldier to officer. The army sent somebody to investigate his past in the village. At that time, Fei was the party secretary. He refused to write a certificate, because my father once refused to act as the team head, and from then on their relations began to get worse. We asked another brigade cadre, Sun Qilu. He
wrote a certificate for us, and thanks to his help, my brother was promoted. In 
order to thank Sun, Lingxian called Sun his fictive father.

With the help of Sun Qilu, Li Lingchang (Ta7) got a certificate from the 
brigade and was therefore promoted to officer rank. The fictive relation between 
Lingxian and Su continues to this day.

Looking back on the history between 1950 and 1980, socialist collectivization 
was realized in the countryside, and brought great changes to it.

In terms of politics:
(i) collectivization provided political and economic conditions for the state to 
achieve its vertical reach down into the natural village and even to the 
individual households. The penetration of the state into the village and 
even into the household was unprecedented. This penetration resulted in 
the planned economic system and the unified leadership of the party.
(ii) The main factor, which made the collectivization successful, was that the 
CCP produced a new local elite class.

There were some differences between the previous gentry class and the new 
local elite. First, the new elite had to have a good class status. Therefore, the previous 
tenants had a chance to be leaders of the community. Second, as a result of 
collectivization, peasants lost their autonomy in the economy and their social life, and 
the cadres were vested with more authority over the villagers. Therefore, 
patron-client relationships developed. Before the Liberation, patron-client 
relationships were not found between cadres and villagers, but were found between 
landlords and their tenants, based on economic factors. On the other hand, we can 
still find continuity between the old elite group and the new one. The similarity is that 
both of the two groups consist of those who are better educated and have a good 
relationship with the local people. Therefore, they tend to be loyal to their kinsmen 
and their local people. However, during the 30 years discussed, the cadres were not 
only loyal to their villagers, but also their patrons.

In relation to the economy:
(i) Though the nominal success of collectivization was hailed as a giant step 
toward economic progress in the countryside, in fact through the 
collectivized structure the state established a grain monopoly, procuring 
and distributing the basic food supplies of the whole country. Strictly 
speaking, collectivization benefited the urban areas much more than the 
rural areas.
(ii) Collectivization mobilized manpower as never before, and carried out 
some gigantic projects, which had failed before the Liberation, such as 
building dams and reservoirs, and digging canals. From a long-term point 
of view, these projects were valuable, but the immediate results were 
chaotic and uneconomic. These projects affected the agricultural 
production of lower level collectives and the life of villagers as well.
(iii) Material incentives were played down, and instead moral incentives were
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emphasized, so the policy of “taking grain as the main aim” prevented brigades and teams from planting cash crops, and the free market ceased. All these changes not only affected the income of the collectives but also reduced the income of the villagers.

(iv) Though the yields of crops did increase as compared with those before the Liberation, most of the produce was sold to the state at low prices. As a result, the peasants remained poor and therefore they lost their enthusiasm for production.

Notes

1. After Liberation, the name of Yili Xiang was changed into Lilou Xiang.
2. People told me that, his real name was Li Linghua and he was a member of the same lineage as the Li of Lijialou, but he lived in the other village. In the anti-rightist struggle, Li Linghua was classified as a right and hanged himself.
3. There is a legend relating that Liu Bang, an Emperor of the Han Dynasty, once took refuge in this valley.
4. Wu fu means the five mourning grades. It is a category drawn up in regard to a given ego. The five mourning grades not only provide the boundaries for mourning but also for other ceremonies and the exogamous boundary between people of the same lineage. I will explain wu fu in detail in Chapter 8.
Chapter 5  Lijialou under the Responsibility System

In this chapter, I will deal with the period of decollectivization between 1980 and 1991. It includes an account of how the responsibility system was utilized as a way of resolving the economic crisis within the brigades, and how it obtained central government approval and became a system which spread all over China. The adoption of the responsibility system was not merely an economic reform, but it has also brought great changes to both political and social life.

1. THE START OF THE RESPONSIBILITY SYSTEM IN ANHUI PROVINCE

After the death of Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, in December 1978, snatched the leadership from Hua Guofeng. Since then, China’s economic reforms have gone hand-in-hand with democratization. How to begin reforms in the rural areas remained a problem for the central party committee and government. Before the central government was able to work out reform policies, the peasants and local cadres of Anhui had already sought a good way to develop their own economy, and their achievements provided the central party with an important alternative.

Wang Yuzhao, the former party secretary of Chuxian Prefecture, Anhui Province, described how the responsibility system began in this area and later in the whole of Anhui and China. In September 1978, Chuxian Prefecture experienced one of the most serious ever recorded droughts. In order to arrange production in order to deal with the situation, the CCP committee of Chuxian Prefecture called a four-level cadre emergency meeting. Cadres of prefecture, counties, communes and brigades all attended the meeting, in which some party secretaries of communes and brigades mentioned that, in their areas, they had quietly made contracts with small groups or individual households, and that this had produced good results. Under this system, all land was divided among small groups. Each group concluded a contract with the collective to fulfil a fixed production quota. There were bonuses or fines depending on output. However, draught animals, machinery, and irrigation remained under collective control. Payment was by workpoints. The method was simple and the benefits were attractive. It was a version of the “three freedoms and one contract” system, which had been introduced to the socialist cooperative economy by the government in 1962, but which was soon criticized by Mao and, as a result, was soon suppressed. Though confused, the leaders of the prefecture finally decided to report their plan of extending group contracts to the whole prefecture to the CCP committee of Anhui Province. At the same time, they investigated the communes carrying out the group contracts, and found the methods really worked. Wan Li, the present chairman of the National People’s Congress, was the party secretary of Anhui Province. He pointed out that practice was the only criterion for judging truth, and agreed to the plan. Supported by the province, the prefecture soon issued a document on setting up group contracts.
By October 1978, production teams adopting the group responsibility system accounted for 62.2% of all the teams in Chuxian Prefecture. With the new methods, the commune members not only overcame the drought, but also increased their crop yield. They said that in the past, people with authority did not work in the fields, while people doing farm work had no authority. "But now that cadres engage in production with us, we feel there is hope in our future" [Wang 1979]. In another report, from Luan County, Luan Prefecture, Anhui, officials described how in the Red Bridge Brigade, the responsibility system was instituted early in the autumn of 1971. Both cadres and commune members in the brigade said that, "The biggest merit of this method is that production development began to be related closely to the interests of the commune members. In the past, commune members went to work in order to get workpoints. But now they work in order to raise output" [Liu and Wang 1979].

Two months later, in December 1978, the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Party Congress was held. In the congress, the party made an important decision to make a "new long march" to modernization. This included making the market place the center of more social and economic transactions inside China and creating an opening to the capitalist West. At the same time, the central party accepted the method of group contracts. In the spring of 1980, the central CCP legitimized the system and extended it all over China, in order to improve the management of the rural economy, to furnish incentives for raising productivity, and to increase peasant income. In the early stages, the local cadres did not seem eager to give up collective farming. First, they faced an ideological dilemma. The cadres had seen the development of the collective economy as their main priority and they had pledged their lives to that. In a sense, cadres were a group with a vested interest in the collective economy. Replacing collectivization with family production meant that they would lose something. On the other hand, the cadres were bound by party discipline to follow instructions from higher levels, so though they had doubts, they had to put the new plan into action. The villagers on the contrary warmly welcomed the new policy. One of the cadres of Lujing District told me:

At first, most of our cadres were not convinced. Why should we give up the principle of collective prosperity to take the road of building up family fortunes? Was not the responsibility system a capitalist road we had been resisting? However, the masses were enthusiastic. The central CCP gave us a document about dividing the land, but there were no detailed instructions in the document. The method in Lujing District was that we divided the land gradually. Those lands for crops that did not require a roller to be used to prepare the soil, namely cotton and sweet potatoes, were divided first. It took us two years, from 1980 to 1981, to finish dividing the whole of the land.

Lijialou adopted the system of household production responsibility in 1980. It took them two and a half years to finish the whole process. As was described above,
during the commune period, Lijialou was divided into three teams. The quality and quantity of the land were not the same for each team. The first team’s land was all of high quality, whereas the second and the third teams’ land were not so good. On the other hand, the two latter teams owned more pears trees and “waste land” on which no tax had to be paid. Because of the differences in the quantity and quality of lands among the three teams, the divisions of contracted land took place separately. The second and third teams had once been one team, so the two teams merged their lands and other property and divided them among commune members, while the first team divided its contracted land on its own.

The process of dividing land among households was carried out as follows. First, cadres and villagers’ representatives classified the lands into several grades according to quality, and then measured the amount of land in each grade. The households drew lots on a per capita basis, including all those who were registered as living in the village, although some people were in fact living elsewhere. Closely related households, such as the households of fathers and sons, brothers, and close relatives, sent one representative to draw the lots for their households, in order to ensure that their fields would be conveniently contiguous. In response to the new policy, the peasants began to revive household and kinship-based forms of production. Since Anhui was the first province to adopt the family contract production system, they had no experience, and the result was that each household had so many plots that sometimes they even forgot to plant them. The number of plots per household varied from six to eleven, which was not good for mechanization or management. Following the distribution of land, livestock, small and medium sized equipment, fruit trees and willows were distributed in 1981, and in 1982, the large equipment and threshing grounds were finally allocated. The production teams, which still owned the land, warned that it was prohibited to buy or sell land, to lease it, to transfer it or to waste it. Rights to land allotments were not to be inherited by sons.

2. CHANGES OF LOCAL POLITICS

The idea that the economic basis determines the superstructure is one of the basic theories of Marxism. It provides a good basis for explaining rural reform in China over the last ten years. It is clear that economic reform has brought about great administrative reform.

(1) Administrative reform

There have been three significant changes in rural administration. First, after the death of Mao, in 1978, during the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Party Congress, the government decided to transfer their main attention from politics to economic construction. Instead of class struggle and socialist education, economic development became the most important work of the xiang government and the xiang CCP committee. Secretary Zhu of Lilou Xiang, fifty-four years old, joined the revolution
at the age of sixteen in 1952, and became the secretary in 1976. He explained the reason to me:

At present, the central task of the party is to help the masses to develop production and the economy, whereas during the last thirty years, the main work was to carry out class struggle, social education and so on.

Second, in 1984, the administrative unit of the commune became the township or xiang, the brigade was converted to the administrative village, and the production teams were turned into a village group.

Third, at the level of the xiang, internal reorganization divided its functions into politics (the party), administration (the government) and economics (agriculture, industry and commerce). The central party committee and government realized that the merging of politics, economics, and government administration during the GLF had been a mistake, and that the party bureaucracy had exerted unnecessary influence.

The new administrative reform was to free the initiative of the peasants from the control of the party. Until 1984, the revolutionary committee of the commune had exercised leadership. The revolutionary committee had political, economic and administrative functions, among which the political function was most important. The secretary had authority over all aspects of commune life. Since 1984, the revolutionary committee has been changed into the xiang government and the CCP committee. The xiang government is in charge of production, irrigation, the family planning campaign, and so on. The CCP committee is in charge of ideological education and helps the government carry out its work. Compared with the collective period, government plays a more important role than the CCP committee. I visited Lilou Xiang headquarters, and each time I was able to meet the party secretary, while the xiang heads were always absent, visiting the villages. The government also abolished all class labels, so that landlords and rich peasants became common villagers. In order to arouse the enthusiasm of the masses, the xiang not only divided land among the peasants, but also transferred the commune-run hospital and other rural enterprises, such as building and brick production, to private management. However, there was no change in size between the commune and the xiang. Now Lilou Xiang has a population of 12,519, divided between 2,622 households, nine administrative villages or 44 natural villages. The xiang owns 20,500 mu of land, 19,000 mu of which is contract land, and the rest is private land divided between individuals in 1962. It has its headquarters, with its own kitchen, cooks and dining hall where the cadres eat.

The former brigade was replaced by the present xing zheng cun, “administrative village”. Lijialou belongs to Yangzhuang Administrative Village, which includes five cun min xiao zu, “village citizens’ groups”. According to the record of Yangzhuang Administrative Village, it has a population of 1,281, divided into 331 households in 1989.
The administrative village is different from the xiang in that politics and administration are not separated and the party branch still takes the main leadership (Fig. 5-1). The party branch of Yangzhuang Administrative Village consists of three members: the secretary, deputy secretary and one committee member in charge of organization. The secretary is Fei. He took over this post in the early 1958. The deputy secretary is Wu Guangmin, a man of sixty, with six years of education. Both of these two secretaries are from Yangzhuang. The committee member is Li Tianxiang (Sc37), a member of Front Yard, who is in charge of organization. Under the party branch, there are four organizations: village citizens' group, the branch of the youth league, the women's association and the militia. The main posts of the four organizations are all occupied by party members. As a result, political and administrative overlapping has occurred. For instance, the deputy party secretary is the village head, and an organization member, Li Tianxiang (Sc37), is in charge of the women's association. Another two party members are in charge of the branch of the youth league and the militia. The village citizens committee consists of five members, including the village head, deputy head, the accountant, the manager of the birth control program, and an official in charge of settling disputes. Li Tianxiang (Sc37) is the accountant. He began his career as a brigade accountant in 1980. Until then, his sister had been in this important post for more than ten years. The previous production team has been replaced by the village citizens' group” which is usually a natural village. However, the production team was not necessarily a natural village, and it sometimes included only a part of a village. Each village citizens’ group has one head and one accountant. It
is significant if a natural village becomes an administrative unit, because the natural village usually consists of a single lineage and one segment of a localized lineage, so that the new administrative reform has sometimes strengthened the solidarity of the lineage. This also affects political relations in the village.

Now that the central work of the government has shifted from politics to the economy, it has led to reform of the cadres. The new situation requires well-educated, able young cadres rather than those with good class status, who are sometimes illiterate. Generally, the cadres of Lilou Xiang, administrative villages and natural villages fall into three cohorts: old, middle, and young. The old cadres are the early activists, responsible for land reform and collectivization. The second cohort includes those who have grown up after the Liberation, and have better education than the old. The third cohort consists of those who became cadres after the adoption of the responsibility system, some of whom have graduated from college or university. On the other hand, since the shift of emphasis from politics to the economy, the activities of the CCP and CYL have been affected. The functions of the CCP and CYL have been weakened, as compared with their activities during the collective period. The deputy secretary of Yangzhuang Administrative Village, Wu Guangmin told me:

There are 24 party members in the administrative village. We should have a group meeting every ten days and a branch meeting every month. In fact, it is difficult to have them. Even in the party members' meeting, half of the members are absent. No villagers want to be recruited.

I also interviewed the secretary of the Communist Youth League of Lilou Xiang, a man aged 26. He graduated from the University of Inner-Mongolia, where he majored in milk production in 1989. Soon thereafter he came to Anhui. He pointed out that the CYL's work in the xiang was difficult. First, there is no money. Second, the Youth members are separated, so it is difficult to call them together. The CYL's work in the xiang has now nearly ceased.

(2) Changing relation between cadres and the masses

It is clear that with the responsibility system, especially after the breakup of the commune, the general trend is that shared material interests have become the basis for action and that economics has become more important than politics. As for local politics, there are two significant changes: the control of local government and of the cadres over the masses has been weakened, and the villagers have more say in the management of the village. When I asked the peasants the reason for this weakening of political control, my landlady expressed it like this:

During the commune period, the cadres controlled economic rights, but now, land and other property are divided between households.
Another woman told me:

During that time, the cadres lived at the expense of us, the masses: they had a better life. Now land has been divided, and everything depends on labor, so some of the cadres can not have as good a life as that of the masses.

During the collective period, the two opposite categories were the cadres and masses: the cadres had authority over collective property and the masses, and therefore were patrons, while the latter lost their autonomy. Now, the collective has less property to control, so the cadres’ authority has been reduced. Therefore, the masses rely less on them, and indeed have more chance to supervise them. One of the cadres in the organizing department of the CCP committee of Xiao County explained:

The collective economy is weakening because all the collective property has been distributed. Now the collective has nothing in its own hands, so the masses do not listen to the cadres at all. It was our [i.e., the local government’s] mistake to distribute all the collective property.

Here we can see that weakening the collective economy leads to weakening of the political control and authority of the cadres. Before analyzing the change in Lijialou, maybe a comparison with Guangdong and Fujian will give us some hints about how to understand the recent relations between local government and peasants. In his recent book, *The Spiral Road*, Huang reported that, to buy a hand tractor, which now costs about 4,500 yuan, most villagers borrow money from the government’s land bank or agricultural credit cooperative. To apply for such loans, a family must have the village government’s stamp of approval. Without that, financial institutions will not consider any individual loan applications. The village government thus controls the villagers’ investment plans. The local cadres told Huang that:

In our village, business investment is the biggest concern among village families. We can threaten people with cutting off their business ties [Huang 1989: 177–180].

In the case of Guangdong, the Potters reported that party members remain in a strong position, because they have consolidated their opportunities, through managing factories and doing business, to make a great deal of money. The Zengbu party cadres control the Hong Kong processing factories, a most important sector of the local economy. They still retain control of the economy and local administration at all levels [Potter and Potter 1990: 281]. We can see that the local cadres in the two areas still retain strong control over the peasants. In the case of Fujian, through administrative means, they control bank investments, and therefore control the business links of the peasants. In the case of Guangdong, the local cadres still control
the most important sectors of the local economy. However, in the case of Xiao County, these factors are lacking. First the local government bank has little money to lend to the peasants. The only people who can borrow money from the banks are cadres or their relatives; the masses have no chance. Second, the collective economy is not as strong as those in Fujian and Guangdong are. As the xiang level, it has given up control of the local hospital and rural enterprises. On the administrative village level, the remaining fixed assets of the collective include only the elementary school and a water pump. One accountant told me that, in fact, water pumps were privatized in 1980, so in 1989, in order to resist the drought, the higher authorities had to give them some more water pumps. This is perhaps related to the fact that Anhui was the first province to adopt the responsibility system.

Another cause of the weakening control of the cadres and increasing power of the masses is the change in financial institutions. During the commune period, peasants only engaged in production, but not in the distribution of workpoints and income, or other aspects of team management. After the harvest, it was the cadres who deducted from the total income the national tax, seeds for the next year, aid for the five-guarantee households, payment for the school, and other public expenses, including the cadres’ salaries. After deducting all these expenses, the cadres distributed money or crops according to workpoints. Now, the land is in the peasants’ hands, and all the produce from their land initially belongs to them. After the harvest, the peasants get their income directly. The cadres have to collect money from each household for expenses, such as official salaries, welfare payments for the five-guarantee households, support for Army families and schools, and other public costs, including the cadres’ annual expenditures in line of duty. People call all these expenditures za zhi, “multiple expenditures”.

First, the salaries of the cadres of the administrative village and village citizen groups all come from za zhi. The average income in Yangzhuang Administrative Village was 450 yuan in 1988, and 550 yuan in 1989. The salary of each cadre may differ. As in the case of the land, contracts with cadres link special political or administrative tasks to direct material incentives. The payment to the cadres depends on the type and the amount of work, not the result of the work. This makes the cadres try to take responsibility for more work. A five-guarantee household also receives a certain amount of money or crops from the village. (A five-guarantee household is one where the members are old and have no sons.) During the Cultural Revolution, people of bad class origins did not enjoy this benefit. At present, each of the five-guarantee households can receive 250 kilograms of wheat and 100 yuan every year, all of which the natural village pays for. Alternatively, they can have access to contract land instead of receiving wheat and cash, and they do not need to pay a tax in grain to the state. The five-guarantee household is one way in which the socialist welfare system is better than the previous one. In Yangzhuang Administrative Village, there are fifteen such households, eight of which are in Lijialou. The households of soldiers away on service can receive 340 yuan every year and can maintain the contract land allocated to the soldier, while he is away.
Za zhi is paid twice a year, in the summer and winter, on the basis of the members of the family who have a share of contracted land from village. First, the head and accountant of each village collect it in their own villages and then they hand it over to the administrative village. The average za zhi per person has risen quickly in recent years. The amount in 1990 was 130 yuan. This has intensified the conflict between the cadres and masses. Since the collective has no money, any public expenditure, such as repairing roads or irrigation, has to be paid for by the peasants. On the other hand, the peasants complain that the cadres do not use the money properly, and that they use it to drink and make private deals. At the administrative level there is no dining room, so if the more senior cadres visit the village, the village cadres will give them dinner at home. All the cost is included in the za zhi and is paid for by the peasants. The peasants complain that the cadres eat and drink too much, so some of the peasants have even refused to pay. During the season for collecting za zhi, hardly any of the natural villages can collect all the money, so cadres from the administrative village and xiang go to each natural village to press for payment by calling out names over the public radio (Photo 12). In 1990, Li Yindi at first refused to pay, because he said he had no money. Secretary Fei criticized him many times, but Yindi still did not pay. Finally, Secretary Fei said that if Yindi continued to refuse, he would expel him from the party. During the collective period, peasants who could not pay for their grain ration could delay until the next year. Now the collectives have no money, so the peasants have to pay immediately.

In a word, without the masses paying za zhi, the collective can do nothing. This produces two results. Firstly, the prestige of the collective and cadres has been reduced. Secondly, the masses have begun to take more care of the management of the village, and supervise the cadres more strictly. With the land under their control, the villagers want to select a village head that will represent the villagers’ interests, and not his or her own interests or those of the authorities. Here are two cases, one from Lijialou, the other from Yangzhuang Administrative Village that illustrate the two results.

In Lijialou, the village head, Li Lingxian (Ta8), gave up the post in about 1986, because he became too busy with his transport business. Instead, Li Xiangguo (Sc34) became the village head. He is in his late forties and is a party member. Since Li Xiangguo (Sc34) took over the post, the amount of za zhi per person has increased quickly. People complain that “Xiangguo’s hands are too long”, and that he often invites senior cadres to his home to eat and drink, and lines his own pockets by misappropriating public funds. As a result, from 1990 on, the villagers of Lijialou, especially those of Back, East and Northeast Yards, began to talk about separating as a group to get out from under control by Li Xiangguo. In the summer of 1990, people of Back Yard wanted to establish a group consisting only of members of their yard. The reason was that they had incurred losses because of their honesty, when they were in the same group as the people of Front Yard. They wanted my landlord, Li Wanxiang (Sb12), to be their head. In the end of 1989, my landlord retired as a chairman of the cooperative of Yanglou Township, where he had worked for
thirty-seven years. He is a party member, with a good reputation for serious work and kindness to the other members of the village. Li Wanxiang (Sb12) promised that if the senior cadres agreed that Back Yard could form a group by itself, then he would be the head. At the same time, people of East Yard and Northeast Yard wanted to separate from Xiangguo's unit, too. Finally, the villagers decided to separate the village in two, based on the boundary of the previous east and west production teams. They hoped Li Lingxian (Ta8) would be head of the new group. In a letter, Li Lingxian (Ta8) told me that:

The villagers came to my home many times to ask me to be the chief again. I did not want to be the village head. First, I had too much work to do at home. Second, Xiangguo and I had been very friendly during these years. I did not want to oppose him.

The villagers also went to the cadres of the administrative village, including Li Wanxiang (Sb12), and submitted a joint letter to the xiang government to demand the separation of the village into two. Finally, the xiang and administrative village agreed to the division. On the evening of 20, August 1991, on the lunar calendar, a meeting was held among the villagers in Lijialou. In the meeting, they separated the village into two, East Group and West Group, with Li Xiangguo (Sc34) as the chief of West, and Li Lingxian (Ta8) as the chief of the East. The new eastern section includes all the households of East Yard and Northeast yard, and most of the households of Back Yard.

The other case is from Yangzhuang Administrative Village. At the administrative level, the party branch secretary is still the person with the most authority. Secretary Fei is nearly seventy years old. His class status was poor peasant, and he is illiterate. He has been the party branch secretary for thirty-three years. However, villagers dislike him, because they say he has been unkind to the local people since 1958. Another reason is that his son-in-law, Luo, holds the post of president of the elementary school that is run by the administrative village. Having Fei as his patron, Lou does not take the management seriously. This elementary school was established in 1980, and Luo became the president because of his affinal relation with Secretary Fei. People call him fù ma, "the emperor's son-in-law". Luo often uses school money to drink with senior cadres and his friends. This creates financial difficulties. A teacher who has taught in the local school for more than twenty six years complained to me that their school could offer nothing: even the examination papers and the fees for printing were paid by the students. As a result, tuition fees and expenditure on arrangements have both risen quickly. Some other teachers disagreed with what Luo was doing, but they could not stop it. Rather, Luo transferred the teachers who opposed him to other places, and brought in his own people. Since the expenditures on the school have to be paid for by all the villagers inside the administrative village, Luo and his father-in-law, Secretary Fei, provoked popular discontent, which came to the attention of the xiang CCP committee. In addition, Fei
was old and uneducated, and the xiang CCP committee wanted to replace him with a young, well-educated party member. They thought that Li Tianxiang (Sc37) was suitable for this post, because he is in his middle thirties and had graduated from high school. Li Tianxiang (Sc37) has not taken over this post. He explained the reason to me:

Our party branch is very united. The three of us are like brothers. Though the xiang party committee hoped that Fei would retire, and wanted me to be the secretary, Secretary Fei does not want to leave the post. He said to the party xiang government, “I can still contribute to the party.” If I agree, the xiang will certainly replace Fei, and it will cause discord inside our party branch. Therefore, I told the xiang that I did not want to be secretary, and that Fei could still do the work. Finally, the xiang agreed that Fei should continue in his post. Fei felt indebted to me.

Avoiding discord inside the party branch was no more than an excuse. When I interviewed Li Tianxiang (Sc37)’s father, Fanshan (Rc20), he said:

I did not allow my son to take over the post of party secretary, because the situation under the responsibility system has become more complicated. The work of a secretary involves displeasing people. I told my son, if you take the post, I will disown you.

The fact that Fanshan (Rc20) did not allow his son to be party secretary illustrates the fact that the cadres have been losing their authority and influence. Meanwhile, with the land in their hands, the peasants have achieved more economic independence, and therefore they no longer fear that cadres will make things hard for them by abusing their power. Even though as a result, President Luo and Secretary Fei are still in the posts, the peasants have begun to stand up to defend their interests, and may eventually realize their hope of removing cadres who are not on their side.

3. ECONOMIC CHANGE

In the Potters’ view, four main factors held back the collective economy in the rural area. First, since the Maoist agrarian policies stressed economic and social equality, the institutions in the rural area had encouraged a population growth so explosive that it had absorbed all the increased production, and there could be no growth in per capita rice production or per capita income. Another factor was the policy of “taking grain as the key element in agriculture”. Under this policy, the development of cash crops, industry, commerce and markets were inhibited. The third factor was the unfair policy of maintaining low purchase prices for grain products and high prices of industrial goods sold in the countryside. The last cause was that the government invested less capital in agriculture than in industry. The
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underlying idea was that developing agriculture was seen as a means of developing industry. Industry was given priority at that period, because in an unstable world situation it was more necessary to China at that time [Potter and Potter 1990: 165].

The first of these factors does not seem to apply to Xiao County, where the population grew very little during the collective period, but the other three factors seem to be relevant. In the case of Xiao County, it was clear that the fundamental failure of the Maoist system was its inability to motivate labor. This has been proved by the achievements after the adoption of the responsibility system. The increase in prosperity and the economic growth of Lijialou and the whole of Xiao County have been remarkable. There are three significant economic improvements: first, irrigation under the leadership of the xiang government; second, the surge in scientific farming and mechanization; third, the gradual replacement of the traditional single-product economy by a diversified economy.

(1) The collective economy under the responsibility system

During the century prior to 1970, the main problem of this area was excessive rain. During the collective period, the commune dug several escape canals and built reservoirs. Now excessive rain is no longer a problem. Instead, drought is the new problem. When I interviewed the xiang government and CCP committee, Secretary Zhu secretary told me:

We have no problems with excessive rain, but we still have the problem of dealing with drought. We dug 150 wells in our xiang against drought during the commune period. After the introduction of the responsibility system, management of the wells became worse, and as a result, seventy of the wells became silted up. In 1989, the xiang government spent 8,000 yuan to buy a well washer. Now thirty of the seventy blocked wells are able to work again. This year, we are going to build another 100 wells with funds allocated from the authorities and money from the masses. One well can drain 80-90 mu of land. We have 20,500 mu of land, so if we have 220 wells, then the problem of waterlogging will be resolved.

The funds for water conservancy facilities come mainly from three sources: the World Bank through the county government, the xiang government, and the villagers themselves. Xiao County belongs to the Huang-Huai-Hai exploitation area, namely the regions around the Yellow River, Huai River and Hai River. In these areas, natural disasters such as floods and droughts often occur. For this reason, the World Bank has provided a loan to these areas for constructing water conservancy facilities over several years. A district cadre told me that in 1989, Lilou Xiang received the sum of 400,000 yuan from the World Bank and invested all the funds in water conservancy.

Under the leadership of the xiang cadres, the administrative village and the natural village, the villagers laid underground water pipes in Lijialou. In April 1990, the village head, Li Xiangguo (Sc34), called the villagers to a meeting to discuss three issues: cleaning wells, digging new wells and laying underground water pipes. There
were three wells in Lijialou. After the introduction of the responsibility system, nobody took care of them, so they all became clogged with earth. In 1989, the villagers had cleaned out one well, and this time they were planning to clean out the other two, in addition to digging another four. With these wells, Lijialou will have no problems with irrigation. To clean a well costs 200-300 yuan, but to dig a well costs 3,000 yuan. The xiang government was to pay half, and the other half was to be paid by the villagers. Compared with their attitude during the collective period, the villagers now show much more enthusiasm for irrigation projects. First, the peasants control the land, and irrigation is related directly to their incomes and standard of living. Second, many of the irrigation projects during the collective period were carried out far away, sometimes even in other counties, and the villagers did not benefit directly from the projects, so they showed less enthusiasm. However the present projects are carried out in their own village, and they can benefit directly from them. Third, the cadres put more stress on the motivation of the peasants, and both management and payment are better than during the collective period. Villagers who take part in irrigation projects get paid three yuan a day (Photo 11). What makes the cadres put more stress on the motivation of the peasants is that, because of their control of the land, the peasants have become more independent and powerful. With fewer resources to control, the cadres have less control over the peasants, and they have to be more careful in their relations with them.

(2) The surges of scientific farming and mechanization

With the implementation of the economic reforms, the family once more became a unit of production, and the motivation of the peasants was stimulated. In particular, cotton production grew rapidly in response to favorable pricing policies. In the case of Lijialou, in order to raise the yield, the peasants became enthusiastic about scientific farming. They adopted a new scientific method of planting cotton to cope with saline and alkaline soil. It involves mixing water, soil, organic fertilizer and chemical fertilizer in proportion, and making them into "nutritious bowls" about 13 cm in height and 9 cm in diameter (Photo 9). Three or four seeds are germinated in each bowl and then people cover the bowls with plastic sheeting to form a temporary greenhouse. The seedlings are later carefully transplanted to the fields. This job is not strenuous but it needs a lot of care, so women always do this work. Women are also responsible for the harvest, and for drying the raw cotton before it is sold. There are two merits of using cotton bowls. Many cotton seeds can be saved from wastage, and the survival rate is raised. This technical agricultural improvement not only raised output, but also raised the standard of living. By the new method the peasants raised their per mu yield of cotton from 25 kilograms to 60 kilograms. In addition, they also increased their cotton planting area. Before the Liberation and during the commune period, villagers could not expect to make a profit out of cotton, and they planted it just for their own consumption. Now, cotton has become the most important cash crop. An old peasant over 70 told me that, "during the commune period, the
area planted in cotton was 60 mu, so we could get only 1,000 yuan. Today, we can get 1,000 yuan from only 8 mu." To encourage the peasants to produce more cotton, the state store also sells cotton fertilizer at a low price. For example, people who sell cotton to the state will get mian piao, “cotton coupons” from the mian dian, “cotton purchasing center”, and with these mian piao, the peasants can buy good fertilizer at a reduced price. For instance, they can buy 50 kilograms of fertilizer with 20 yuan with the mian piao, whereas those without the mian piao will pay 60-80 yuan for the same amount of fertilizer.

Since the motivation of the peasants was stimulated, they have invested more in tools, livestock and machines. According to Secretary Zhu of Lilou Xiang, before the revolution, because of the low crop yield, a household with more than 20 mu of land was able to raise a donkey. A household with 25 mu was able to raise a cow, and a household holding 30 or 40 mu of land was able to own a cow and a flatbed tricycle. In the commune period, there were only five livestock animals in this village, but now each household has more than one animal. On the other hand, mechanization has improved greatly in this area since the arrival of the responsibility system. Before the Liberation, there was no mechanized farming at all. In the collective period, several villages shared one or two tractors. In Lijialou most of the grain was harvested by hand. At present, there are five tractors in this village and 90% of the planting and harvest of wheat is carried out by tractors. Generally, the mechanization of farm work is not yet widespread. Many people still use draft animals like cattle, horses, donkeys and mules for ploughing.

At present, the plot of contract land for each household is too small, and plots held by each household may be separated from one another. In order to make the field arrangement more convenient for mechanization, in the late 1980s the peasants began to think about redistributing the land. For example, the villagers of Zhangji Village redistributed their contract land some years ago. Before that, the average number of plots farmed by each household was more than ten, but now the average is two or three. In order to carry out the mechanization of agriculture, and to strengthen management, Xiao County called on the peasants to redistribute land again, merging small plots into big ones. In the autumn of 1991, before sowing the wheat, redistribution of land was carried out in Lijialou. First, the cadres divided all of the contract land into three classes, according to its distance from the village, and distributed the land by drawing lots. Land near the village is regarded as low-class land, because there are more insects and livestock can easily do damage. The land far from the village is regarded as middle class, because it takes time to reach there. The high-class land is that in the middle distance. After redistribution, each household had an average of two or three plots. In addition, by examining the use of fertilizer, we can see how actively the peasants are engaged in production. Before the Liberation, people did not use fertilizer at all, but they began to use it since the GLF in 1958. My landlord told me that:

Our state store promoted the sale of chemical fertilizer, starting in 1958. At
first, the peasants did not believe in it. We did our utmost to publicize it and we conducted tests at selected points. Seeing that we were successful, people began to use it.

At that time, about 10 kilograms of fertilizer was applied per mu. In the 1960s, this increased to 50 kilograms, in the 1970s to 80.5 kilograms, and in the 1980s to 100 kilograms. In 1990, it fell to 64.4 kilograms, as a result of a price rise. Though Xiao County has its own fertilizer plant, the amount produced is far less than the peasants need. Therefore, most of the chemical fertilizers used here are imported from the U.S.A, the Soviet Union, Japan, Turkey, Romania, India, and Iraq. Villagers told me:

During the commune period, in the season for sowing wheat, the higher authorities supported us with fertilizer. However, we were so poor that we sold the fertilizer and bought wheat to eat. At that time, none of the households had surplus grain. After the introduction of the responsibility system, the initiative of our peasants was brought into play, so we have become more interested. We spread several flatbed tricycle loads of fertilizer per mu, whereas during the commune period, we used less than one flatbed tricycle per mu. Thus, the quality of the land has become much better than before.

Because of improved mechanization, scientific farming and utilization of more fertilizer, crop yields have risen greatly. During the commune period, the wheat yield per mu was less than 50 kilograms, while the present yield is from 300 kilograms to 350 kilograms. The annual per capita wheat consumption was from 15 kilograms to 35 kilograms. Now the average wheat consumption per capita is more than 250 kilograms. People can eat xi liang all year round. Peasants divide grain into two kinds: cu liang and xi liang. Cu liang means coarse food grain such as maize, sorghum, millet, etc, and xi liang means wheat and rice. How much cu liang or xi

![Fig. 5-2 Income per person in Xiao County](image-url)
"liang a person eats is a way of measuring standard of living. Peasants told me, "now we are living a better life, even better than the landlords before the Liberation, because even in a landlord family, not all the members could eat white steamed bread all year."

As a result of scientific farming, increasing yields of grain, and higher selling prices, incomes have increased significantly (Fig. 5-2). In 1985 and 1986, the CCP committee of Xiao County formed a team to monitor incomes. A xiang in which the average annual income per person was less than 200 yuan was regarded as a low-income xiang. Secretary Zhu of Lilou Xiang told me that:

There are eight low-income xiang in Xiao County. Three of them are in our Lujing District, namely Lujing, Zhuji and Lilou.

The average annual income per person in Lilou Xiang in the 1970s was less than 100 yuan. After 1980, it was about 180-190 yuan. It rose to about 248 in 1988 and about 422 in 1989. In the case of Lijialou, the average annual income per person is more than 450 yuan. More than 95% of the households have built new brick and tiled houses to replace the pounded mud and thatch cottages. Two of them have even built new houses with two stories. Houses have become one of the main expressions of economic status, and an important form of property that parents should provide for their children.

(3) From a mono-crop production economy to a diversified economy

The motivation of the peasants was stimulated by the implementation of economic reforms. They are not only actively engaged in growing grain, but also in cash crop production, sideline production and other businesses. As Table 1-2 in Chapter 1 showed, the 78 households in Lijialou can be divided into three categories: the purely agrarian households, those with additional rural sideline production, and those who have jobs in urban areas, such as mines or other units. During the commune period, most of the households were engaged in agriculture. After the responsibility system, many households began to engage in sideline businesses. That is a significant change. There are 58 purely agrarian households, accounting for 74.36%. In 11 households, accounting for 14.1%, some of the members have jobs in urban areas, though their families remain in Lijialou. Nine households, which account for 11.54%, are engaged in sideline production, and the income of sideline production accounts for more than half of their annual income. Of these, five young men have bought tractors, a truck, and mini-buses and are engaged in transport. One household in East Yard runs a grocery store inside the village. Another household in Front Yard operates a flour mill inside the village that attracts villagers from more than ten villages around. One household plants vegetables, because their son is attending college and they have to pay for his tuition and living expense. Besides these three categories, half of the young men are involved in carpentry. However, this is not a permanent job for them. They usually take part in a building team, consisting of carpenters and bricklayers that come from the nearby villages. Sometimes they work
in the cities nearby such as Xiao County and Xuzhou. Sometimes they go outside to other provinces such as Henan, Jiangsu, Shaanxi and Gansu to do carpentry. However, compared with other provinces, the rate of working away from home is still low, because the average holding of land per capita is 2.3 mu, much more than the national average of 1.4 mu. In fact, people have a labor shortage problem.

This is an essential factor that restrains peasants from engaging in commerce and one of the reasons influencing geographic mobility from rural to urban areas. However the young, well educated generation seems to be interested in exploiting its economic possibilities, while the middle-aged and old villagers still believe that they should be able to (as they do) get rich by farming with their own hands. Land can provide them with hope. On the other hand, compared with Back Yard and Northeast Yard, people from Front Yard and East Yard seem to engage in sideline business more often and to be willing to take competitive economic risks. Generally, the villagers of Lijialou still judge a person as good or bad according to his industry at working on the land. A badly weeded farm will give its owner a bad reputation. Like their ancestors, people in Lijialou still emphasize agriculture. They work very hard on their farms to keep them clean and neat and a source of pride. This also provides them with a standard by which to evaluate other people.

4. RECONSTRUCTION OF LINEAGE UNDER THE NEW ECONOMIC SYSTEM

Before I entered the field, I wondered whether the socialist revolution forty years before had changed the social structure completely. In this section, I will analyze the continuity of the lineage over the last forty years, and the ways in which this has been achieved.

To discuss lineage continuity and change in Lijialou, it is necessary to distinguish between the essential features of the kinship institution and the peripheral ones. Freedman and the Potters have pointed out that corporate landed property was the essence of the Chinese lineages [Freedman 1958: 127; Potter and Potter 1990: 252]. This was maybe true for the lineages in Guangdong and Fujian, but this was not necessarily the case in northern Anhui. Since lineages were the landowning group, most of the peasants in Guangdong lived on their common lineage land as tenants. The common land provided the funds for ancestor worship, education, treating the sick, supporting widows, and court cases. In the case of north Anhui, lineages only held a small amount of common land that was established for ancestor worship. Most of the property was concentrated in the hands of each of the segments or families rather than the whole lineage. Each time segmentation occurred, the property was divided accordingly. Without controlling large amounts of joint property, the lineages in northern Anhui still maintained their solidarity by localization, ancestor worship, maintaining genealogies and the naming system.

As I have described in Chapter 1, most of the villages in northern Anhui consist of one main lineage or one segment of a localized lineage. The Li Lineage extended over dozens of nearby villages. Before the Liberation, a large lineage gathering would
be held in Laozhuangzi each year during the Qingming Festival. All the segments sent representatives to Laozhuangzi to worship their first ancestors. By carrying out this rite, the Li Lineage strengthened its lineage identity, and its integration. This was necessary because the segments were far from each other, and they seldom interacted with one another. At the same time, the magnificent rites, with their pomp and ceremony, demonstrated the power, prestige and status of the Li Lineage. Another factor that should be mentioned here is that among the villages, only one village, Laozhuangzi where the first ancestor settled, keeps the general genealogies. The other villages were not free to record their genealogy. All the newborn babies had to be registered in Laozhuangzi. When the rite of ancestor worship was conducted during the Qingming Festival, representatives from these villages went to Laozhuangzi to take part in the rite, and at the same time reported their births, marriages and deaths for the previous year. By controlling the genealogy and its membership, the Li Lineage maintained itself over six centuries.

After the Liberation, collectivization replaced the traditional style of household production, and the traditional lineage structure and lineage identity were defined as feudal relics that disrupted the harmony of the collective. During 1958, the local government even attempted to wipe out the family, by separating people according to age and sex. The old ethic of lineage solidarity was to be replaced by a new ethic. In the framework of the new ethic, in spite of different lineages or surnames, peasants became members of the big socialist family, and people of the same class status were class brothers and sisters. The landowning and educated elites were replaced by those who had a better class status and were thus considered more loyal to the state. During this period, the worship of the first ancestor, which had been carried out once a year before the Liberation, stopped. Until 1980, there was almost no communication between Lijialou and the old home village where the first ancestor had settled. During the GLF, the Cultural Revolution and the socialist education campaign, many stone monuments of ancestors' tombs were moved or destroyed. Some of the branch genealogies were even burned.

Did the lineage really lose its essence, based as it was on localization in one area and shared rituals? To take localization first, though members of the lineage were distributed in different production teams, the basic pattern of residence remained. We can find a structural continuity in the formation of these teams at a deeper level. Most of the villages in northern Anhui are based around a core of a single or a dominant patrilineal descent group. Most of the lineages here have long histories and thus cover dozens of villages. The patrilineal residence was correlated with the formation of the team. The residential structure of Lijialou had been based on kinship, with each yard located in one corner of the village. On the other hand, Lijialou was divided into three teams. On the surface, the team boundaries were drawn according to the location of the households. In fact, each of the teams was based on people from the same segment. For example, households of East Yard made up most of the first team. Northeast Yard, all the Wang households, and a few households from Back Yard and Front Yard formed the second team. Back Yard,
Front Yard and West Yard made up most of the third team. In terms of social composition, the team was still formed by patrilineal groups.

The Potters have also pointed out the importance of patrilineal residential continuity. “From the mid-1950s to 1981, the deep core structure of the lineage institutions of Zengbu remained unchanged, because of the persistence of the ownership of collective property by co-resident men” [Potter and Potter 1990: 263]. On the other hand, after land reform, tenancy was abolished, and most of the tenants who used to live inside Lijialou moved out. In this sense, the patrilineal composition of Lijialou was strengthened after the Liberation. In Lijialou, brothers used to live near each other. Sometimes, in order to find a close site for a new house, they often exchanged plots with others. They said it was convenient to help each other. After the adoption of the responsibility system, this assistance pattern was reinforced.

Second, because the core of the village is still the patrilineal group, a social organization based on age and seniority still remains. People still gave names to babies according to the generation words, in order to distinguish seniority and thus maintain the lineage structure. People behave according to their status in the genealogy and maintain solidarity inside the village. The young respect the old, and old people still have authority over the younger generation. During rites of passage, people fulfill their duties strictly according to their status in terms of lineage and affinal relations. Although large scale ancestor worship has stopped, worship of the most recent ancestors, usually three or four generations back, continued during the collectivization period. Though some of the genealogies were burned, many of them were secretly kept. During the socialist education campaign, the authorities forced the Li Lineage to hand over their genealogy. People of the old generation decided to divided the genealogy volumes into several parts and have them hidden among several households, and keep this secret even from their own sons. The tombs were flattened, but people have quietly rebuilt them on a small scale in the same places. The tomb of Li Yaoba (J2) is a good example. An old man of the fifth junior segment told me that:

People flattened the tomb during the day and, I piled it up again at night, and they flattened it again. Finally, I made a mark on the site. When the campaign was over, I rebuilt the tomb.

Though loyalty to the collective and to the state, and the ideology of class status were to replace former kinship and family loyalties, the social identity of the villagers still remained unchanged. At the funeral of the wife of Li Xiangjia (Sd54), a landlord who lived in a village 6 kilometers away, most of the households of the Li in Lijialou sent representatives. As I mentioned in Chapter 4, after the death of his wife, Li Xiangjia (Sd54) lived a very difficult life, and many people, Lijialou included, helped him, for instance by transferring his registration from Quanlou to Lijialou. At that time, it was difficult to transfer registration even for an ordinary poor and lower-middle peasant. The accountant, a member of Front Yard, risking her post and party membership, found a friend who was a cadre in charge of Quanlou, and helped
Xiangjia (Sd54) move back to Lijialou. Helping people who were from the same segment but were of different classes often occurred. Seeing the non-Li team head mistreating an orphan from Back Yard whose father was a landlord, his aunt could not keep silent any more. She quietly found a teacher in the brigade running the elementary school who would write a letter to the county government.

During the post-Mao period, the traditional household mode of production recovered again. The administrative reforms of 1983 and 1984 disbanded the commune, and re-emphasized the importance of the natural village based on a single patrilineal group, as a unit in China’s rural administrative structure. Since the natural villages in this area consist of a single lineage structure or a dominant patrilineal descent group, the old lineage village community now has an economic base and an administrative apparatus, and is once again becoming a key unit in local society. Thus, both lineages and important village-level lineage branches are now strengthened [Potter and Potter 1990: 257-258]. In Lijialou, when the commune was disbanded, and production teams were merged into one natural village, villagers selected Li Lingxian (Ta8) as their village head rather than Li Yindi. The main reason is that Li Lingxian (Ta8) is their agnate and is loyal to his kinsmen and his villagers, whereas Li Yindi is not their agnate and does not support the villagers. Even the non-Li members said to me that, “Lingxian was fair and he always thinks about the interest of the masses, while Yindi mistreated the villagers.”

On the other hand, in the present mode of family production, mutual aid based on consanguinity has become important. Farm work, like threshing, spreading chemical fertilizer, pollination and gathering cotton, needs help from other families. This is especially true when in the autumn all the households are busy with harvesting soybeans and wheat sowing. For instance, sowing wheat with a seeder takes four laborers and two draught animals at least. One person guides the pair of oxen or donkeys in front; one person follows the plough; a third person carries the chemical fertilizer and seed, and a fourth covers the furrows using a stone roller, also pulled by animals. No single family can do the work by themselves. Since wage labor has not developed in this area, usually two or three households get together to help each other. Villagers call this kind of cooperation heju. Ju here is a word used to numerically classify livestock, and the peasants use it to mean livestock in general. Thus, heju means to cooperate by putting livestock together. Villagers have fixed cooperating partners. I call this kind of group a “mutual aid group”, similar to those once organized by the government in the early 1950s. Peasants themselves form the present mutual aid groups, whereas the previous mutual aid groups were encouraged by the government. At present, except for the five-guarantee households, all the other households form 20 mutual aid groups in Lijialou, which can be divided as shown in Table 5-1.

Among the 20 mutual aid groups, 85% or 17 households consist of members from the same lineage (Photo 10). At present, help with work or the exchange of labor between agnates is much more frequent and important than before the Liberation and during the collective period, because before the Liberation, the Li had
their tenants or hired hands to help them. During the collective period, people had few private plots, so the exchange of labor between agnates was limited to building or repairing house and rites of passage. At present, in addition to agrarian production, on the occasions of wedding or funerals kin of the same village, and sometimes kin from the same yard, come to help. These close agnates come as a matter of routine, without a formal invitation. Kinship ties cannot be maintained without a banquet and ritual distribution of money. These ties have real importance because they provide a source of help when a family is in difficulty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type(s)</th>
<th>Group(s)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With Li</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Household</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Parents or Brothers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Households of the Same Yard</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Households of Li Lineage</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Non-Li</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Non-Li Lineage Inside Lijialou</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Non-Li Lineage Outside Lijialou</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fact that the responsibility system was begun by commune members and local cadres in secret, and gradually accepted by the government, illustrates something important. It was one of the first times in China’s history that local peasants and cadres caused the government to accept a system that was the opposite of the established policy. In my view, peasants and village cadres are not completely passive, only responsive to authority, but are in fact very rational and pragmatic, and able to turn a situation to their own advantage.

Economic reform brought great changes in agrarian production and political structure. With regard to local politics, there are three significant changes. First, the main focus of attention has been transferred from class struggle and socialist education to economic construction. At the same time, the commune was replaced by the xiang; the brigade was changed into the administrative village; and the production team was changed into the village group. At the level of the xiang, internal reorganization divided its functions into political, administrative and economic. The new administrative reform freed the initiative of the peasants from the control of the party. Second, with land in their hands, the peasants and their lineage became more powerful so that they began to influence local politics. On the other hand, local governments and their cadres are losing their power and control. The first reason is that since Anhui was the first province to adopt the responsibility system, all the
collective property has been divided among the peasants. All this is in contrast with
Guangdong and Fujian, where the responsibility system was adopted later, and where
local cadres still retain strong control over the peasants. Another reason for the
weakening control of the cadres and increasing power of the masses is the changes in
financial institutions. Now cadres get their salary from the za zhi, which is paid by the
peasants. Villagers have begun to feel that they are the owners of the village, and have
become enthusiastically involved in village affairs.

In terms of production, since the adoption of the responsibility system, the
increase in prosperity and the economic growth of Lijialou and the whole of Xiao
County have been remarkable. There are three significant economic improvements:
first, irrigation under the leadership of xiang government; second, the surge in
scientific farming and mechanization; and third, the diversification of the economy.

The economic and political changes have also strengthened the influence of the
patrilineal groups. First, the administrative reforms of 1983 and 1984 disbanded the
commune, and re-emphasized the importance of the natural village based on a single
patrilineal group as a unit in China's rural administrative structure. Since the natural
villages in this area consist of a single lineage structure or a dominant patrilineal
descent group, the old lineage village community now has an economic base and an
administrative apparatus. It is once again becoming a key unit in local society. Since
peasants have more influence, they tend select their kinsmen as cadres. Thus, both
lineages and segments are now strengthened. Second, the traditional household mode
of production has recovered. Kinsmen tend to cooperate in farm work. In addition,
on the occasions of wedding or funerals, kin of the same village, and sometimes kin
from the same yard, come to help. These close agnates come as a matter of routine,
without formal invitation. The result of responsibility system has been to tell peasants
again that these are the ties that are stable and reliable.

Notes

1. Before Liberation, Sd54's grandfather once owned half of the land in the village, Quanlou,
so his family moved there from Lijialou.
Chapter 6 Gender, Marriage and Affines

This chapter deals with changes in the status of women, patterns of marriage and relationships among affines after the adoption of the responsibility system. It focuses in particular on changes in marriage payments and the relations between the families of the bride and groom during the 1980s. The basic argument is as follows: (i) The increasing value of female labor and demographic factors have led, as in some other parts of China, to rapid inflation in marriage-related expenditures by the groom’s family, but not by that of the bride. (ii) This suggests a major shift in the power relations between wifegivers and wifetakers in marriage negotiations, and leads to attempts to account for this shift in the case of Anhui. (iii) The realities of the developing Anhui “marriage market”—the high cost of marriage and the difficulty which many men face in finding a suitable partner locally—have led some of them to try unconventional solutions, not always with happy results. With the relaxation of social controls that followed the breakup of the communes, a new breed of professional marriage broker has appeared, and they have made a considerable profit from introducing women to the area from Sichuan, Yunnan, Shanxi and Shaanxi Provinces. The cost of marrying a woman from outside may be a third or a quarter of that of marrying a local girl, though, as I will show below, the risks are also considerably greater. (iv) Finally, it is suggested that with the rapid growth of the rural economy of many parts of China, fundamental changes are taking place not only in the relations between partners and between their respective families, but also between the generations, and these suggest some possible directions for change in the future.

1. CHANGING PATTERNS IN THE PROCESS OF BETROTHAL AND MARRIAGE

The traditional rules of Chinese marriage are summarized in the famous canonical book, The Book of Rites, which appeared early in the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-220 A.D.). In this book, the sequence of events from betrothal to marriage are called, the “Six Rites” which can be summarized as follows: (i) Cai na, inquiries are made to a girl’s family by a go-between, sent by a family seeking a bride. (ii) Wen ming, genealogical and horoscope data are sought by the go-between, in order to ascertain whether the girl’s birth date matches that of the boy. (iii) Na ji, the result of this enquiry is announced. (iv) Na zheng, the betrothal is confirmed by the transfer of gifts. (v) Qing qi, the date of the wedding (that is, the transfer of the bride) is fixed. (vi) Ying qin, the bride is transferred.

These rites have provided a common framework for the organization of marriage in Han society since 200 BC, although the ideal is more commonly adhered
Social Change and Continuity in a village in Northern Anhui, China

to by the rich than the poor. Despite this, as Freedman has pointed out, these rites are "essentially the structure of all Chinese marriage in its preferential form, however modified and embellished by custom" [Freedman 1979: 90]. At present, people in the Huaibei Plain area still maintain this basic structure. Locally, the six practices are called:

1. *Ti qin*, "making an offer of marriage"
2. *He tian ming*, "divination"
3. *Jian mian*, "looking in the face", i.e., meeting
4. *Ding hun*, "being betrothed"
5. *Yao ri zi*, "asking the wifegivers the date of the wedding"
6. *Jie xin ren*, "transferring the bride"

However, there have been significant changes in detail, both after the 1949 revolution and since the introduction of the responsibility system. The economic relationships between wifegivers and wifetakers have been substantially altered. In the rest of this section, I will describe both the changes and the continuities in the patterns of betrothal and marriage.

**1. *Ti qin*, “making an offer of marriage”**

Before the Liberation, as in most parts of China, marriage on the Huaibei Plain was arranged by parents and a go-between. In arranged marriages, the young had no right to select their own partners, and this kind of arranged marriage was virtually universal in the rural areas. Since the villages in Huaibei Plain were single lineage villages, and the lineage was exogamous, marriage was nearly always outside the village, and villages were connected by a network of affinal ties. The go-between was usually a close agnate or affine of both the bride and groom, so that new affinal links tended to follow the pattern of existing ones. Even at present, traditional arranged marriage still holds an important position in this area, despite national legislation designed to give young couples more freedom of choice. The young person as an individual is ignored, and when the young person is taken as an individual, it really means that he or she has the duty to obey his/her parents, in order to maintain the harmony of the family. Marriage is defined by the parents choosing a good partner for the children, who can help them maintain the patrilineal line, and the young people choosing a good partner with whom they can make a peaceful life. In the case of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6-1 Marriages in 132 Administrative Villages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arranged Marriages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love Marriages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lijialou, between 1920 and present, there was only one union that could be called a “love marriage”.

As Table 6-1 shows, the Xiao County Women’s Association carried out a survey of 3,055 people from 132 administrative villages who were less than 30 years old, and who were married between 1983 and 1985 [Xiao Xian Difang Zhi Bianzhuan Weiyuanhui 1989: 6]. Of these, 2,549, or 83.44%, had their marriages arranged, whereas only 366, or 11.98% had arranged their marriages themselves. In 92 of these cases of “love marriages”, the parents had tried to stop the marriage. When I asked the young people which they preferred, a love marriage or an arranged marriage, they all said that they did not like arranged marriages. Girls in my village told me that:

It is the custom to have an arranged marriage in our rural area. So, if a girl and a boy know each other, and visit each other, then they will give people cause for gossip.

What, then, are the criteria by which people choose a marriage partner for their children? As in other parts of China, the people in HuaiBei Plain regard matching “doors”, i.e. social and economic status, as being particularly important [Diamond 1969: 55; Wolf 1970: 199; Han 1991: 224; Ueno 2000: 213]. Two main reasons are given for this. The first is the happiness of the couple after marriage. If a girl from a rich family marries a poor boy, she will suffer living with her husband’s family, and if a poor girl marries a boy from a wealthier family than hers, she will be bullied by his relatives. The second reason is related to the presentation of gifts between affines, which continues for three or four generations after the marriage [Han 1991]. However in her study of the Han people in Taiwan, E. Ahern claims that “Affines in Chi’-nan are not equal; contrary to Freedman, marriage creates a ranking in which wife-givers are distinctly superior to wife-takers. From the time of betrothal the bride’s family is defined as ritually superior to the groom’s, irrespective of the previous economic and social positions of the two families [Ahern 1974: 279].”

In this area, marriage payments are made in the name of the head of the family, and are substantial, amounting to about 25% of annual income over time. If the social and economic statuses of the two families are very different, the villagers ask, how can they continue ritual exchanges with each other in future? When I asked them what kind of man is the ideal type, the girls in my village told me that he is a man that you feel satisfied to look at. Then I asked, how about the family? They said that it is better to marry an eldest son, because when the eldest son gets married, his parents are still young and are able to help the young couple. On the other hand, one girl said that marrying the eldest son is not a good idea because he has the duty of taking care of his parents. In addition to social and economic criteria, people also want to marry their daughters to villages into which other daughters from the same village have married, so the position of their daughters will be better. Married women want to introduce daughters to relatives or neighbors from their natal home village, hoping that it will reinforce their own position and the networks linking their own and their
husband's village.

(2) *He tian ming*, “divination”

After an offer of marriage is made by the go-between, next comes the divination, which is based on the scrutiny and matching of the “eight characters”. In China, everybody’s birthday can be expressed in eight characters, which are in four pairs, indicating the year, month, day and hour of birth, and each pair consists of a “Heavenly Stem” and an “Earthly Branch”. In the Six Rites, this matching was called *wen ming*—fortune telling or divination. At present, the people in the Huaibei Plain still follow that custom. Their local term for this rite is *he tian ming*—seeing whether or not the two people’s destinies match. Chinese believe that destiny, including the success of a marriage, is decided by Heaven. By examining the eight characters for each partner, it is believed that it is possible to determine whether or not the match will be a good one, in terms of life expectancy, as well as the sex and number of children that it will produce. On the role of horoscopes, Freedman points that, “we know in fact that they are merely a ritual mechanism for confirming matches already hit upon, even when the actors are unaware of procuring the supernatural confirmation of what they desire. Heaven must be made to speak, and yet people are bent on realizing the benefit of their careful calculations of social, economic, and political advantage” [Freedman 1979: 191]. For the villagers on Huaibei Plain, divination is not simply a formality. Before a betrothal is proposed, people will of course consider the social, economic, and political status of the other family, but after that, even if both parties are satisfied, the planned marriage will be abandoned if the characters do not match. Diviners distinguish among four categories of marriage, on the basis of the characters:

(a) *Shang deng hun*, “a first class marriage”. The couple will produce five boys and will live to about 80 years of age.

(b) *Zhong deng hun*, “a middle class marriage”. The couple will produce two boys and three girls and will live to around 70, and the first child will be a boy.

(c) *Xia deng hun*, “a lower class marriage”. The marriage will produce no boys.

(d) *Duan tou hun*, “cutting heads”, i.e., a fatal marriage. The couple’s destinies are opposed, and so the marriage will only bring them misfortune.

My landlady told me that:

My marriage is first class. Now three of my children have got married, and all of their marriages are first class. When we made the first inquiry for my second daughter, we were satisfied with the circumstances of the boy's family. Then we went to a diviner who told us the two young people’s horoscopes did
not match very well. We gave it up, and found another partner whose circumstances were similar to those of the previous one, but whose horoscope matched my daughter's very well.

It appears that different diviners use the same basic techniques, and so come to similar conclusions on the basis of the same information. Since the implementation of the birth control program, the villagers have become more careful about the choice of a partner.

(3) Jian mian, "looking in the face", i.e. meeting

Before the Liberation, partnerships were "blind": it was the custom that the bride and groom were not allowed to meet each other until the actual wedding, and even their agnates were asked to avoid each other. As elsewhere in China, things changed after the revolution. Now the two young people can meet each other in the company of the go-between and their parents, and this is called jian mian. In rural areas on the Huaihe Plain, the best time and place to meet is at the local market village on market day. On market day, there are so many people around that the meeting will not attract people's attention. After the introduction by the go-between, the two families begin to talk. Then the parents leave the two young people together to talk alone. This can be an awkward occasion. As a girl of 20 put it:

It was too embarrassing to talk with a man you have never met. That day when our parents left us alone, I wanted to ask him something, but I could not. I did not know what to say or how to express it. It was terrible.

Since 1980, there have been some changes in the nature of these meetings. When the two families meet for the first time, the boy's family should present the girl's family with money, known as jian mian li. As Lang pointed out, the traditional Chinese belief was that to accept money from the wifetakers is rather like selling their daughter [Lang 1946: 126]. There are still a few people who maintain this belief, including my landlady, but the majority of the villagers have gotten used to the new ways. The girl who described her first experience of jian mian also said that she received 400 yuan from the boy's family. She said it had become the custom to receive a cash gift, so if she had not, it might have been considered strange. Between January 1990 and April 1991, there were five girls and six boys in Lijialou who became engaged to people outside Lijialou. All the boys gave their fiancées jian mian li, and four of the girls received jian mian li from their fiancés. Although the amount of jian mian li varies somewhat, on average it is usually about 400 yuan with an upper limit during the research of 1,000 yuan. This compares with an official average annual per capita income in the area of between 400 and 500 yuan. After the meeting, the two families convey their opinions through the go-between. If both feel satisfied with the outcome they will continue with the next stage of the marriage arrangements.
However, if they are not, the *jian mian li* will not usually be returned to the boy's family. There is therefore a potential conflict of interests between the young man and his parents. The parents will want to settle their son's partner on the first occasion, but the son will want to find a girl who is pretty and with whom he gets along well, and so the more girls he meets, the more likely he is to achieve this. What is clear, however, is that the introduction of this payment since the early 1980s has been in the interests of the wifegivers, rather than the wifetakers.

(4) *Ding hun*, "being betrothed"

At this stage, according to the "Six Rites", the wifetakers should present gifts to the wifegivers, after which the betrothal is confirmed. However, in the case of those marriages in Lijialou before the Liberation on which I have information, no gifts were given by the wifetakers to the wifegivers for the betrothal, even among the richer families. It was only after 1980 that this became the practice. At present, in the company of the go-between, the groom come to the bride's village with gifts of four hens, four pieces of fish and 10 kilograms of candy that will be given to all the villagers who come. After this, the betrothal is established. Next, the groom will present clothes to the bride. This rite is called *zuo ding hun yi*, which means, "making clothes for the betrothal". In fact, the boy takes the girl to the big department stores in Xuzhou to buy clothes for her. The clothes for the betrothal usually cost the wifetakers between 1,000 and 2,000 yuan. After this presentation, if the wifegivers cancel the engagement, the clothes themselves, or their equivalent in cash, will be returned to the wifetakers' family. If, however, the wifetakers cancel the engagement, nothing is returned. None of these issues are fixed by law, but are simply a matter of local custom, which has arisen since 1980, but in them there is an obvious inequality between the positions of the wifegivers and the wifetakers. Calling off an engagement involves the wifetakers in a large financial loss, but not the wifegivers. In arranging a marriage, the wifegivers have considerably more freedom to maneuver. The reasons for this growing inequality will be considered in more detail below.

(5) *Yao ri zi*, "asking the wifegivers the date of the wedding"

In the Six Rites, this is called *qing qi*. The future groom, together with members of his family or the go-between, goes to the wifegivers to ask when they will give him the girl. Usually the wifegivers simply suggest an approximate time, for example, "next autumn", after which the wifetakers will ask the diviner the best date for the rite of marriage. Between 1930 and 1980, it was easy for the wifetakers to get an answer, but after the introduction of the production responsibility system, things became more difficult. It now takes the wifetakers two or three visits to get an answer, and each time they have to prepare gifts to present to the wifegivers. There is even a popular proverb indicating how difficult it is to get an answer from wifegivers: "The first time send hens; the second time send fish; the third time get the daughter." *Yao ri zi* not
only requires time but also money. The gifts for each visit usually include lamb, pork, carp, sugar, tinned food and liquor costing over 100 yuan. To give an example from Lijialou: a young man visited his bride's home to ask the date of the wedding in the company of the go-between. It was the second visit. He prepared a large number of gifts which cost more than 250 yuan: a whole sheep, a pair of carp, 5 kilograms of pork, 5 kilograms of sugar, 10 tins of food, and 10 bottles of liquor. He had to arrange for a tractor to transport the gifts for him. However, in spite of the quantity, he still failed to get an answer, and had to ask a third time. At present, it seems that the initiative for deciding the date of the marriage lies with the wifegivers, and the longer they can postpone it the better it is for them. There are two reasons for this. First, since the introduction of the responsibility system, many households are short of labor, so it is in the bride's family's interests for her to stay home as long as possible after the betrothal is completed. The wifetakers want the bride to join them as soon as possible, for the same reason. Second, during this period, the wifegivers can make more and more demands on the wifetakers. At present, the demands from wifegivers usually include items such as: a new house built of brick with at least three rooms and sometimes with a brick wall surrounding it; a TV set; san zhuan, "the three rotators": a bicycle, a sewing machine and a wrist-watch; and yi xiang, "one sounder" a radio-cassette recorder. If the wifetakers cannot meet these demands, then there is always the possibility that the betrothal will be canceled by the wifegivers. Here I will give two instances from Lijialou in 1990.

A young man was engaged to a girl from another village and his parents built a new brick house for him. The girl's family said the rooms were too small, and because of this they canceled the betrothal and returned the betrothal clothes. The boy's family could do nothing about it. Later they were introduced to another girl, and there was another meeting at which cash was again presented. Once more, the girl's family requested a large brick house. The boy's parents discussed this issue with the girl's family and they proposed that if the other party agreed, they would exchange the small house they had built for their son for the bigger one in which his elder brother was living with his wife and child. This time the wifegivers agreed with the suggestion.

However, the items demanded by wifegivers are not always the same. They depend on such factors as the boy's education, his occupation and his family's economic circumstances. The poorer the boy's family is, the more the girl's family will request. For the women, this may be their last chance to obtain wealth, because once the young people get married, they will soon divide the house with their parents, and then all the debts which are owed for the marriage will fall on the parents' shoulders.

On the other hand, if the boy has graduated from university, or works in a city, then the wifegivers reduce their demands accordingly. For instance, Li Yindi's third son, another young man in Lijialou, got engaged to a girl from his brother's wife's village, and his sister-in-law was the go-between. There were seven children in the young man's family, two girls and five boys. Only his elder sister and elder brother
had been able to marry, and in addition, his father was often ill. The family was one of the poorest in Lijialou. However, the young man's sister and her husband ran a private copy shop in the county township of Xiao County and the young man worked for them in the shop. The villagers regard working in town as much better than making a living from agriculture in the village. The girl introduced to him was from a peasant family of average means, but was pretty, with a fair complexion. As his family did not have enough money to build a brick house for him, they promised instead to give their son the brick house where they had been living, and they also built a new brick wall around it. Although the wifetaker was poor and could not provide a new brick house, the girl's family agreed to the marriage, because the boy worked in town. After the wedding, the boy's parents and his brothers and sisters moved back to their previous house built of straw, where they had been living until 1985.

(6) Jie xin ren, “transferring the bride”

Before the revolution, on the eve of a wedding, the groom's family had to send half a pig, some cake, four carp, a jug of local alcoholic spirits, and a set of red wedding clothes to the bride's family. At the same time, a group of buglers employed by the groom's family would go to the bride's home as well. The next day, the bride's family would give a feast for their kin, after which the bride would be transferred to the bridegroom's village, accompanied by the buglers. Until the Cultural Revolution, the bride would be transported in a palanquin, but after 1966, in the face of fierce attacks against “superstitious ceremonialism”, this was replaced by a large cart or bicycle. Sometimes the bride went to the groom's village on foot. Now, however, cars are used in nearly all marriages, and the wifegivers usually demand this (Photo13, 14). This has helped make rural taxi owning a profitable business, so that a taxi can usually be found either in the wifetaker's village or nearby. In some cases, it has become the custom for the wifegivers to request another cash gift, called shang che li, from the wifetakers for allowing the bride to get into the car, and this money goes to the bride's parents. Whether shang che li should be paid, and how much should be paid, depends on them. Beside the clothes provided at the betrothal, the wifetakers now have to send additional clothing on the eve of transferring the bride, and this has become the subject of new proverbs. Typical examples are: Shang che yi shen lan, yi bei zi bu zuo nan, “Get in the car with a set of blue clothes, and throughout life there will be no suffering”; and Shang che yi shen hei, yi bei zi bu chi kui, “Get in the car with a set of black clothes, and throughout life nothing will be lost”. The implication is that it is the groom's family that has to present the clothes. In fact, more than one suit of each color is requested, even though these clothes are not worn during the wedding. They are simply packed into cases and taken to the couple's new home. These new proverbs all involve requests by the bride's family for more money or gifts from the groom's family, and once they become popular they tend to reinforce a new norm which face-conscious Chinese peasants feel they have to obey.
2. WIFEGIVERS AND WIFETAKERS: CHANGING RELATIONS IN MARRIAGE PAYMENTS

To give some illustrations of the way in which marriage payments have risen, as well as the changing balance between wifegivers and wifetakers, Tables 6-2 and 6-3 give details of the presentations in a series of marriages over the period from 1930s to 1990s, for which fairly full information was available. All of the marriages in Table 6-2 and Table 6-3 took place in Lijialou.

The major changes and continuity in marriage payments between 1930s and 1990s can therefore be summarized on the following two points: a basic pattern of higher dowry between 1930 and 1980, and new pattern of wifegivers' superiority to wifetakers.

(1) A basic pattern of higher dowry between 1930 and 1980

The basic pattern of marriage payments in northern Anhui was that dowry was higher than bridewealth. From 1930 to 1980, there was little change in the basic pattern, despite the revolution and the creation of the communes. It should be noted that almost all marriages in Lijialou are of the "major marriage" variety, involving the marriage of adults with the payment of dowry and/or indirect dowry, followed by patrilineal residence on the part of the bride. The tong yang xi form of marriage, which involved a girl's going to live with the husband's family when very young and which reduced the cost of marriage to the girl's parents, was very rare in this area, as in other parts of northern China. It has been noted that in northern China in general, this form of marriage was uncommon, and was often the result of a family crisis or poverty, and this was the case in the only example remembered in Lijialou. This involved a family called Wang. They were very poor and, having left their home in Shandong, settled at Lijialou as tenant farmers. On the way to Lijialou, they met another family that was too poor even to feed their daughter, so they asked the Wangs to take the girl as tong yang xi without any payment.

Tong yang xi marriage was forbidden in the Marriage Law promulgated in 1950, despite the fact that it had been widespread throughout China. The usual form of marriage therefore was between young people, 17 to 20 years of age. Before the revolution, all the marriages among members of the Li Lineage in Lijialou took this form. All five segments of the Li Lineage in the village were comparatively rich, and had plenty of land. When people prepared a dowry, they usually took into consideration the wealth of the bridegroom's family and the amount of the dowries that other women who had married into the family had brought with them. If the dowry was not enough, then the new bride would be looked down upon by her mother-in-law and other women in the husband's family.

The number of cases is admittedly small, but the figures are, all the same, suggestive. In the decade after the Liberation, expenditure on marriage fell steeply, started to pick up in the 1970s, and grew rapidly in the two cases from the 1980s. The
## Table 6-2  Marriage Payments by Bride's Family

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expenses of the two families remained similar until around 1980, apart from case 7, in which the substantial expenditure by the groom’s family was accounted for by the cost of the feast, particularly elaborate because he was an eldest son. The range of items on which money was spent became smaller after the revolution, then expanded once more in the 1970s. The items included in the dowry have remained fairly traditional, mainly furniture and linen. The expenditure by the groom’s family, on the other hand, has undergone a transformation in the last two cases, with bicycles, watches, a sewing machine and electrical goods being added to the traditional clothes and bedding. In all of the last three cases, the groom’s family had to provide a brick house, and as a result, in the last two, the ratios between the expenses of the groom and bride’s families have dramatically increased. The figures in case 10 were in fact lower than they might have been, because the bridegroom was living and working in town: there was no feast, and the brick house provided at first was relatively simple. Later, the groom’s parents built the couple a more elaborate structure.

These figures are in line with the informants’ perceptions that there has been a relatively larger increase in the costs incurred by the groom’s family since 1980. Most of this money, of course, is not lost to the family, as it is a transfer of wealth not to the bride’s family but to the young couple. The problem is that the amount of wealth to be transferred is now decided almost entirely by the bride’s family, and since 1980 the provision of the most expensive items has become a prerequisite for the marriage to take place at all. If the demands are not met, the wifegivers can simply cancel the engagement and look for an alternative match. Now, families fall into debt if they have more sons than daughters, in a situation where the cost of a marriage to the groom’s family may be as much as twenty times the official annual per capita income. This has become a serious social problem on the Huaibeip Plain. Men, whose families are unable to provide sufficient resources for them to marry a local woman have, as we will see, to look elsewhere.

From 1930 to 1965 the dowry provided by the bride’s parents usually included such items as a basin, a bed, a desk, clothes, and a bureau. During the early part of the Cultural Revolution, there were some changes. Women started to bring agricultural tools to their husbands’ houses, such as spades or sickles, because at that time the Chinese Communist Party’s policy was to encourage habits of thrift and husbandry. After 1980, items of furniture have become more common, and now these usually cost the bride’s family between 1,000 and 2,000 yuan. Photo14 shows a part of a dowry. The value of the dowry in the Huaibeip Plain from 1930 to 1980 was much larger than that of the indirect dowry, the gifts from the groom’s family, which, before the revolution, consisted only of one set of wedding clothes. After the revolution, instead of special wedding clothes, two or three sets of clothes for everyday use were presented. Sometimes in marriages before 1980, as the tables show, there was no indirect dowry at all.
(2) The new pattern of wifegivers being superior to wifetakers

Since 1980, the wifetakers have contributed increasing amounts of clothes, and their value is nearly the same as that of the clothes provided for the bride by her family. In addition, whereas from 1930 to 1980 the indirect dowry consisted mainly of clothes and accessories, it has increasingly come to include cash. The transfers of cash involved during the course of the “Six Rites” in total, compared with the local levels of incomes, are very substantial, and they are all in one direction. Before the revolution, it was the wifegivers who incurred the major expense involved in marriage. Because the cost was high, families with more daughters than sons tended to become poorer. Sons were therefore preferred, and this showed up in the higher birthrate and survival rate of male children. Now, families fall into debt if they have more sons than daughters, in a situation where the cost of a marriage to the groom’s family is now around 20 times than the annual per capita income. This has become a serious social problem on the Huaibei Plain. Families unable to find the money for their son to marry a local girl import women from other areas, such as Sichuan, Shanxi, or Yunnan.

3. MECHANISMS OF CHANGE IN MARRIAGE PATTERNS

(1) Increasing incomes since 1980

What, then, are the reasons for these changes? First, and most obviously, there has been a rise in real incomes in this area since the introduction of the responsibility system, and the overall rise in the costs of marriage can be related to this factor alone. According to the local records of Xiao County [Xiao Xian Difang Zhi Bianzhuan Weiyuanhui 1989: 76] the annual income for one person in 1964 was only 52.81 yuan, and the income gained from the collective economy accounted for 33.11 yuan, whereas income from household sideline production amounted to 29.7 yuan. In 1978, the annual income for one person was 98 yuan. In 1980, the annual income of one peasant was 182.3 yuan. By 1985, the figure was 305, a rise of 67.5%. The quantity of consumer goods in circulation also increased. By the end of 1984, every household on average had 1.1 bicycles, 0.66 sewing machines, 0.73 radios, and 1.2 clocks. Televisions and electric fans had also become very popular.

(2) The increasing value of women’s labor

The increasing value of women’s labor is another important factor to explain the changes in the ratio between dowry and bridewealth. This in turn is due in part to the fact that, since the Liberation, women for the first time have had large-scale involvement in agriculture, and in part due to the greater opportunities for earning cash that have resulted from the introduction of the responsibility system. With the advantage of more recent data, we can therefore ask what effects the responsibility
system had on the position of women in Lijialou in the last decade. Despite the fact that women are almost entirely involved in agriculture, with a few side businesses, and despite the fact that production revolves around the household, there have been significant changes from which they generally seem to have benefited. The important factors accounting for this appear to be the precise role that women play in agricultural production, and the changing role of affinal relations in the rural economy. Women are crucial both in production, and in the establishment of these affinal networks, which now have an economic significance extending far beyond the arrangement of the marriage.

First, it should be noted that before the Liberation, women's labor power was essential in the rice-growing region of the south, where agriculture was labor-intensive. In the dry-field region of the north, this was not the case. Women in this region generally did not work in the fields at all. They stayed at home, cooking the meals and weaving cloth for their own use. For the same reason, footbinding remained universal. Because they were unable to convert their labor into cash, their status was low and therefore they were controlled by the family head, like other members of the extended family. The household structure was genuinely patriarchal. During the commune period, women began to participate in agriculture, but at that time, the state encouraged the production of staple crops such as wheat and maize. These involved strenuous labor and therefore the women earned fewer workpoints than the men did (eight points for a full day's work as opposed to ten). Women were also less active in the irrigation work carried out during the same period. As Wolf and Jacka mentioned in their studies about rural Beijing, Shandong and Sichuan, under the work-point remunerate system, the principle of equal payments for equal work prevailed just in theory; however tasks done by women were usually rewarded at a rate lower that that for tasks done by men [Wolf 1985: 84–85; Jacka 1997: 121].

After the introduction of this system in the 1980s, the family once more became a unit of production. With the implementation of economic reforms, the motivation of the farmers to increase production of non-staple crops increased. In particular, cotton production grew rapidly, as a result of favorable pricing policies and the adoption of new production methods. As described above, women are responsible not only for the care of the seedlings (Photo 9), but also harvesting and drying the cotton before it was sold. As a result, they are now more important economically than during any previous period, and their status and their role in decision-making, both in the household and on the farm, have also been enhanced. The value placed on their work is such that recently, during the cotton season, some of the husbands have started to stay home, looking after the children, while their wives attend to the crop. On their frequent visits back to their natal villages (another big change from the past), they sometimes take their husbands along as well, to help their parents with the farm work there during peak periods.

On the other hand, the amount of work that women do each day has been reduced. Until the 1980s, most of them clothed themselves and the rest of the family. This meant that in the daytime they did the same amount of farm work as the men,
but after returning home they carried on working until midnight, cooking, weaving
and sewing. On average, women worked fifteen or sixteen hours a day, six or seven
hours longer than the men. Today, they buy cloth or ready-made clothes, and
weaving has largely disappeared. They work for around 8–10 hours a day, about the
same as the men, and though their workload has been reduced, cash earnings and their
contribution to the household budget have increased. So has their control over the
household budget. Here, how the money is spent is flexible and a matter of
negotiation. It is certainly no longer a patriarchal decision, and women have a
powerful voice.

(3) The imbalance in the sex ratio

Demographic trends may have intensified this process. Though evidence is
rather limited, it seems as though the rural reforms took place at the end of a period
in which the number of women of marriageable age was particularly low. It has
frequently been commented on that, given the preference for male over female
children in Chinese society, infant males have had a better chance of survival,
especially in periods of famine and deprivation. Historically, Chinese daughters were
a drain on family finances, and arranging their marriages was particularly expensive.
Their parents received no cash gifts on betrothal, and the dowry cost them a good
deal. In some parts of the country, of course, female labor was crucial to the local
economy, for instance in the silk industry in the south, and here bridewealth and
indirect dowry payments were more important, but in the wheat growing areas of the
north they were less so. Here, daughters were perceived as contributing less to the
household while they still lived with their parents, and after marriage, they usually
lived elsewhere and so contributed little by way of parental support. Therefore, many
female babies were either killed at birth, or simply neglected when they became ill.
Certainly, in the recent past, some age groups in Xiao County have shown a marked
imbalance in sex ratio. According to the 1982 census, the male population of the
county between 30 and 44 years of age was 84,572, of whom 8,711, or 10.37%, were
unmarried. The female population in the same age group was 76,029, of whom only
80, or 0.11%, were unmarried. These age groups were born in the very difficult
period between the late 1930s and the Liberation in 1949, so it is not surprising that
an imbalance of this magnitude existed.

(4) Changes in consumption on the part of the younger generation

Changes in the idea of consumption, held by the younger generation, affects
relations between two generations. If the expenses related to marriage are so high in
relation to incomes in this region, in whose interests is this level of expenditure
sustained? So far in this discussion, all the emphasis has been put on the relationships
between the two families, but the relations between parents and their children must
not be overlooked. In discussions of Chinese marriage, both by social scientists and
the party, children are often presented as rather passive pawns in a game played out by their parents, but in fact as the future guarantors of their parents' security, their bargaining power would seem to be considerable. Even if young people have limited control over their choice of a partner, they certainly have aspirations concerning the life-style they want to enjoy after marriage, and increasingly they are fulfilling these, even in the rural areas. Of the money flowing back and forth around the time of a marriage, some is kept by the bride's parents and some is spent on the celebrations, but an increasing percentage of it is converted into housing and consumer goods for the young couple. Even the money that is retained by the parents is likely to be spent eventually on the wedding of a junior sibling, or it will be inherited. The rise in the standard of living that has followed the economic reforms has led to expectations of a better life style, similar to that of the population of China's cities or of the developed countries, which the young villagers now see daily on their televisions. With the breakdown of the commune system and the rise in the standard of living, parents increasingly strive to provide their children with good housing, modern furniture and better clothes. In return, they hope, but do not necessarily expect, that their children will guarantee their security in old age. While the children enjoy a better lifestyle after marriage, their parents have to worry about the debts that they have incurred on their children's behalf. Marriage, in other words, represents a massive transfer of resources, not simply between families but between generations.

(5) Affinal links in access to credit and labor

Married women have also benefited from the growing economic importance of affinal networks. In today's household production, a family's main support no longer merely comes from the patrilineage within the same village, but from affines in other villages. In increasing importance of affinal network is also pointed out in the studies about Shandong by Judd [Judd 1989, 1994], the studies about Guangdong by the Potters [Potter and Potter 1990] and the studies about Heilongjiang by Yan Yunxiang [Yan 1996].

In the case of Anhui, peak periods of the farming season, as the crops on the villagers' farms ripen; there is always a serious shortage of labor. All the lineage members in the village are equally busy, and so it is usual to ask affines from other villages for help. In addition to farm labor, villagers also regularly look to affines for financial help, for arranging marriages and building houses, as well as for purchasing farm equipment. It appears that within the village, as a result of the strong ideology of equality in money matters, including inheritance, loans between close relatives within the lineage can easily cause trouble, with those who have not received loans complaining that they have been unfairly treated. It is generally thought to be better to borrow money from elsewhere. In building up these new networks of credit, women play a vital and active role, which, again, enhances their status in their own households. Interestingly, the women in the village from more distant areas such as Sichuan, Yunnan and Shanxi have a problem because their natal homes are far away,
and of little use in establishing networks for the exchange of labor and gifts. As a result, their status is lower than that of brides from the local area, though they are cheaper to marry. The escalating cost of marriage is not just a function of the value of women's labor therefore, but also of the affinal networks that they can create.

4. CASUALTIES OF THE MARRIAGE MARKET

The problems of acquiring a wife are not peculiar to Lijialou, and something of an inter-provincial trade in women has grown up between different parts of the country. This has been commented on in the national press as a social problem (Beijing Review vol 26, no 36, 1983, Sept 5th.) and has also been noted by Endicott in his study of Sichuan, from which some of the wives of the men in Lijialou came [Endicott 1988: 190]. An unfortunate aspect of the problem was that, in the early 1980s, with the loosening of social controls on the breakup of the communes, there developed a new breed of brokers and confidence tricksters, operating in rural areas such as northern Anhui, in which there was a shortage of potential brides. The problems faced by the older single male can be illustrated well by the cases of men in Lijialou who, for the reason of poverty, were unmarried during the commune period, and who, because of their age, found it increasingly difficult to find a bride by conventional means. There were eleven of these men in all, and the ways in which they tried to solve their problem are illuminating. As we will see, many of these men are related to each other, and involve chain migration of women from other provinces. The relationship between marriage and chain migration has been noted by the local Women's Association of Xiao County, as we will see later in this section.

Li Xianggan (Sa4), was a 35 year old man in 1991. His parents were both in their mid-70s. His two brothers got married in their late 20s in 1965 and 1976 respectively, and then they separated from their parents' household. As the youngest son, Xianggan (Sa4) lived with his old parents who were by then unable to make enough money to marry him to a local girl. Some years ago, he began to do part-time work in the mine where his elder brother had been working for years. One day in 1987, a couple brought their daughter from a village in Sichuan Province to the mine to find a worker to marry their daughter. Since Xianggan was unmarried, he married her and gave the parents 2,000 or 3,000 yuan. At that time, he was 30, whereas his wife was only 20. Now they have a baby boy, and live in the same yard together with Xianggan's (Sa4) parents.

Li Lingxiang (Tb30) is a man of 34. His father died early, and his mother, who had one blind eye, brought up her children alone. His family was therefore poor. Lingxiang (Tb30) is the youngest of the three brothers. His second brother married in 1978, when he was 31. Lingxiang (Tb30) married in 1988, when he was 30. His wife is from Sichuan, too. In fact, she was a relative of Li Xianggan's (Sa34) wife's parents, so Xianggan (Sa34)'s wife's parents introduced her to Lingxiang (Tb30) who paid them the same amount of money. Now they have two children, a girl and a boy. One year later in 1988, the couple from Sichuan introduced another relative to
Li Zhaoxiang (Sc60), who was 29 at the time, married the girl from Sichuan. She is also a relative of Xianggan's wife's parents, who introduced her here and got 2,000–3,000 yuan from Li Zhaoxiang (Sc60). Li Zhaoxiang (Sc60) is an only son and his parents are also old, both over 70, so they do not have enough labor to make money. Moreover, his father was an officer in the Guomindang army, who suffered during the commune period. Thus, his family is poor and had been of lower social status until the introduction of the responsibility system.

Li Xiangkuan (Sb21) is a man of 51. He is an only son and his parents died when he was young. He was very poor and remained unmarried until the age of 46, despite the fact that he worked hard, and had a good reputation, which he gained through being in charge of village livestock during the commune period. His only close relative is a sister who is married. After the communes were disbanded, one of his affines married a girl from Yunnan. In 1987, one of Li Xiangkuan's (Sb21) affines took him to visit Yunnan. While they were there, they were able to arrange a marriage for him with another Yunnan girl by paying the parents 2,000 yuan. At that time, Li Xiangkuan (Sb21) was 46 and the bride was only 21, 25 years younger. In order to marry the girl, he told the parents that he was still in his 30s, and his bride is still under the impression that he is younger than he actually is. However, the marriage has been successful, and they have two sons. During the fieldwork season, Li Xiangkuan's wife was talking of visiting Yunnan during the summer of 1991 to see if she could arrange a marriage for another unmarried older man who will be introduced the next case, Li Jixiang (Sc61).

Li Jixiang (Sc61) is a man of 35. He is illiterate, but has a reputation for honesty. His parents are now over 70, both nearly unable to work, so they are very poor. All the same, his younger brother got married in 1990, partly because he is 10 years younger than Li Jixiang (Sc61), and partly because of his education. His younger brother is a high school graduate, and he tried to get into university for many years, but failed. At last, his father was worried that if his son continued to postpone his marriage in order to try to pass the examination, but still failed in the end, he would be too old to find a wife easily. His father therefore arranged a marriage with the beautiful daughter of a brigade party secretary. His son's education and good looks apparently offset the family's limited resources. When his brother got married, his parents owed a debt not yet repaid. Therefore, his parents have no money to marry him. Li Jixiang (Sc61) himself is currently working very hard making bean curd in order to earn cash. His main hope of marriage at present would appear to lie in his friendship with Li Xiangkuan (Sb21), who, though even older than Li Jixiang (Sc61), has been able to find a wife from Yunnan Province.

Li Lingchi (Tc51) is a man of 35. There are three brothers in his family and he is the eldest. His family was poor, and he himself at one time joined the PLA. In April 1987, with the help of a broker, he married a girl from Hanyin County in Shanxi Province. At that time, he was 31, 15 years older than his bride, who was only 16 and had never been to school. The girl appears to be unable to remember either where she
came from or how she came to Anhui. The local people said she was brought here by a marriage broker. However, the marriage is successful. Her husband is kind to her and they get on very well. She has produced a son for him.

Li Xiangchan (Sb25) is 40. He is the youngest child in the family, and has three elder brothers. The eldest brother got married in 1948, before the Liberation, when he was 17, which was the normal age of marriage in Lijialou before the Liberation. His second and third bothers both got married during the commune period, both when they were 29. When the three brothers got married, they separated from their household, where only Li Xiangchan (Sb25) and his old, chronically ill mother remained. His mother died in the late 1970s. In the early 1980s, Li Xiangchan (Sb25) was introduced to a woman from Shanxi Province through a marriage broker. She produced a daughter. She was a spendthrift, did not work hard and had a bad temper, so their relationship became violent. Eventually she left him. However, this was not the end of Li Xiangchan's (Sb25) attempts to find a wife. One of his neighbors was an old woman whose husband had been a tenant farmer from another lineage. Her husband was now dead, and her only means of support was the government’s minimal “five guarantees” allowance of food, clothing, medical care, housing and burial expenses. Li Xiangchan (Sb25) often helped her with all kinds of work. One day the old lady told him that she had a relative in Henan Province who knew a widow who had recently lost her husband and wanted to remarry. Would he like to meet her? He said that he would. One day the widow arrived in Lijialou in the company of a marriage broker, and seemed to be clean, kind and hardworking. The arrangement looked a good one, so she stayed with Li Xiangchan (Sb25) overnight while the broker stayed with another household. The next day the woman and the broker said that they would go back to her previous home to finish the funeral arrangements for her dead husband, and that she would be back in a week or ten days. Li Xiangchan (Sb25) paid the broker for his services and gave the woman the train fare for the journey home and back. Ten days, and then one month, passed, but the widow never appeared again, and soon afterward the old woman who had provided the contact in the first place died, so Li Xiangchan (Sb25) was unable to trace what had happened to her. Local opinion is that he was the victim of a confidence trick.

Li Xianghou (Sc33), is a man of 54, is illiterate. He married a woman ten years younger than himself in 1971, when he was 33. His wife was mentally unbalanced and was infertile. He beat her a lot and eventually she ran away. Once, during the fieldwork season in 1990, a marriage broker brought a woman to Li Xianghou's (Sc33) home to ask him whether he would marry her or not. The broker promised Li Xianghou (Sc33) that he could marry the woman in return for paying the broker several hundred yuan. This is a very small amount by current standards in the marriage market in Anhui. Then Li Xianghou (Sc33) and the woman were left alone in the room for a moment. Li Xianghou (Sc33) asked where she came from and why. He found that the woman had been tricked it coming to Anhui by the broker, and was still apparently mentally unbalanced from the experience, so he decided not to marry her.
Li Xiangji is a man of 50. He is a member of the fifth junior segment of the Li Lineage. His father had been a tenant farmer before 1949, and stayed on in the village after the Liberation. His father died early and his elder brother joined the PLA, and after that, remained in the south of Anhui. Thus, his only close relative was his elderly mother, and mainly because of poverty he was unable to marry during the commune period, despite the fact that he was a commune clerk. His other problem was his reputation, which was harmed by several affairs with women from within the Li Lineage. In the early 1980s, he married a woman through a broker from Shanxi who worked very hard. However, she had no children and eventually died of cancer. After that, Xiangji went to Henan Province to look for temporary work, and he was able to find another woman from Henan who was married, and had a son by her. He took the woman and the boy back to Lijialou and they are still together.

Xianglai (Sa8) and Xiangbei (Sa10), the two final examples, are brothers. One is 44 and the other is 39. They are both illiterate and their parents are both in their mid-70s. Before 1949, their father, Fanhong (Ra6), had been very rich, but he became addicted to opium, and so squandered his money. At the time of the land reform, therefore, he was only classed as a “middle peasant”. His wife has been bed-ridden for more than ten years, and he was in poor health because of a lung complaint. The sons could not get married because of their poverty, the bad health of their parents and the bad reputation of their father for meanness. Some years ago, the family found a wife for the elder brother, Xianglai (Sa8), through a marriage broker, but she ran away after only a few days. However, the brothers continued with their search for wives. During the season of fieldwork, another woman came with a marriage broker, this time from Xian in Shaanxi Province. The family negotiated with them through a local marriage broker in the hope of arranging a marriage for Xiangbei (Sa10). They arrange the marriage to the girl by paying the broker 2,700 yuan. The girl was not a typical country girl: she told the villagers that she was 19 years old, that she had an urban background, and that her mother had taught at a university, and her father was a worker. When her parents divorced, she did not like her father's new wife and so she left home at the age of 13, and lived in Shanghai, Beijing and Shenyang before going back to Xian. When the people asked her why she came to Xiao County, she suddenly burst out crying. The girl seemed unhappy that the broker had tricked her into coming to rural Anhui, particularly because she could not understand the local dialect. She remained in the village for a month. All the members of the family were worried about her because she could read and write and seemed very clever, so they were afraid that she would get in contact with her family, who would come and take her back to Xian. It was said that every night the old man slept outside her bedroom door to prevent this. The marriage took place, but the girl was given none of the usual presents, only a shirt, some cakes and a couple of apples. The following month the news spread that the girl had been sold to another family. During the month that she had been in the village, the old man had sent his sons to other villages to find another husband for her. This took some time, and the new husband paid less than 2,700 yuan, but by this time the family was prepared to settle
for a loss. The girl went to her new husband, and it was said that three days later he took her to the market to buy some clothes. While there, she told him that she wanted to go to the toilet, and she never came back.

According to their father, Fanhong (Ra6), while the girl had been staying with the family, she had taken pity on them because the family was poor and was kind to her, and so she told him the truth: she and the broker from Xian were working together, and they went from area to area playing the same trick. He would pose as a genuine marriage broker with a prospective bride, and would collect money for arranging a “marriage”. After a few days the girl would run away to rejoin him, after which they would move on. However, she said because the family was poor, she did not want to hurt them, and so advised the old man to find her another husband. A curious final detail in this saga was the fact that the older brother, Xianglai (Sa8), himself sometimes worked as a go-between: why couldn’t he find a wife for himself? The reason he gave was his age and poverty. He was in fact a good carpenter, and had developed many social contacts through his work, so he was also employed at times as a go-between, but he had never been able to arrange a marriage for himself.

Admittedly these are a small number of examples, but it is striking how similar themes of age, poverty, illiteracy, poor reputation and social isolation flow through them, and how frequently, even in a small sample, attempts to arrange marriages with women from elsewhere seem to have ended either in domestic violence and unhappiness, or in being cheated by confidence tricksters. Some of the marriages with outside women have undoubtedly been happy and successful, and have led to further marriages with other women from the same area, but others have been expensive disasters. From these and similar cases elsewhere the villagers conclude that in the post-commune marriage market, marriages with outside wives are cheap but risky. They cost only a third or a quarter as much as marriages with local women, but there is no assurance that the woman will stay. Even in cases where there was clearly fraud involved, local village leaders were for a long time unwilling to intervene in what they had come to regard as people’s private business.

Given that an elaborate market in rights over people was a fact of life in pre-Revolutionary China [Watson 1980], it is perhaps not surprising that enterprising individuals should have appeared to meet the market demand generated by the economic conditions of the 1980s. By the end of the decade, the problem was widespread enough for the government to decide to deal with it at the highest level. On September 4 1991, the Twenty-First Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Seventh National People’s Congress adopted measures to “punish severely criminals abducting and kidnapping women or children” with immediate effect. For a long time, the responsibility in law of the buyers in these bogus marriage transactions had been ignored, but this new measure stressed that not only those who abduct women or children, but also those who buy abducted women or children should be punished by up to three years’ imprisonment. The Women’s Association of Anhui began to publicize the new measures in January 1992, and in the case of Xiao County, the County Women’s Association and its local branches began a propaganda campaign in

In April 1992 the Fifth Meeting of the Seventh National People's Congress adopted *Fu Nü Quan Yi Bao Zhang Fa*, "The law of protecting women's rights and interests". The law was put into effect on October 1, 1992. This measure, the first specifically relating to this issue, attempted to protect six categories of women's rights. The first four of these were participation in government and political affairs; rights to education; rights in employment; rights to property, including contract land in the rural areas. The fifth area was in terms of human rights: women should be protected from abduction and being forced into prostitution. The sixth was in the area of marriage and the family, protecting the rights of divorced women to housing and the custody of children. As a result of this publicity, more and more peasants appear to be realizing that buying a woman from a broker is now a criminal offence. In Lijialou in 1992, people were beginning to wonder whether it was worth it, seeing that there appeared to be a danger of prosecution and imprisonment. Given the problems of many of those who have acquired wives through brokers in the past, it is just possible that public opinion in some areas will support tough action against abductors and bogus marriage brokers. Whether they will vanish completely before the pressures on the rural marriage market in areas such as Xiao County are reduced remains to be seen.

5. WOMEN FROM OUTSIDE AND THE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

The situation of the women in these marriages is illustrated by a further piece of research carried out by the Xiao County Women's Association in August-September 1987. Their aims were to obtain information and to protect the legal and human rights of women, and to help them fight against the "women abductors" as the brokers were now officially termed. The survey was based on information from a total of 4106 wives who had arrived in the country between 1980 and the first half of 1987 from a total of 14 other cities and provinces. Of these the largest contingents were from Sichuan (914), and Shaanxi (801). There were also sizable groups from Gansu (120), Yunnan (86) and Henan (86).³

The researchers asked the women whether or not they were satisfied with their lives in Anhui. It was hoped that the association would be able to help those that were unhappy, either to go back home if they wanted to, or to adapt to Anhui life and customs if they wanted to stay. Many of the women complained that their husbands' families would not let them stay in contact with their home areas, for fear that they would run away or be taken back by their families, and many of them were unable to understand the local dialect when they first arrived. The three girls in Lijialou who came from Sichuan fall into this category. They miss their parents and want to go back to visit them, but their husbands and their relatives are afraid that the girls will not come back again. A common response to a request to go home is to buy the wife an expensive gift in the hope that it will make her want to stay. Local farming techniques were also unfamiliar to many, particularly those from rice-growing areas.
Wives from outside also suffer from low status: not only do they not have a network of kin on whom they can rely for support, but they cannot provide their husbands' families with a network of affinal political and economic contacts which are often useful in the post-commune era. The responsibility system has meant that affines are often important sources of labor and money, for instance, when a marriage has to be arranged and a house built, or in agriculture during peak periods of the annual cycle or when new equipment is required. Links between families are maintained through reciprocal visits and gift giving, and of course, outside wives are unable to participate in these.

The research highlighted four causes of wives flooding in from outside. First, it noted that because of "feudalistic" modes of thought which perpetuated the inequality between the sexes, selling and mistreating women is still common and the law is ignored. It found that 75% (3,124) of the sample had been "sold" to husbands in ways involving some degree of deception. Second, and on a more positive note, it noted a "snowball" effect: women who liked their new surroundings persuaded their friends to come and find husbands as well, in the process providing themselves with a friendship network. This process of chain migration involved 15% of the sample. In Lijialou, we have already seen the examples of the girls from Sichuan and Yunnan who followed each other to the village. Third, the research highlighted the high cost of weddings, which it blamed on rising standards of living and "consumption fever", and which made it cheaper to marry a girl from outside than from within the local area. Finally, the research commented critically on the remaining 10% of women from outside who "lacked self-respect" and who had "sold themselves". This seems to refer to the instance of women working together with bogus brokers, as in the case of the two brothers discussed above. As to the ages and marital status of the women, the youngest was 16 and the oldest one was 50. Over half the women, 55%, had been married before their arrival in Anhui, and another 20% were under the legal age of marriage (20). Only 25% were both over the legal age and unmarried on their arrival. Only 20% officially registered their marriages after their arrival. Marriage registration, together with the legal age of marriage, is largely ignored here, as in much of rural China. The research did find positive things to say about the lives of the women after their arrival. Almost all the women were involved in agriculture, and some of them had developed the skills of weaving maize straw and rearing livestock and poultry. The research paid particular attention to those who were active in the party. On the other hand, it reported that 14% of the women reported mistreatment at the hands of their husband and/or his family, probably a much higher percentage than would have been found in conventional marriages. The wives' complaints included being followed when they went shopping, and being locked up at night to prevent them from running away. Even though violence was not particularly common, life for a substantial minority of wives from outside could still be a lonely and somewhat constrained existence.

From the description and analysis above, we can see that the increasing value of female labor, together with the rise in rural incomes, demographic factors and the
increasing importance of affinal network, have led to rapid inflation of marriage-related expenditures by the groom’s family, but not by that of the bride. This has brought about major shift in the power relations between wifegivers and wifetakers in marriage negotiations. On the other hand, with the rapid growth in the rural economy, fundamental changes are taking place not only in the relations between marriage partners and with their respective families, but also between the generations. However, the difficulty which many men face in finding a suitable partner locally has led some of them to try unconventional solutions. With the relaxation of social controls after the adoption of the responsibility system, a new breed of professional marriage brokers has appeared, and they have made a considerable profit out of introducing women from Sichuan, Yunnan, Shanxi and Shaanxi Provinces to the area. The cost of marrying a woman from outside may be a third or a quarter of that of marrying a local girl, although the risks are also considerably greater. If the area remains predominantly agricultural, with low levels of technological innovation or outmigration, present trends in marriage may well continue. On the other hand, with the continuing development of the Chinese economy, leading to greater mobility, technological change in agriculture, social polarization and a redefinition of the relationships between parents and children, peasants may adopt new strategies to arrange one of the most important parts of the process of reproduction.

Notes

1. After the Liberation, cadres and committees responsible for safeguarding women’s rights and welfare were established throughout the country. In Anhui, Women’s Association operated at the provincial, district and county levels, though in the administrative village of which Lijialou formed a part, women’s issues were dealt with only on a part time basis by a male cadre. A suitable woman to take over the role had not been found. Research by the Women’s Association into the position of wives from outside Xiao County is discussed in a later section.

2. The figures in the tables express marriage costs in approximately 1980s’ prices. In most cases, they have been arrived at through estimates of the present-day cost of the quantities of food consumed or goods purchased. On the other hand, it is a standard in northern Anhui to measure the size of a marriage feast in “tables”with eight people to each table.

3. Source: Unpublished internal report of the Xiao County Women’s Association. There were also 48 girls from Shanxi, 29 from Guizhou, 20 Hebei, 20 Hubei, 20 Jiangxi, 20 from Jiangsu, 30 from other counties in Anhui, and others from Shandong and Inner Mongolia. There figures are probably on the low side for the county as a whole: indeed, officials of the association thought that a figure of around 4,000 was only a fraction of the the true total.
Chapter 7  The Growth of Christianity in Northern Anhui

After the adoption of household production, the family and lineage increased in importance. On the other hand, these changes brought instability to the lives of those on the margins of the family and kinship structure. The economic reforms and the opening of the market led to polarization. Those who have access to sufficient labor, technology and cash get rich, while those who have insufficient labor, or who have to look after the sick at home, live a poor life. In addition, the breakup of the commune affected the welfare system in the rural areas. Medical payments have increased so that many poor old people cannot afford them. In this sense, these poor and sick people have more difficulties than they had during the collective period. It is against this background that Christianity appears to attract people, men and women, young and old, by helping them solve their problems. In this chapter I will discuss the reasons for this rapid growth, the preaching and the process of conversion, and the influence of Christianity on social life.

1. CHRISTIANITY IN HISTORICAL AND CURRENT PERSPECTIVE

When I carried out preliminary investigation in a village of Su County of Suxian Prefecture in October 1989, a girl told me that several Christian meeting groups had appeared recently in her village; they gathered three times a week to pray and sing hymns, and went to a church in Suzhou City for Sunday service. She took me to visit the church in Suzhou City. I was moved by the scene: more than eight hundred people gathered in the church, bowing their heads and praying piously; at the front was a white-haired woman, while people cheerfully shared bibles with each other even though they were strangers. Most of them were peasants from the nearby villages. The service lasted for two hours. After the service, people remained at the church, sharing stories of the benefits they had experienced since their conversion. When I went to Xiao County in Suxian Prefecture, I encountered some Christians in villages and many episodes of recent conversion. Having visited the church and Christian meeting places in the village, and interviewed the priests many times, I realized there has been a boom in Christianity in recent years and that, in some places, whole families and villages have been converted.

Christianity was first introduced to China early in the seventh century by a Nestorian missionary from Persia. At that time, Christianity was called jing jiao (Nestorianism). The missionary was received with respect by the emperor of the Tang Dynasty. During the following two hundred years, Nestorianism spread across the nation. In the year 835, Emperor Wuzong issued an order banning Buddhism and sending monks and nuns back into secular life, and Nestorianism was banned as well. After the Mongolians became masters of China in the thirteenth century, Mongolian Nestorians came to China, and Nestorian Christianity was popular in the Yuan Dynasty. However, after the Yuan Dynasty, Christianity disappeared from China for
a while. In 1582, an Italian Jesuit missionary brought Christianity back to China adapting Christian teachings to Chinese customs and culture and introducing Western science. However, later on, Dominican and Franciscan missionaries joined the work and disputes arose, resulting in the “Rites Controversy” over the question of Confucian rites and ancestor worship. In the eighteenth century, the Emperors Kangxi and Yongzheng issued an order to ban missionaries who opposed Chinese rites. As a result, most of the missionaries were driven out of China. Because of the traditional attitude of religious tolerance in China, no religion has ever taken control over politics, and there has never been armed conflict among the country’s religions.

Protestantism entered China about the time of the Opium War, and preaching started on a large scale. At that time, the religion was closely related to the Western colonial powers. They expanded the influence of Christianity by means of schools, hospitals, and charitable organizations. After the 1911 Revolution, and particularly during the First World War, the independent Church grew, and by 1920, it had spread to sixteen provinces. Many religious people plunged into the mass movement to abolish unequal treaties, protesting against imperialist aggression and advocating that Chinese churches should break away from foreign missions and became independent. On the eve of the Liberation, there were 3,000,000 Catholics, with 15,000 churches in about 140 Catholic dioceses, and 700,000 Protestants divided among seventy Protestant denominations, both large and small, with 121 foreign mission societies (of which half were American), and about 2,000 churches [Luo 1991: 36].

In 1907, the North American Association Mission Boards sent people to preach in Suzhou City of Suxian Prefecture for the first time. In 1912, a couple of American missionaries sent by the Mission Boards came to Suzhou and set up a Protestant church called fu yin tang, the Gospel Church (Photo 6). In addition to preaching, they also set up farms, schools, hospitals and welfare centers. At that time, the North American Association Mission Boards provided funds for the church. In Xiao County, a foreign Catholic priest from Nanjing came to Majing in Xiao County to set up a church in 1887, followed by a French priest in 1889. They used the Majing church as ben tang, their base, and opened thirty fen tang or sub-churches in the surrounding villages. During the Japanese invasion between 1938 and 1945, in order to escape, many people fled into churches and converted to Christianity. The number of believers increased to 4,473. On the other hand, the first Protestant missionary, from England, came to Xiao County to preach in 1929. The next year, an American also set up a church, and the Protestants used the county town as their base and developed six sub-churches in the surrounding villages.

Since the CCP came into power, religious activities have been affected. The “Land Reform of the People's Republic of China”, issued in June 1950, called for the “confiscation of the lands of temples, churches, schools, and collective units in the countryside and other public land”. Buddhist and Taoist monks and nuns would be allocated their shares of land on the same basis as the peasants. However, Christianity survived. In 1951, Protestants established the National “Three-Self” Patriotic Movement Committee in Beijing, stressing self-support, self-government and
self-propagation, and breaking off relations with foreign churches. In 1957 the first representative meeting of the Catholic Patriotic Association was convened in Beijing and adopted the decision to "firmly free ourselves from the control of the Vatican". Until the Cultural Revolution, there were six Protestant churches and 29 meeting points in the whole county including the rural areas. During the Cultural Revolution, all the churches stopped functioning. The protestant church of Suzhou was used as a broadcasting agency, and the church of Xiao County was used as a hospital, and the office of the county government.

The third plenum of the eleventh central committee of the Chinese communist party in late 1978 reinstated the policy of freedom of religious belief. This was later articulated in Article 36 of the 1982 revision of the national constitution. Since that time, all of China's five officially recognized religions, namely Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Protestantism and Catholicism, have renovated and rebuilt damaged churches, temples, and mosques. They have revived local religious activities; reopened seminaries and institutes; and reorganized long-defunct religious organizations at national and local levels [Luo 1991: xvi]. Among the five religions, Protestant Christianity seems to be growing the fastest, from 700,000 members in 1949 to an estimated 5 million in 1989 [Luo 1991: xvii]. The Xiao County government established min zu zongliao shi wu ke, a National Religion Affairs Section in 1982. In 1983, a Protestant Congress was opened and established a "Three-Self" Patriotic Movement Committee in Xiao County, and selected candidates for the religious affairs committee. This committee controls two churches: one is in the county seat, and the other is in Hekou. Under the two churches, there are more than 60 meeting centers. Furthermore, under each meeting center, there are dozens of family meeting places, which I will describe below. A man in charge of a meeting place told me that there are more than 10,000 Protestants in Xiao County.

2. THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES, MEETING CENTERS AND MEETING PLACES

Xiao County belongs to Suxian Prefecture, which has five counties under its control. The prefecture headquarters is in Suzhou City. Each of the five counties has its own Protestant church. These churches are of equal status, and organize many juhui zhongxin, Christian meeting centers (Photo 7) in the countryside. Missionaries and their helpers, who are local people, preach there. Under each meeting center, there are a lot of juhuidian, meeting places. In the meeting places, there are no missionaries but only members. Local government neither interferes with the Protestants nor provides them with any funds. The financial resources for the management of the churches and meeting centers come from the members.

I have visited the church in Suzhou City many times. Services are generally held twice on Sunday. In addition, there are prayers on Wednesday afternoon, and a women's service on Friday. There is one minister, Gai Sanxuan, 82 years old in 1989, and a young minister, Zhang Yufa, working at this church. Gai was born in
Shandong, and began his Protestant career when he was young. He had been preaching at this church as the only minister for many years. Zhang was born in Hefei in 1963. He failed to pass the university entrance exam after high school, but on the advice of his uncle, who was a Christian, he sat the examination for the seminary of Hefei, which was set up in 1986, and he passed. He told me that he converted to Christianity because of what he learned in the seminary. Two years later, he graduated and was sent to this church. Now he has married a worker who is a Christian and belongs to the church. Besides these two people, there is another female minister, and four yi gong. Yi gong is a local term for those who are neither priests nor ministers, but serve the church, for instance helping with mission work. The church also runs a clinic. Zhang told me that they organize services and prayers in the church, but also often visit meeting places, and during the festivals visit church people, especially the sick and the elderly, to give them material and spiritual help.

When I asked what was the main problem at present, Minister Zhang told me that:

The emergent problem is that we do not have enough ministers. We have 1500 believers, but there are only seven people in charge of this church. This situation is more serious in churches in the rural area.

In order to train preachers and respond to the needs of the believers, they started a program for training ministers. Until March 1990, they ran a short-term training class twice. Ninety people took part in the first class, from October 1988 to March 1989, while seventy people took part in the second class, from November 1989 to March 1990. In the classes, there were more men than women. They came from the surrounding villages. They had graduated from middle school, and had been recommended by their meeting places. In this class, they learned about the Old Testament and the New Testament, Christian doctrine, and religious music. Having been trained for several months, they received a certificate of course completion, and with the certificate they could preach in the rural areas. As for education in Christian doctrine, Minister Zhang explained to me that the basic belief of Christianity is that people all are born in original sin. Our ancestors were guilty, and we often have wicked ideas, so we are guilty. However, God still loves us and he sent his son, Jesus to our world to save us.

In addition to the church, I also visited a Christian meeting center in the countryside of Xiao County. One Sunday, believers in Lijialou showed me the meeting place in Sunlaojia Village, three kilometers away. About 150 people came from a dozen nearby villages. The house was full of people. Many people who could not get in, just stood outside and listened to the preaching attentively. Most of them were old women, but in addition, there were many young people. The service began at ten o’clock. At first, a yi gong led the believers in prayer. The congregation bowed their heads. Then he had them sing hymns over and over again, and taught them new ones. Next came the sermon. A minister explained a certain chapter or verse from the Bible. Only a few people had bibles, but many had notebooks in which were
copied some verses or chapters from the bible and some hymns. Then, came the confession of sins, and the pledge never to sin again. The last element of the service was the collection of *gan en fei*, "thankful money" offered spontaneously by the congregation. An old lady in Lijialou presented 5 yuan to the meeting center, because her daughter-in-law had a baby boy, and she owed all this to God. The service lasted about one and a half to two hours. Another woman in Lijialou presented two yuan. She told me that:

Recently, some of my neighbors' lambs became ill and died. My lambs became ill too. I could do nothing but pray again and again. Suddenly, a flash of light appeared in my eyes. I followed the light and found my lambs. It was strange, but my lambs were full of vigor. I began to realize that, if you believe in God, then God is efficacious.

There are six people in charge of this Christian meeting center, and all of them have been trained a class run by the Hekou church. They are all local peasants. On weekdays, they do farm work like other peasants, and on Sunday they come to preach. I visited the minister, Sun Shanqin, who opened this meeting center. He was over 50. His class status is landlord. He graduated from high school, and was called *xiu cai*, a talented man. Having been trained, he began to preach at home in the middle of the 1980s. Since his congregation increased rapidly, in 1989, he used 5,000 yuan of the "thankful money" to buy a house with five rooms from an elementary school.

Meeting centers encourage believers to form family groups and to meet regularly for prayer in groups of five or six, in particular houses, praying and reading the Bible. Generally there is one group in each village. In Lijialou, there are six believers, all of whom are old women and illiterate. They meet every Monday, Wednesday and Friday evening. Sometimes, the believers from a neighboring village join them. Because there are ten Christians in the neighboring village, and three of them are young, they can help the believers in Lijialou. I once joined their gathering on a summer evening. Five old women from Lijialou gathered in Qian Zhihong's home. They practiced their hymns, said their prayers and exchanged their recent experiences. One said:

Recently I lost my hens. In the past, I would have shouted abuse at the village. But this time, I did not because God does not allow me to abuse people.

Qian Zhihong said (Photo 16):

Some days ago, when I was looking for my hens, I was bitten by the dog from Sal's home, and my legs started to bleed and would not stop. I immediately went to hospital to have a preventive inoculation. Keeping God in my mind, I felt no pain.
Another woman said:

Yesterday, the door of my home fell down and hit my head. It was strange: I just felt that something had bumped my head and I felt no pain.

The accountant's mother said:

I used to have dropsy and a terrible headache. I was not able to do so much housework. Since I have come to believe in Jesus, I have recovered. During the wheat harvest season, I myself made food for twelve persons and I did not feel tired.

The more they talked the happier they felt. That day, they talked until one o'clock at night.

3. THE PREACHING METHOD IN SUXIAN PREFECTURE

Christianity is a religion imported from abroad. To attract the masses, most of whom are illiterate or semi-illiterate, and take root and grow in the local soil, the churches and meeting places do not entirely use the Western forms of preaching, but rather, they use styles which have existed for a long time among the people, things they love to see and hear. Churches and meeting centers in this area have their own character, and they have made innovations both in forms of preaching and in content. First, few of the hymns are in the original Western styles. Some of them are sung to tunes made up by the missionaries, but most of the melodies are taken from local folk songs, and many of them are even melodies taken from the songs that were popular during the Cultural Revolution. Generally, the wording is rough and the tune is simple, but it is effective, because it comes from the local folk tradition and thus is easy to understand, to learn, and to sing. Secondly, missionaries not only adopt tunes from folk songs, but also traditional ideas and ways of thinking. For example, the most famous song “The East is Red” in which Mao Zedong was praised as the Messiah (savior of the world), is now used to praise Jesus. Chinese believe that the Messiah will come down from heaven to destroy injustice on earth and relieve people from their sufferings. The idea of a Messiah has long been popular among Chinese. Though the illiterate and semi-illiterate peasants know little about the foreign ideas of God and Christ, they can understand Christ better through the traditional concept of the savior of the world. So the adoption of folk song and traditional ideas are two of the characteristics of the present Christianity boom.

On the other hand, aiming at social problems that concern people most, local churches and meeting places revise and develop Christian teachings, making Christianity something locally born and bred, both in form and content. For example, the most frequent sermon topic is filial piety. Originally a moral precept of the Confucian school, filial piety has been given great emphasis in Christian preaching.
This is clearly linked with the failure of sons and daughters to care for their parents and to the bad relationships that often exist between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. The world has changed, however and some people, especially some of the old people, still judge everything according to the old moral concepts. These people feel disappointed. Here I will give a Christian song, which I collected from believers in Lijialou, as an example.

Compared with other people, I am neither pious nor virtuous. Scolded by my mother-in-law, I get angry; scolded by my husband, I turn hostile. I beat children vigorously, making the earth shake. Our family becomes a living hell. I make Jesus lose face.

We can see clearly that to meet people's needs, Christianity stresses the harmony of the family. It advocates that one should "Show filial piety to parents, respect to the elderly, and love to the young; do not believe in superstitions; do not profit at others' expense; do not strike others or abuse them; give up evil and return to good; avoid the false and keep the true; hold firmly to the truth." By adopting the idea of filial piety into Christianity, missionaries can attract more people; in turn believers hope to restore the traditional ethics by conversion to Christianity. It is also one of the reasons why Christianity has become so popular just now. However Christianity not only teaches people to love their parents, husbands or wives, brothers or sisters, children, their senior relatives, but also teaches people to love everybody.

Here it is necessary to distinguish Confucian "love" and Christian "love". "Benevolence", ren, the kernel of the thought of Confucius, means to love people. It takes "filial piety" as its foundation. Filial piety was one of the elements that brought social stability. A filial person would not offend the ruler. Filial piety could lead to loyalty. "King as King, subjects as subjects, fathers as fathers, and sons as sons" became the basic moral force regulating ethical relationships in the feudal society. For the peasants, filial piety and benevolence are based on consanguinity. Christianity's love is different. It is universal fraternity that is beyond consanguinity and therefore more universal than the love of the Confucian school. It tells people that God is the father, and all the people who worship God are God's children, so all the people are brothers and sisters. In the churches and meeting centers and the family groups, missionaries call believers sisters and brothers, and believers themselves called each other sister or brother. So adopting this universal love is a big innovation in traditional relationships and may lead to some changes in people's personal identity.

4. CAUSES OF THE RAPID GROWTH OF CHRISTIANITY

There are several reasons for the rapid growth of Christianity since the end of 1978. The religious policy of the central government provided a framework for the revival and development of Christianity, while economic reform and the breakup of
the communes provided the stimulus for its spread. Finally compared with other beliefs and religions, Christianity appears to provide solutions to problems more easily.

(1) The policy of religious freedom

Since the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in late 1978 corrected the extreme Leftist line, the government has reinstated the policy of freedom of religious belief. It stresses that at present stage, the basic interest of believers and nonbelievers are politically and economically identical, and differences in ideology and belief are secondary. The aim of implementing the policy of religious freedom is to unite the people of all nationalities throughout the country, in order to build a strong and modern socialist nation. Here the high percentage of minority peoples among the population of religious believers is an important factor in the central government’s policy of freedom of religious belief.

(2) Economic reform and the breakup of the communes

Household production on the one hand has strengthened the functions of family, segment and lineage. On the other hand, it has brought instability to the lives of those on the margins of the kinship structure. The economic reform and the opening of the market have led to polarization. Those who have access to sufficient labor, technology and cash get rich, while those who have insufficient labor, or who have to look after the sick at home, live a poor life. The breakup of the commune has affected the welfare system in the rural areas. Medical payments have increased so that many poor old people cannot afford them. First, the medical services provided by the churches are a means of attracting poor people with health problems. Some people, who are critically ill, having tried all possible medical solutions, turn to Jesus for help. In an investigation in Shanghai, people in these circumstances made up 68% of the new Christians [Luo 1991: 196]. In the case of Lijialou, five of the six believers are weak. Since they have attended the Protestant meeting center, they feel they have become better. In another village, there is a woman in her late thirties. She told other believers that she had been suffering from cirrhosis for some years, and had visited several hospitals. All the doctors said that she had only two years left to live. Feeling disappointed by the doctors, she turned to the church, trying to find some hope in Christianity. She prayed piously every minute of every day even when in the toilet, and she gradually began to feel better. Now she feels that having God’s blessing, she is always in high spirits and can do a lot of housework. When I met her, she was even pregnant. Hearing her story, people asked her what kind of prayers she said, and wrote them down immediately. Believers believe that hymns have extraordinary power that can cure people’s illnesses, so they all try to be the first to write them down. This kind of miraculous “witnessing” by the Christians has had a snowball effect, and has lead to a gradual increase in people’s interest in Christianity. More and
more people believe that by singing hymns or through prayer they can recover their health. Some of them even say that if you carry a knife when praying then it is more efficacious. More and more people begin to think that Christianity does not require people to pay money, but it helps people to overcome illness.

Many people converted to Christianity because of family problems. When people see the harmony and good fellowship among the Christians, they begin to accept the faith, in their search for emotional sustenance. Some believers told me that, after their conversion, they became different people, dealing with the contradictions of their household with cheerfulness, patience, and forbearance.

Some people converted because of physical loneliness. As for the age distribution among Christians, there are more elderly than middle-aged or young people. From one investigation in a meeting place in another Anhui county, 53% were women over fifty, 25.9% were middle-aged women between 30 and 50, 21.1% were young people 21.1% [Luo 1991: 234]. In the case of Lijialou, four of the six believers are widows, and two of them live alone. They told me that they felt lonely until conversion. But now they never feel lonely at all because God protects them. One old woman told me that:

I used to wake up at midnight, and could not fall asleep any more. Now when I wake up, I sing hymns or pray. I feel God is with me.

Christianity not only gives people encouragement to overcome loneliness, but also broadens their social relationships, and what is more important, fills their spiritual vacuum. An investigation reported some retired workers in Shanghai as saying, “The Communist Party saved my physical life, and Jesus saved my soul,” or “I rely on the party while alive, and on God after death [Luo 1991: 198].” Some people converted because of misfortune. Among the believers, there are many young people, most of whom had been unlucky. Taking the neighboring village Zhangji as an example, I interviewed one man in this village who is 30. He once married a girl from Henan through a local marriage broker. Two months later, her brothers and policemen came to his home and took the girl back. This shocked him. In fact, the girl was going to visit her relatives, and when she changed trains, she was abducted by a couple who lived in a village in Xiao County. The couple kept the girl confined indoors all day, then they found this man and promised him that he could marry the girl. Borrowing some money, the man paid the broker and brought her home. However this girl was well educated, and she wrote a letter and secretly sent it to her home. Receiving her letter, her brother and her relatives, who were policemen, all came to get her. The girl has gone, but the money her “husband” had paid would never be returned. He was very sad. Since he conversion, he has become a different person: bright and kind to people. Now, though he is still not married, he has become an active farmer. One day he came to the mill at Lijialou and I asked him about Christianity. He said that Christianity teaches people to do good, and he even sang some hymns for us.
Since there are too few missionaries, usually the believers themselves preach. They tell those who are not yet believers what kinds of benefits they can get if they convert. One day, my landlady and I went to the market town. On the way, we met a woman who was a believer. She recommended Christianity to my landlady, who is not in good health. The woman said:

The door of paradise is still open. You can enter any time you want. If the door is closed, then you will not enter any more. People who have entered the door will be saved by God, while those have not entered will be destroyed. Our fates are controlled in the hands of Jesus. If we do good, God will know, and forgive our sins and prolong our lives accordingly. Believing in Jesus is convenient. If you pray, God will come immediately. If you ask help from a shaman, you have to wait, and do not know when God will come.

Hearing her suggestion, my landlady said that it sounded like a good thing, but that if she converted she would not be able to offer incense to the ancestors, and that would be too bad. For this reason, my landlady kept outside the “door of paradise” for several years. In August 2000, when I returned to Lijialou she had become a Christian (Photo 17). She said she wanted to ask God to help her grandson, who is very ill, so she became a Christian in 1999. She also told me that her husband stands by her as much as he can, for instance by offering incense to the ancestors in her place.

(3) Comparing Christianity with other beliefs and religions

Before the Liberation, four major religions and belief systems could be found in Xiao County: Buddhism, Taoism, Catholicism, and Protestant Christianity. Buddhism and Taoism lacked the grass-roots organization. The influence of Christianity, especially Catholicism, was great, because foreign missionary associations supported it, so it had built many churches and convents and ran hospital and schools in Xiao County. There were no Christians in Lijialou. There were only two Buddhists, who were widows. At present, Protestantism is the most popular in Xiao County.

Traditional Chinese ideology stresses this world, and teaches people to submit to the will of Heaven, and resign oneself to one’s fate. For thousands of years, the peasants have believed “do your best and obey fate”. This idea maybe provides social harmony, but gives people no hope. Those who are ill, poor or unlucky can do nothing but obey fate, over which they have no control. Another character of the Confucian school is that harmony of a family, lineage and nation is the highest value, and therefore individuals are encouraged to restrain themselves and to contribute to the organization. The importance of happiness, spiritual longings, interests, hopes and misfortunes to individuals are underestimated. Therefore people who are marginalized to the edge of the family, lineage or nation will get no help from Confucian idea, but will just feel hopeless.
Christianity stresses the value of the individual human being, and encourages people to strive for a better life by adopting two concepts: heaven and hell. It divides people's life in two: the life of this world and life of next world. In the life of next world, there are two places: heaven and hell. God will allow those who do good to enter heaven, and those who do evil will go down to hell. Apart from freeing themselves from the physical suffering in this world, Christianity also provides people with spiritual comfort, encouragement, strength, hope, and ideals. People feel that Christ has asked them for no money, but has freed them from misfortune and calamity, giving them well-being in this world, while promising them happiness in the next.

Buddhism stresses the idea of “cause-and-effect retribution”, and gives poor and unlucky people hope in the next world. On this point, Christianity and Buddhism are very similar. However, Buddhism includes the belief in reincarnation, while Christianity stresses the restoration of the soul, which is easier for the Chinese to accept, because the Chinese believe that the soul can live without the body. On the other hand, Buddhist practices are too complicated and onerous. For this reason, some people chose Christianity rather than Buddhism. For example, an old woman in Lijialou wanted to be a Buddhist, because she had been converted to Buddhism before the Liberation. Her daughters and son disagreed and suggested that she convert to Christianity. They said to her:

You have suffered all your life, and you can and you should enjoy your later life. If you convert to Buddhism, you cannot eat pork, chickens or even eggs any more, so how will you enjoy your life?

Lutheranism believes that a devout person at prayer can hear the voice of God. This idea is similar to the Chinese idea: xin cheng ze ling, piety is efficacious.

Compared with shamanism, Protestantism is a very convenient and economical religion. Shamans have long existed in this area. A female shaman is called shen ma zi, and a male shaman is called shen han. Villagers visit them when they suffer from mental disorders. For every three or four villages, there is one shaman. Villagers say that when they suffer, they cannot ask a goddess for help directly, unlike Christ, but they have to ask the shaman to call on the goddess to cure them. Furthermore, they have to pay the shaman a lot. In addition to its high cost and inconvenience, shamanism has not yet been officially recognized as a religion.

5. THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY ON SOCIAL LIFE

The Christian lifestyle has had a strong social influence. Peasants said that Christians do not fight or swear, nor do they smoke and drink. They seldom have disputes with their neighbors or within their families. Many Christians handle their relations with the family and with their neighbors in the spirit of “Christian love” which is beyond Confucian “love” based on consanguinity, and “forbearance” is
embodied in Christian morality. Numerous Christians have given up smoking and drinking. Bishop K.H. Ting, Principal of the Nanjing Theological Seminary, President of the China Christian Council, and Chairperson of the Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement, pointed out that: “All religions admonish people to be good”; this is the most universal view of religion. It is reported by many local officials today that there is little crime in places with many religious believers... Christianity is a religion that lays emphasis on ethics. The Bible distinguishes between right and wrong, goodness and evil, good and bad behavior; much of the Bible is about how society and political life should be conducted [Luo 1991: xi]. In fact, Christianity puts the emphasis on eternal life or the immortal soul. However, Christianity in China stresses ethical relations in this world in order to adapt to China’s situation, because Confucian ideology with its emphasis on ethics, has long been dominant. On the other hand, forbearance and obedience are Christian teachings. The Bible tells people to obey those in power because they represent God’s will; thus the preacher offers a new reason to obey the cadres and a new possibility of social stability. Therefore, local cadres generally do not interfere with Christian services. They even hope that Christianity will play a more important role in the creation of a socialist spiritual civilization. I asked Minister Zhang,

H: What was or is your attitude towards the incident of Tiananmen Square in 1989?
Z: I did not agree with the methods which the students used. Other Christians and I all thought that the only way left us was to pray.
H: What did you pray?
Z: I prayed for our rulers, I begged God to give our leaders more wisdom to lead our nation, and to give more wisdom to the students to take the whole interest of our nation into account. Christianity teaches forbearance and nonviolence. We must obey the rulers, because they are appointed by God.
H: If the rulers fail to represent God’s will, can we rise up against their rule?
Z: As far as I know, the Bible does not tell people to rebel.

On the other hand, there appear to be some problems created by the rapid growth of Christianity. First, because they lack missionaries, some people proclaim themselves as missionaries. They do not have enough knowledge of Christianity, so they do not preach according to the Bible. For example, a man in another county of Suzhou Prefecture used to be a believer. He set up a “Jesus family”, and raped sixteen women including virgins. The authorities got in touch with the religious section of the government and church. Having asked their agreement, they executed him. In addition, a false minister gave people names or baptism and demanded money. A female believer in the same county cut her son into eight pieces in order to thank God. At a Christian meeting place, a minister put a millstone outside the house and told believers that those who were ill would be cured if they were willing to lie under the millstone.
As we have seen, in the early 1980s, Christianity experienced a boom in Northern Anhui. There is no doubt that it was first due to the new policy of freedom of religious belief. On the other hand, the adoption of household production and the breakup of the commune affected the welfare system in the rural areas, but therefore has strengthened the links of households, segments and affines. However, it has brought instability to the lives of those on the margins of the family and kinship structure. Those who have access to sufficient labor, technology and cash get rich, while those who have insufficient labor, or who have to look after the sick at home, live a poor life. The reform and breaking up of the commune not only affected the socialist welfare system, but also brought crisis of belief among the masses. It is against this background that Christianity appeared and attracted converts, men and women, old and young, by offering help in solving their problems.

On the other hand, both churches and meeting centers have made great efforts through preaching methods aimed at social problems that people are most concerned about, revising and developing Christian teachings, making Christianity something locally born and bred, both in form and content.

Christianity stresses the value of the individual human being that is lacking in Confucianism. Apart from freeing them from the physical suffering in this world, Christianity also provides people with spiritual comfort, encouragement, strength, hope, and ideals. People feel that Christ has asked them for no money, but has freed them from misfortune and calamity, giving them well-being in this world, while promising them happiness in the next. The base of traditional identity was consanguinity, while the base of socialist identity is class. The base of Christian identity is belief in God and it is beyond both consanguinity and class status. The spread of Christianity may bring about changes in peasants’ identity, and in their social behavior and social organization as well.

Notes

1. In 1993, the Japanese anthropologist, Nishizawa, proved that John Buck and his wife, Pearl S. Buck, had long-standing links with this church. I later went to the church many times, and interviewed some old people, who directly or indirectly knew John Buck and his wife, Pearl S. Buck.
Chapter 8 The Revival of Rituals, and Reconstruction of Agnatic and Affinal Networks

Twenty years have passed since the responsibility system was adopted in rural China. Family enterprise and the market economy were restored, and communes were disbanded, so peasants achieved more freedom in both economy and polity. One of the most clearly manifested results of decollectivization was enthusiasm for the revival of traditional customs, ritual and religion. Why did this happen and what can we explain from these changes? All these questions become important when we assess the effects of the socialist revolution, including collectivization during the Mao period and decollectivization post-Mao.

Recently some anthropological scholars and students have begun to pay attention to the revival of traditional institutions. For instance, the Potters [1990] have pointed out the revival of household ancestor cults in Guangdong and suggested it is a symbolic statement of the social and economic importance of the household. Kim Kwangok [1991] from South Korea analyzed revived popular culture in Shandong in the context of tension between the state and people around the ownership of popular culture. Jing Jun [1992, 1996] gave a report on the rebuilding of the Confucian Temple by the Kongs in Gansu, and pointed out that beneath it lies a hidden memory, burdened by regret, fear and shame. These authors to a certain extent have described the same phenomenon of a resurgence, but they share a similarity in that each of them adopts a one-sided approach. The economic importance of the household is the focus of the Potters; competition between the Party and the people around the reconstruction of the past is the perspective of Kim; and social memory is studied by Jing. Therefore, the overall picture of how this revival happened still remains unclear. To overcome this, an intensive and full-length study from multiple angles is necessary.

This chapter presents a detailed account of the resurgence of ancestor worship and ritual presentations between agnates and affines on the occasions of rites of passage and festivals in the lunar calendar in a northern Anhui village. It focuses mainly on three aspects: the constraints and possibilities of the local economy and political system, people’s group identities, and, especially important, the efforts of the elite inside the descent group and the influence of overseas Chinese people who come back to visit their homes.

1. GIFT EXCHANGE BETWEEN AGNATES AND AFFINES

With the recent changes in economic and social policy, wedding and funeral customs have changed dramatically, becoming more expensive and elaborate. Li shang wan lai is a very old maxim in the Analects of Confucius, which means that courtesy demands reciprocity. The great tradition of li shang wan lai has infiltrated the rural areas and become an important part of local tradition. People have also
adopted the practice in northern Anhui. This section deals with the continuity and changes in the patterns of reciprocity between agnates and affines before the Liberation, during the collective period and in the period after Mao. I will also discuss the reasons for this continuity and change. People call the practice of gift exchange *xing lai wang*, “having contact”, when it is carried on between affines, because “having contact” means having relations of reciprocity with someone outside the village, and villages in this area consist of one lineage or one localized segment of a lineage. There is a popular saying, “the relationship between relatives is like a saw; you come, and I go”. Here relatives mean only affines, they do not include patrilineal kinsmen, who are called *zi jia ren* “members of this family”. In fact, as I have observed, gift exchange can be seen not only between affines but also agnates. So I take “having contact” to mean the practice of reciprocity between both affines and agnates, but I will concentrate on affines.

(1) The tradition of gift exchange

As an affinal relationship is established at the time of a wedding, the duty of gift exchange is also established. However the gift exchange relationship is not limited to the natal families and marital families, but to the *wu fu*, “the five mourning grades” of relatives on both sides. The five mourning grades not only provide the boundaries for mourning but also for other ceremonies. The closer the grade is, the more gifts

![Fig. 8-1 The Five Mourning Grades](image-url)
should be presented.

As Freedman has pointed out, "The wu ju is in principle a category drawn up in regard to a given ego; it could not, therefore, be a discrete segment of a lineage. But, while the term was used to define the range of agnatic kinsmen to whom a given individual was supposed to hold himself closely related and with whom he should co-operate in a number of ways, in another sense it marked out different classes of relatives, both agnatic and otherwise, for the specification of types and durations of mourning due to them; whence the literal meaning of the expression" [Freedman 1958: 41]. In the case of Xiao County, as shown in Fig. 8-1 (a), the wu ju also includes the sisters of the men within the wu ju. For instance, ego, his father, ego's brother or sister and ego's son or daughter are all of the second grade. Ego and his first cousin, either male or female, are all of the third grade. However, villagers usually say that they have a common ye ye or nai nai, grandfather or grandmother, instead of sharing the third grade. In the case of the fourth grade, they usually say that they have a common lao ye ye or lao nai nai, great-grand-father or great-grand-mother. Here we can see that villagers tend to use a common ancestor, male or female, to define the limits of their relations of consanguinity.

Why do the Chinese tend to use their common ancestors to limit their relationships? The Chinese believe: shen tiju fo shou zhiyu ju mu. This means one's body, skin and hair are all given by one's parents. They obtain their bone and spirit from their fathers, and obtain their flesh and blood from their mothers. That is to say, people obtain one part from their fathers, and another part from their mothers.

Here, assuming that one person obtains half of his body from his father and the other half from his mother, the grade can be simply counted as follows. When one person and one of his relatives have obtained the same (1/2)^n amount from their closest common ancestor, the relation between ego and his relative is of the (n+1)th grade. For example, ego and his first cousin, as shown in Fig. 8-1 (b), obtain a quarter (1/2) × (1/2) = (1/2)^2 from their grandfather, so ego, ego's grandfather and ego's first cousin have a quarter of their body in common, and therefore they are of the third (2+1) grade. In the same way, ego and his second cousin obtain one-eighth (1/2) × (1/2) × (1/2) = (1/2)^3 from their great-grand-father, so ego and his second cousin are of the fourth (3+1) grade. Here we can see clearly that the grade depends on the degree that ego and his kinsman have the body of their ancestor in common. The more they have in common, the closer their grades are.

In funerals, all the relatives within the wu ju should attend, so funerals are the most expensive rituals. Villagers told me that before the Liberation, if somebody died, the family would not have a funeral for him immediately. Sometimes, it would take years to gather enough money to organize a funeral, because the expense was so great. My landlord told me that, before the Liberation if somebody died, none of the households in the village needed to make steamed bread for several days, because the family would provide for them. Marriage and other rites of passage did not cost as much as funerals. The process of village formation and patrilocality required reciprocity between affines.
(2) Gift exchange during the collective period

During the 30 years of the collective period, even though people still carried on gift giving, two big changes occurred. First, the boundaries of exchange became narrower. In an ordinary funeral, instead of agnates within the five grades attending, only close affines within the third grade attended. The scale of banquets was also greatly reduced. In the pre-revolutionary period, the average marriage banquet had about 30 tables of guests, whereas the average during the collective period was reduced to about 10 tables. Similarly, exchanges of money and gifts were also reduced. The reasons for the reduction in scale were that:

(i) The collective economy and the commune welfare system to a certain extent reduced the importance of family and lineage.

(ii) The state encouraged people to change the old customs in order to save money and in the name of “constructing socialism”. In most parts of China, burial in the ground had been prohibited as a result of state policy. In northern Anhui it remained popular, but was carried out in a very simple way.

(iii) During the 1960s and 1970s, people were poor and few of them had surplus cash and grain. This was particularly so in the period between 1960 and 1962, when nobody conducted wedding or funeral rites.

(3) Gift exchange under the responsibility system

At present, three factors regulating presentations have changed, so that traditions of presentation have revived. Here, I will show how people carry out rites of gift exchange between agnates and affines on the occasions of rites of passage and festivals of the lunar calendar.

A. Hui men, “going back to the natal home”

In the past, four days after the wedding, the bride and groom were expected to go back the bride’s natal home to visit her parents and close relatives. This rite is called hui men, “going back to the natal home”. It was the first ritual visit after a wedding, so they would present gifts such as fish, steamed bread and so on to the bride’s parents. At this time, the parents relationship to the bride was changed; their daughter was no longer a member of their patrilineal household but an affine. The bride’s parents and close agnates would give a banquet for the new couple. When they left, the parents would present the couple with a large quantity of steamed bread and some cooking utensils.

B. Bao xi, “announcing good news”

When the first baby is born, the rite of “announcing good news” should be carried out. The husband will go to his wife’s natal home with a bai he, a ritual box (Photo 2) and red dyed eggs. The ritual box is red and is made of feathers. It is used
for visits to affines. For example, on the occasion of betrothals or weddings, people usually put ornaments in it. Until the Liberation, a ritual box could be bought in any shop. After the Liberation, they were seldom made. When a boy is born, a cong, which means onion in Chinese, and a book are put inside the box or a flower if it is a girl. Arriving at the village, the husband will open the box to show what is inside, instead of making a spoken announcement. Cong, which originally means onion, is a homophone of “wisdom” in Chinese. The book symbolizes that the boy will become an official in the future, because in the old days, people became officials through school and civil examinations. When the husband leaves, the wife’s natal home group will present him with sugar and eggs.

C. Jie nuo wo “transferring”

On the 28th day after a birth, the rite of “transferring” is carried out. The woman and her baby are transferred by her brother from her marital home to her natal home, and they stay there for one day only. It is said that, due to this transfer, the baby will grow up quickly without becoming ill. The next day, her husband brings them back. Before leaving, the natal home presents her with cocks and clothes. The cock here has two meanings: first, it is a homophone for “good luck” in Chinese; second, it symbolizes good health.

D. Song zhu mi “sending blessing rice”

On the 30th day after a birth, the bride’s parents and her father’s patrilineal kinsmen within five grades, together with her husband’s father’s sister or her mother’s brother and sister, come to her marital home with “blessing rice”. Though it is called “rice”, in fact this is not a rice growing area, so instead of rice, people send wheat. In addition, sugar, eggs, cotton, clothes, and gifts of money are presented as well. Among the gift givers, the bride’s parents and her patrilineal kinsmen present the most gifts. All the gifts in Photo1 are from the bride’s natal home. Each of the wicker baskets is from one household. Inside the wicker basket, there are about 15 kilograms of wheat, dozens of eggs, and sugar. The big four-layered box on the right of the photo is from the brother of the bride’s mother, who provides the largest gift. In return, the groom’s family will give a banquet for these affines. During the banquet, the woman holds the newborn baby and shows it to the affines. Then the affines give the baby gifts of money for the first meeting. The average amount given is 10 yuan. In addition to the bride’s affines and groom’s affines, the groom’s patrilineal kinsmen present wheat, sugar, eggs and gifts of money as well.

E. Qiao hua “expressing sympathy to a vaccinated baby”

Several months after the birth, the family asks a doctor to vaccinate the baby against smallpox. In the past, this was a big event for the family and its affines. The mother’s brothers and sisters and the father’s sisters come to express their sympathy by presenting streamed bread, pancakes, cakes and sugar. Among the gifts, those presented by the mother’s brother and sister are the largest.
F. Marriage

In the morning of the day of the wedding, before the bride is transferred from her natal home, her father gives a feast for his agnates and his affines. The agnates present cash, wheat or cloth, according to their status in the genealogy in turn. The closer their grade, the more gifts they present. The affines also present gifts. Among the affines, the bride’s mother’s brother sits in the most important seat, and presents more gifts and gift money to his niece than the other affines do. When his niece has a child, he will continue presentations, such as “sending blessing rice”, “expressing sympathy to the niece’s baby”, and so on. In this way, presentations between affines in this area keep going for three generations. Since the adoption of the responsibility system, the boundaries for presenting gifts on the occasion of marriage have become wider. The relationships for gift exchange are not limited to natal families, marital families and their close relatives, but extend to the wu fu.

G. Funerals

In this area, it is traditional to bury the body in the ground rather than to cremate it. Chinese funerals are famous for their complexity. However, a funeral for a father is easier to organize than one for a mother (Photo 4). There is a popular saying that “a father’s funeral is easy; a mother’s funeral is difficult”. The mother’s brother or his son is given the most important role at a mother’s funeral. If the mother’s brother and his kinsmen are absent, then the funeral cannot be carried out. Even if they are present, if they do not allow the coffin to be moved out, then her son and his kinsmen do not go to the funeral either. At the funeral, the mother’s brother or his son should present the largest gifts among the affines attending. The mother’s brother has special authority over his nephew and his kinsmen. This is because he is the guardian of the interests of his married sister on behalf of his lineage. If his sister has been mistreated in her marital home, he and his kinsmen will express protests at her funeral, because her mistreatment is a an insult to his lineage. The mother’s brother and his kinsmen not only provide a woman to give birth to descendants for her husband’s lineage, but they also give them a lot of help, through the interchange of gifts during rites of passage from birth to death, and this gives them authority over their nephew and his kinsmen. Funerals have become more and more grand. For example, it was customary to make grave clothes before death, and usually the women made them themselves. Now, even the state-run department stores in Xiao County and Huaibei City have begun to sell grave clothes. Photo5 shows the first village head of Lijialou in grave clothes that were bought this way. In addition, the scale of banquets for both funerals and marriages has become larger. The range of kin attending weddings and funeral has been enlarged from the third grade to the fifth grade of kin, and sometimes it goes even beyond this traditional limit. The present average number of people attending a banquet for a marriage or funeral is about 240 persons, 30 tables.
H. New Year's greetings

It is traditional practice to greet agnates and affines on the two most famous festivals: the New Year and the Mid-Autumn Festival. On January 1, people greet their agnates in the village. In Lijialou, men of the same yard exchange greetings first. There is a snowball effect as first one man visits another, and then the two of them visit a third, and so on. The order is from junior to the senior, so in the last, most senior man's home there will be a crowd of people. The women also exchange visits with each other. As it is shown in Photo15, junior women of Back Yard in "S" generation are paying a New Year's call on the only two senior women of "R" generation. On the following day, people greet their mother's mother or brother with wine, cakes, tobacco and so on. On the third day, people greet all their affines, such as the mother's sister, father's sister and so on. It usually takes ten days to complete the main New Year's greetings.

I. Mid-Autumn greetings

August 15 of the lunar calendar, the mid-autumn festival, is another important festival, like New Year. However, it differs in that people exchange greeting and gifts only among affines. The gifts presented include wine, hens or cocks, and autumn cakes. For ordinary affines, only autumn cakes are sufficient, but to greet their mother's brother, people should bring at least four bottles of wine and two chickens, in addition to the cakes.

(4) Gift exchange as an insurance system

Gift exchange between agnates and affines has three meanings. First, it is a ritual expression of blessing. Second, it can provide economic aid. Third, by fulfilling duties through exchange of gifts, affines are constantly able to keep in touch and strengthen their ties. Since the village composition here is one lineage or one localized segment of a lineage, the resources available to one village are limited. Gift exchange is a good way to exploit new resources outside the village. In other words, inside the village the agnatic tie is the most reliable, while outside the village the affinal tie is the most reliable.

R. Watson mentions with the political and economic changes, the meaning of affinal tie in Hong Kong is changing, and affinal tie has become a kind of relation that should be utilized for economic purposes [Watson R. 1985]. Ueno Hiroko emphasizes the importance of affinal tie among the Han people in Taiwan in her recent book. She points out that, “the importance of affinal tie in Taiwan is expressed in rituals, and the affinal tie plays an indispensable role for the development of a family and rites of passage. On the political and economic sides, the affinal tie is essential as well and it works better than the agnatic tie at present” [Ueno 2000: 382 –383]. “Affinal tie is not opposed to agnatic descent, it even contributes to the continuity of the agnatic descent” [Ueno 2000: 374]. “This kind of affinal tie in Taiwan is not particular to its Han society, and it can be expected that the affinal tie
in Taiwan has a fair universality in every Han society” [Ueno 2000: 385-386].

People of northern Anhui attach great importance to gift exchange. In order to fulfill their duty correctly, each household keeps a written record of gift exchange. If at A’s wedding B presented a certain amount of money or other gifts, then when B holds a wedding, A will present the same amount. If B’s brother’s son gets married, then A will vary the amount presented accordingly. From the recorded notes, people can understand the patrilineal and affinal relationships involved immediately. Gift presentation is still important to the Chinese. It is highly systematized and still functions in rural areas of northern Anhui, and as Table 8-1 shows, people between 20 and 30 years old usually spend 30 to 40 days a year on presenting gifts on occasions such as rites of passage and the festivals of the lunar calendar. The total annual expenditure on these gifts is between 300 and 500 yuan per family. Middle-aged people with a wider network of relatives usually spend 30 to 50 days a year and have a total expenditure of between 500 and 700 yuan. The older people get, the wider their networks become. People older than 50 generally spend 50 to 60 days presenting gifts that will cost them 600 or 700 yuan a year. On average, the cost of gift exchange between affines and agnates accounts for 20–25% of the annual income. The villagers spare no expense in order to fulfill their presentation duties. If a man fails, he or his family will lose status within the patrilineal and affinal network. That means they will be kept outside the structure of reciprocity, and therefore will not get help in times of need. In a society that lacks a public welfare system, losing ties with agnates and affines can be dangerous and almost suicidal. On the other hand, if a man fulfils his duties correctly, then he can get help at any time from his agnates and affines. Thus to an individual, payment of gift exchange is like the payment of insurance premiums. And to a lineage, the rite of gift exchange is like a system that functions to ensure the continuity of the lineage.

### Table 8-1 Number of Visiting Days and Amounts of Gift Exchange per Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Yuan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20–30</td>
<td>30–40</td>
<td>300–500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30–50</td>
<td>40–50</td>
<td>500–700</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;60</td>
<td>50–60</td>
<td>600–700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. THE GENEALOGY BOOM AT ITS HEIGHT

In the early 1980s, soon after the adoption of the responsibility system and the breakup of the People’s Commune, rewriting genealogies experienced a boom in Xiao County. Lineages, especially those that had produced famous people, such as a party
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secretary of Xiao County or county magistrates, all began to rewrite their genealogies. Examples are the Ma Lineage (Ma Xinguang was the county magistrate), the Zhang Lineage (Zhang Duo was the county magistrate in the 1980s), the Shan Lineage (Shan Jingzhi is the secretary of the CCP committee of Xiao County) and so on. Most of the genealogies in this region had not been rewritten during the 60 or more years since the Japanese invasion. Here it is worth mentioning those lineages that have produced influential officials during the Mao and post-Mao periods are most active at recompiling their genealogies. By appealing to a tradition of descent, people are attempting to reassert the prestige of their groups and to enhance their image in the local area as people of distinction. Compilation of the genealogy does not appear to have resulted from the simultaneous creation of any new property. Their main concerns are relationship and status, which can be used to gain access to material resources and business opportunities under the new responsibility system.

This was the background for recompiling the genealogy of the Li Lineage. In 1983, three men, members of the fifth senior segment, came to Lijialou from Laozhuangzi, where the first ancestor had settled in 1369. It was the first time that people from Laozhuangzi had come to Lijialou in hundreds of years. Since Laozhuangzi was the first ancestor's village and the ancestor's hall was there, it was always the people of the other villages around who went to visit Laozhuangzi. The proposal of these three men was to collect contributions from all of the six senior segments to rewrite the general genealogy and rebuild the ancestor's hall. During the land reform in 1950, the ancestor's hall, like most of the ancestor's halls in China, began to be used as a school, and it was still standing. The old general genealogy in Laozhuangzi was not damaged during the Cultural Revolution. When I interviewed them in 1990, and asked them how the genealogy was able to survive, they told me that:

In previous days, especially during the socialist education campaign, the authorities forced us, sometimes by violence, to hand over our genealogies. How could we hand over our genealogy, which is more important than our lives? People of the old generation decided to divide the genealogy into several parts among several households. We hid the parts of the genealogy in jars and buried them in the ground. All this was kept secret, even from our own sons, because we were afraid they would be politically active and tell the work team the truth.

As a result, the genealogy that was written in the early 1930s survived (Photo 22). For the new genealogy, each male of Li had to pay 5 jiao for his name to be registered in it. All the villagers eagerly paid the money, and even those who had no sons wanted to pay for their daughters to be included. All the male lineage members born between 1930 and 1983 were included in the genealogy. It is said that there were 50,000 males in 1983. Two years later in 1985, the new genealogy was finished. The villagers used their contacts, and had the genealogy printed in a factory in Xuzhou.
Then they loaded the new genealogy and copies in six trucks, brought them back and delivered them to each village of the six senior segments. Now each village keeps at least one copy. The genealogy committee also decided on 20 new generation words for the next generations. The present generation words were decided in about 1772, and there are still seven characters left for the next seven generations. However, four members of the committee considered the matter for a whole week, and finally composed another *wu jue* poem, a four-line poem with five characters to a line. Each of these 20 characters is the name taken by one generation. The new generation poem is:

Gen shen zhi ye mao, yuan yuan quan mai chang.
Qin jian wei jia ben, shi dai yong rong chang.

It means “the root is deep, and the branches and leaves are massive; the stream has a distant source and is endlessly long; thrift is the foundation on which we can build; hundreds of thousands of generations will be prosperous”. Compared with the old poem, the new one is much easier to understand, so many Li old and young Li can recite it very well. These new naming words have reinforced a corporate consciousness and are an expression of a sense of common identity.

At the same time, people with the same surnames but from different provinces, such as Shandong, Henan, Jiangsu and Anhui, began to visit each other to find groups with the same surname. If the genealogies or the generation poems of both sides were the same, then they would consider that the two surnamed groups were of the same lineage, and they would merge into one. At present, the range of private economic activity has been enlarged, and therefore a reliable network based on consanguinity is necessary for business. People want to have a strong network, not only within their own commune, county and provinces, but also across provinces. With the genealogy boom, some small lineages have attempted to join big influential lineages. However, the big influential lineages, though they hope that they will have more and more agnates in different counties and provinces, still try to preserve the purity of the lineage as before the revolution, in order to prevent other people from sharing their prestige and influence. The Li Lineage provides a good example. One man of Laozhuangzi, who is in charge of lineage affairs and keeps the genealogy in his home, told me:

One day a group of people came to Laozhuangzi with fish and pork. They claimed that they were Li and hoped to join our genealogy. I asked them some questions about the Li’s history. They could not answer. I immediately realized that they were not really our people. I asked them to take the gifts back, and I refused their request.

In this region, many lineages have rewritten their genealogies, but some of them have not yet. The difference between the two is that those that have rewritten have
men who are educated, influential and enthusiastic about lineage affairs in their groups. The Li Lineage was lucky to have such a man.

He was Li Xianzhi. Before the revolution, he was the administrator of a district and a township of both the CCP government and the national government. He had high prestige among the masses. Even today, local people still remember him and the incident that happened when he served as a town administrator, sixty years ago. It was said that a bridegroom took his bride to see a play. It was night, and he used an electric torch, which was so rare that many people had never seen one. The township guards thought the young man was a troublemaker, so they took him to the headquarters and beat him until he died. Li Xianzhi did not know about the incident until the family members of the deceased came to complain. Li said that the problem was easy to solve. As the young man’s parents had lost their son, he would be their fictive son. At that time, it was unimaginable for a xiăng administrator to go to a commoner’s home to make an apology and to become their fictive son. Wearing uniform and leather boots, Xianzhi took his guards to the young man’s home. Entering the room, he threw himself on his knees, asked the parents to forgive him and his men, and then asked them to take him as their fictive son. This moved the parents. People said that Xianzhi never did any evil during his whole life. After the revolution, he became a fortuneteller, geomancer, and doctor of acupuncture and moxibustion, and traveled about the country. At one time he went to the northeast to live with his son, and he took the genealogy with him. Coming back from the northeast, he opened a private clinic. People said that he had taken part in rewriting the genealogy twice, the second time being in 1983. The new generation poem was composed mainly by him. It was sad that after the new genealogy was finished, he had hemiplegia and died in 1989, at the age of seventy-five. For this reason, the ancestor’s hall remains unfinished.

The repeated updating of their genealogy is evidence of a strong sense of group identity among peasants, especially among their educated members. Perhaps it even demonstrates an ongoing organization. Recompilation of the genealogy does not appear to have resulted from other factors, such as collective property. People’s main concerns are not material resources, but relationships and status in the descent group, which are considered to be useful in the new situation of household production and the market economy.

3. REBUILDING A MONUMENT FOR AN ANCESTOR FROM THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

The genealogy boom has been at its height, and building or rebuilding stone monuments and restarting the ancestor cult are also experiencing a boom. During the collective period, nearly all the stone monuments in Xiao County were moved, to be used as material for building houses, wells or bridges, and many of the tombs were flattened. Recently, under the open door policy, more and more Chinese from Taiwan, Hong Kong and America, most of whom left Xiao County in 1949 with the
nationalists, have come back to visit their ancestor’s graveyards, build cement tombs, and rebuild stone monuments. For instance, in a neighboring village near Lijialou, the first three cement tombs were all set up by people who came back to visit their home from Taiwan. The state has not restricted this kind of activity by overseas Chinese or tai bao, “compatriots in Taiwan”, and this has influenced and encouraged the local people to do the same. Some of them rebuilt tombs on the previous sites or enlarged tombs by adding more earth, and some built cement tombs or set up marble monuments for their ancestors. As the tombs and stone monuments are revived, ancestor worship in the graveyards has become popular and its scale has become larger. In the case of Lijialou, during the collective period, peasants only visited the tombs of their parents or at most their grandparents, during Qingming. Now, people from each yard also visit graveyards to worship their own common ancestors who founded their yards. Besides during Qingming, some of them also visit tombs on July 15 and October 1, the two of which are called in local term gui jie. Although July 15 is the Buddhist All Soul’s Feast and October 1 is the Buddhist Stove Lighting Festival, they are never considered Buddhist celebrations. Here, I will present a case study of how the seven junior segments rebuilt a stone monument and held a magnificent ceremony to worship their common ancestor, Li Yaoba (J2).

In the early stage of my fieldwork, I once asked the villagers where they came from and how the Li had settled in Lijialou. They were not sure, but they just knew that their old home was in a village called Laozhuangzi, and that they belonged to the “sixth junior segment” of the Li Lineage, which in turn was part of a larger “sixth senior segment”. They also told me they used to have four stone monuments to lineage ancestors in the graveyard to the northeast of the village. Besides these stones, there were other two stone tables, two stone lions and two stone horses. But these monuments had been moved to distant villages and used in bridges, wells and so on in 1958, as part of the process of establishing the collectives. However, it was said that one of the monuments might be in a village called Zulou, two kilometers away. One day in February of 1990, I asked two young people to take me to Zulou Village. We soon found a monument belonging to the Li. It had been used as part of a stone bridge, four meters wide and ten meters long (Photo19). The characters on the monument were not very clear. I wrote down those that I could recognize in my notebook. Going back to Lijialou, I went to the old villagers and confirmed that it was one of their stone monuments, which was lost in 1958. However, they were not sure to which generation the owner of the monument belonged, and their relationship to him. Lijialou did not have a copy of the old genealogy, only one of the new genealogy that was distributed in 1985. In this, only the lineage members between 1930s and the present were recorded. So I had to go Laozhuangzi to look it up in the old general genealogy. However, I had two problems: first, Laozhuangzi belongs to Jiangsu Province, and nobody in the village had been there. Second, the distance from Lijialou to Laozhuangzi is about 30 kilometers, a long distance in rural China, given that few people have access to vehicles, and that it is difficult to rent a taxi. Six months passed, until one day in August of 1990, I talked with some villagers about the
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history of the Li Lineage and Laozhuangzi. Li Lingxian (Ta8) said that he would take me to Laozhuangzi in his truck some day. I was very pleased to hear that, and at the same time, I wondered it would mean his taking time off from his transporting business. However, he said firmly that as a member of the Li Lineage, he himself badly wanted to visit their old home. He also suggested that, in order to be accepted by Laozhuangzi, I should invite Fanjie (Re26), an old man of the most senior generation in Lijialou and another young man to go with us.

Some days later, the four of us left for Laozhuangzi by truck. About three hours later, we arrived there. With the help of the three men from Lijialou, I finally got Li Lineage members to show me their old general genealogies, consisting of fifty volumes that had survived for 70 years (Photo 22). By reading the genealogy and interviewing these informants, I clarified a number of things. The first was the process of segmentation and localization of the Li lineage over the last 600 years. During those six centuries, twenty-three generations had passed, and the Li Lineage grew to over 50,000 people divided among dozens of villages concentrated in one local area. The first ancestor, Li Qing, had six sons who later founded the six senior segments. One of the descendants of the sixth son, called Li Yaoba (J2), ten generations later had seven sons who were the founders of the seven junior segments. The Li of Lijialou belong to the sixth junior segment. Second, I was able to confirm that the person designated by the monument we had found was Li Yaoba (J2), the ancestor of all of the seven junior segments. He probably settled around Lijialou in about 1630, in the late Ming Dynasty. According to the genealogy, Yaoba was a xiang sheng, a student at an official local school run by the prefecture or county during the period of the imperial examination system. He used also to be shao ci shi, a deputy prefectural governor.

When we got back to Lijialou, many people were waiting for us. They seemed to be keen to hear the information about their history and their distant ancestors, which we had heard and found out in Laozhuangzi. Every piece of news excited them, especially the old people, who heard that I had seen their names in the old genealogy. Later, I made a diagram of their genealogy from the first generation to the present generation for my own research. When I showed them the diagram, they all wanted to have a copy of it, so I made copies and gave to them to keep. After seeing the diagram, the villagers said that without it, they would not have known very much about their distant ancestors, nor would they have seen so clearly how their lineage was segmented. They said that I had made a great contribution to their understanding of their lineage. Now they knew the relationship between the owner of the tombstone and themselves, both the cadres and the villagers wanted to move it back as soon as possible.

On August 18, 1990, four of the most influential men in the area went together to Zulou to negotiate with the cadres there for the exchange of the tombstone for cement and planks. They were: Li Tianxiang (Sc37), a member of the party branch and the accountant of the administrative village; Li Xiangguo (Sc34), the village head; Li Lingxian (Ta8); and Li Wanxiang (Sb12), my landlord. The cadres in the
other village agreed to the plan. In the afternoon of that day, more than 20 men, led by the village head, went to Zulou Village by truck. They removed the stone monument from the bridge and repaired the bridge with the wooden planks and cement. Back in Lijialou, they stored the stone monument on a threshing ground temporarily, rather than putting it up immediately, for two reasons. First, it is the custom to erect stone monuments during the Qingming Festival, on April 5th, or on October 1st on the lunar calendar. Second, since Li Yaoba (J2) was the ancestor of all the seven junior segments, the villagers decided that they should get in touch with the other segments.

In order to do all this, they established a committee to make preparations. One day, Fanjie (Rc26) and Fanshan (Rc20) came to my landlord to talk about who should be on the committee. Fanjie (Rc26) and Fanshan (Rc20) were both senior members and wen shi de, people in charge of rituals, including weddings and funerals. In northern Anhui, each village has one or two wen shi de. That evening, about a dozen men who were enthusiastic about lineage affairs gathered in Fanjie's (Rc26) home. They decided some issues: (i) establishing a preparatory committee; (ii) getting in touch with the six other junior segments immediately; and (iii) on the next Qingming to present offerings to the ancestor and invite local performers for three days, in order to mark the reestablishment of the monument. Then, after reestablishing the monument, representatives from the seven junior segments would have a banquet. In the evening, five men were selected as members of the preparatory committee: Fanjie (Rc26), Fanshan (Rc20), my landlord, Xiangguo (Rc34), the village head and Li Fanen, who is a member of the fifth junior segment and lives in another village near the ancestor's tomb. When the news spread the next day, only Lingxian (Ta8) felt unsatisfied with the membership of the preparatory committee. As he was busy with his transport business people thought that selecting him as a member would affect his business. Lingxian (Ta8) got very angry about this and complained:

I visited Laozhuangzi more often than the other members of the preparatory committee. Why were they selected, and I was not? I would be happy to be engaged in reestablishing the monument, even if I make a loss on my business. It is worthwhile, because the younger generations will remember the people who have contributed to their lineage.

Seeing his enthusiasm for the project, the committee decided to accept Lingxian (Ta8) as a member of the preparatory committee. However just at this time, the "socialist education campaign" aimed at tightening up discipline and adherence to socialist principles in the rural areas began in Xiao County. On the morning of December 26, 1990, a mobilization meeting was held in the yard of the xiang headquarters. All the cadres of the xiang, administrative villages and natural villages, together with party members, Youth League members and teachers were called to attend the meeting. The villagers became nervous because it reminded them of the
socialist education campaigns in the collective period during which traditional practices, including ancestor rituals, had been condemned. It was in fact the first major socialist education campaign since the end of the Cultural Revolution, and stemmed from the political events of 1989, particularly the demonstrations in Tiananmen Square in Beijing. They decided to wait for a while and watch what was the direction of this political activity. After two months had passed, they found that there were no big changes. Based on their experiences with political campaigns over the last 40 years, they foresaw that there would no major changes at this time, so after the spring festival, Lijialou began to send Xiangguo (Rc34), the village head, and my landlord around to get in touch with the other junior segments.

Representatives of the seven junior segments gathered twice in Lijialou. They agreed unanimously to reestablish the monument at the Qingming festival, to hold a grand ceremony, to present offerings to the ancestor, and to have a banquet afterwards. Li Lingrong, who was from the eldest junior segment, was invited to join the six-member preparatory committee and was selected Chairman. He was a party member and used to be a PLA officer, who later became a high-level cadre of the Public Security Bureau of Fujian Province. He had recently retired and come back to Xiao County. This preparatory committee was well chosen and it consisted of three kinds of people: old peasant representatives of the senior generation who had high prestige among their agnates and the local people; retired state cadres, such as Lingrong and my landlord, who had accumulated a wealth of experience in dealing with policy from central government; and local cadres in active service. These different groups took on different responsibilities according to their status and careers. The old peasants’ representatives agreed to shoulder the blame if there was any trouble with the authorities, as they had the least to lose. They said: “We are not cadres but no more than common peasants, and we are old; even if the xiang or county government punishes us, what else can they take from us besides our lives?” The retired state cadres and local cadres in active service were responsible for the concrete arrangements, such as making decisions and getting in touch with the seven junior segments. They said, “Having the old generation take responsibility for us if necessary, we can carry out our plan without worries.”

The first thing the preparatory committee decided to do was to ask a stonemason to rewrite the inscription on the old monument. Before that, it was necessary to make sure what the inscription was and write it out. Xiangjia (Sd54) and I spent a whole day working it out. I read it and Xiangjia (Sd54) wrote the whole thing down in his notes (Photo 20). Seeing us writing down the inscription on an old monument, a cadre from another xiang who passed by joked to us that the winds of socialist education were coming and that we would all be punished. A stonemason was invited to come and stay in my landlord’s house. It took him two months to finish the work. In addition to restoring the old inscription, the seven members of the preparatory committee decided to add their own names on the stone monument. They said that when their grandsons or grand-grandsons would see their names on this stone monument, they would be proud of their ancestors. This may be seen as another
kind of invisible property that they are able to hand down to the next generation, and it certainly provided one of the motivations for these six men to take the risk of being in charge of the event.

The next step was to set up the stone monument at the Qingming Festival. On April 4th, 1991, the villagers of Lijialou moved the monument to its previous site, in order to get it ready for the ceremony the next day. In the evening, representatives of Laozhuangzi arrived. In fact, they were members of the six senior segments but not the seven junior segments. Since they lived in the first ancestor’s village, they represented the highest authority in the Li Lineage. Their attendance symbolized the authority of the higher level of the lineage over the lower level of the segments. A banquet was held in my landlord’s home that evening. People sat according to their order of seniority in the lineage. Official rank among the cadres was ignored here. At the banquet, the people of Laozhuangzi and Lijialou talked about the history of the lineage, exchanged stories about their ancestors and the whole processes of rebuilding the stone monument. They also decided the details of the ceremony the next day. I was the only female at the banquet. The chairman, Li Lingrong, asked me to give a speech during the ceremony because, he said, I had contributed to their lineage. I responded that, as an outsider, it would not be suitable.

On April 5, 81 representatives from 24 villages of the seven junior segments and about ten representatives from the first ancestor’s village drifted into Lijialou during the morning. They gathered in my landlord’s and landlord’s brother’s yards. One representative and some men of Lijialou made wreaths, a narrow flag and a mourning shed that would be used in the ritual. The mourning shed is made of stalks of sorghum. It is used for hanging scrolls in memory of the dead. At the same time, each segment contributed 150 yuan for the rite. At noon, everything was ready. Before leaving Lijialou, Lingxian (Ta8) told the people:

Let’s walk in good order with five people in each row. During the ceremony, please be serious. We should let people of other lineages know about our family (i.e., lineage) discipline.

A long line started to move to the northwest (Photo 3). It consisted of men, with the women carrying their babies following it. Children ran around in front or behind. Firecrackers sounded all the way, and attracted people from nearby villages. They put aside their tools and ran up to see what was happening, as did the schoolchildren leaving school. The grave is inside a wheat field. The preparatory committee had promised the owner of the field, who was not a Li member, that after the harvest they would give him some wheat to make up for his loss during the ritual. The mourning shelter and offerings were ready. Lingxian’s (Ta8) brother brought his tape recorder and microphone. Representatives of the seven junior segments and Laozhuangzi, all together more than a hundred people, stood in front of the monument and grave in order of seniority, with the senior ones in front and the junior ones behind.
Lingxian (Ta8) declared the ceremony open. First, firecrackers were set off. Second, the man who belonged to the oldest generation from Laozhuangzi gave a speech about the history of the Li lineage. Third, three of the representatives of Laozhuangzi, one who was over 70 and the other two who were over 40, performed *er shì sì bāi*, the “twenty four prostrations” in front of the monument. These were very complicated prostrations to the music of the *suo na*, a local woodwind instrument, which involved their changing positions frequently. It took about forty minutes to finish. Throughout their performance, all the other members had been kneeling with a serious expression (Photo 25). When the performance was finished, some of the old representatives could hardly stand up by themselves. Fourth, Li Lingrong, a member of the eldest segment and the head of the preparatory committee for rebuilding the monument, made a speech on behalf of all seven junior segments. In his speech, Li reminded the audience that the grand ceremony was in memory of their common ancestor, Li Yaoba (J2), and he spoke of the Li Lineage with its long history, a glorious tradition, strict family discipline and massive size, of which they were still proud. He called on all the members of the seven junior segments to carry on the great tradition of their lineage, respect the order of seniority, and maintain harmony from generation to generation. Perhaps with the socialist education campaign in mind, he also stressed that the Li should unite as one under the leadership of the Central Party Committee and said, “Let this old lineage make a new contribution to the present socialist construction of spiritual and material civilization”. Third, he thanked me on behalf of the members of all seven junior segments for having clarified the history of the lineage. When he finished the speech, he himself performed the “twenty four prostrations” for 40 minutes. Then Lingxian (Ta8) declared the ceremony closed. The final business was for anyone who wanted to pay their respects to the monument and take photographs in front of it (Photo 21).

When the ceremony was over, the people came back to Lijialou to have a banquet in my landlord and his brother’s yards (Photo 24). Though many of them had not known each other before, they seem to have become acquainted with each other after the ceremony. At the banquet, representatives from 24 villages exchanged information about their own agricultural production, businesses and other things. After the banquet, they gradually began to leave Lijialou, after shaking hands. Most of them said that they were glad to attend the rite, because they had gotten to know so many agnates from so many villages, and they would keep up these new links, which they might find useful later on. Some people, especially the representatives of Laozhuangzi and the eldest segment, thanked me again and again. The eldest segment invited me to go to their village, because they said all the villagers were deeply grateful to me, and they would hold a dinner for me.

It is worth mentioning how the payment for reestablishing the monument was made. Each segment was allotted 150 yuan for the rite. Then leaders of each segment allotted part of the 150 yuan to each village in their segments, and the village allotted part of this to the male members (Photo 23). By the day that the monument was re-established, all the villages had paid their money except one village of the third
segment. The reason was that the relationship between the cadres of that village was not good, so they had not gotten themselves organized. Nobody had been put in charge of collecting money and no representative was sent to the ceremony. Four members of the preparatory committee went to that village the next day, and told the cadres that if they did not pay within three days, the name of their village would be removed from the monument. The following day, the party secretary and village head came to Lijialou and paid the money.

As a result of the ceremony, the members of the seven junior segments seemed to have strengthened their group identity. First, they decided to gather in Lijialou to worship Yaoba (J2) once a year on Qingming. Second, they decided to compile a new genealogy for just the seven segments. Li Lingrong demanded to be put in charge of this work. One year later, in 1992, the first genealogy of the seven junior segments was finished. However, on the Qingming of 1992, ancestor worship by all seven junior segments was not carried out, though people from the fifth segment and the sixth segment in Lijialou which were near each other went to Yaoba’s (J2) tomb to worship him on their own. The ceremony was not carried out for two reasons. The immediate reason was that main organizer Li Lingrong left Xiao County for Fujian Province for his own private business. The essential reason was that since there were no funds for the annual ritual, it would be a heavy burden on the people of Lijialou to give a dinner for so many people. Before the Liberation, lineages and segments had had their grave lands that they used to meet these expenses of the group’s annual cycle of rituals. Now the socialist revolution has changed the previous economic conditions. However, that did not mean that without corporate land, ancestor worship would have to stop. As they did here, people could collect cash from male members. There are two possibilities for the future of ancestor worship in the seven junior segments. One is that people just stop their group worship, and the other is that people will work out a new method to continue financing the rituals. All this depends on two factors: whether they have an elite who is enthusiastic about lineage affairs, and whether the link between agnates still has a meaning in the future.

Finally, I want to consider this question: what actual role did I as an anthropologist play in the process of rebuilding the stone monument? The Li said that without my help, they would not have been able to verify whom the stone monument commemorated, and so would not have moved it back to the village and set it up again. Without my appearance, is it unlikely that the peasants would have eventually rebuilt the monument? Given the new conditions under the responsibility system, the economic and social importances of both household and lineage have been renewed. The revived traditional rituals, in Lijialou as in many other parts of China, were an expression of this change. In fact, the period of collectivization over the previous thirty years have not completely changed traditional institutions, and many people still maintain their group identities. As a large, influential lineage with a long history, the Li had managed to save their genealogy despite the political upheavals, and had even recompiled it in 1985. The possibility of rebuilding the stone monument, as a reminder of their glorious tradition, power and influence, certainly existed therefore,
and if I did anything for them, it was to help them realize this possibility a little earlier than might otherwise have been the case.

In the new economic, political and international conditions, lineage and traditional rituals are reviving. First, under the responsibility system, the renewed economic and social importance of household and lineage is increasing. Compared with the kinship network in the commune period, the current agnatic or affinal network plays a more important role in agrarian production. On the other hand, as the market economy has developed, it has enlarged the range of economic activities among the peasants. A reliable network based on consanguinity and marriage is necessary for business, and with knowledge of the lineage's history or their genealogy people can find hope even when faced with difficulties. All these factors make people want to strengthen the solidarity of their lineage and its identity. In other words, to renew the lineage organization and traditional ritual is a creative response by the peasants to economic and social change and a kind of strategy that peasants utilize to adapt themselves to the new situation. Second, the breakup of the commune has led to a weakening of political control by the central government, and it has led to the strengthening of the lineage. Third, under the open door policy, more and more Chinese from Taiwan, Hong Kong and America, most of whom left Xiao County in 1949 with the nationalists, have come back to visit their ancestor's tombs and build stone monuments. However, the state has not restricted this kind of activity by overseas Chinese, and this has encouraged the local people to do the same. Fourth, many elderly villagers still have strong emotional ties to the past, and being influenced by them, many young people also have some emotional ties to tradition. For many people, old and young, the lineage and the ancestors are still as important as their own lives. They say that as a human being, a person, whenever and wherever he is, should not forget his roots.
Conclusion

I have analyzed change and continuity in social structure during the late imperial period, the period of the republic, the collective period and the decollectivization period. Here I will make comparisons with other recent studies about China and suggest some hypotheses about Lijialou, Xiao County and China as a whole.

1. IS THERE CONTINUITY IN SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STRUCTURE?

As I said in the introduction, recent studies can be divided into two groups according to how they assess the social results of the socialist revolution over the last 40 years: one stresses change, and the other stresses continuity. Helen Siu represents the former, while the Potters, Huang Shumin, and Kim Kwangok represent the latter.

Helen F. Siu argues: “It seems to me that despite efforts to reform itself, a weighty bureaucracy representing the party-state continues to reach the most private corners of people’s lives [Siu 1989: xxi]”. “It is incorrect to conclude that the socialist state was unable to transform society as much as it hoped to, from evidence that traditional kinship, community, and religious functions have re-emerged in the 1980s. One cannot expect the rural population as a whole to look back on the pre-revolutionary period with nostalgia and hope for a return of the good old days. Except for elderly villagers who have some emotional ties to the past, the majority of the peasants have neither the experience nor the memory of those times. The features of traditional village life that scholars see being revived in the 1980s—from popular rituals to the territorial identity based on communal and kinship ties—differ substantially in form and meaning from their counterparts in the past... The land reform destroyed the economic foundation of the lineage organizations; collectivization turned rural communities into component cells within the state sector. The communication movement incorporated the rural cadres into a tight bureaucratic network... These cadres, acting more as state agents than political brokers... established the power of the party-state on the daily lives of the villagers” [Siu 1989: 291–292].

Having done fieldwork in Guangdong, Jack M. Potter came to a different conclusion: “Although there was much surface flux and change in Zengbu over the 36 years of the Revolution, between 1949 and 1985, what impresses me most is the remarkable continuity. There have been reforms but not basic changes in marriage patterns; family and kinship patterns remain much the same; the lineages changed on the surface but the deep structural features persisted during the Maoist period and even surface symbolism such as tombs, halls, and dragon boat races have appeared in the post-Maoist period. Traditional religious and magical beliefs have all returned and as far as I can see, have the same content and meaning that they had before the revolution [Potter 1991: 24–25].
My conclusion is closer to that of the Potters [1990] than to that of Siu [1989]. The Anhui data, which I gathered, suggest there has been continuity in social structure and culture during the late imperial period, republican period, Maoist period and post-Mao period. Although the Potters and I share a similar conclusion, however, the ways in which we reach this conclusion are different.

When the Potters explain the reason of the continuity of the lineage, they stress the factor of property. To reveal how a lineage has survived, it is necessary to explore the basic character of the lineage. Anthropological models of Chinese kinship are based primarily on fieldwork among the powerful, landowning lineages that are characteristic of the Lingnan region of South China. This approach derives from the work of Maurice Freedman [1958, 1966], who, in turn, borrowed a set of ideas regarding segmentary lineage societies from his Africanist colleagues [Evans-Pritchard 1940; Fortes 1945]. During the last twenty years, anthropologists working in the field have published an impressive collection of studies dealing with various aspects of the lineage organization of the Chinese in Taiwan and Hong Kong. Some claim to have “proved the applicability of Freedman’s model whereas others have criticized and refined the models. As for the study of Chinese kinship on the mainland, the Potters have reaffirmed Freedman’s model with new data in their recent work, China’s Peasants—the Anthropology of a Revolution. In discussing lineage continuity and change in Zengbu, Guangdong, they stress the property-owning function of lineages. They pointed out that: “the basic structural idea that property should be owned corporately by groups of co-resident, patrilineally related men, has persisted unchallenged, and has been the basis for all the collectives implemented in China since Liberation. Whatever the form of the collective—whether team, brigade, high-level cooperative, commune, or, now, lineage village—at its core was a group of patrilineally related men owning and managing property” [Potter and Potter 1990: 262]. As a lineage study, the Potters’ case study of Zengbu is a modern version of Freedman’s model. The Freedman model may in fact be true of Guangdong lineages before the Liberation, but it is not true of the lineages after the Liberation. I think the Potters have not differentiated between the nature of property management before the Liberation and after the Liberation.

From my investigations in Lijialou, I realized that in discussing the continuity of the lineage, there are more important factors than owning land or other property. Here, I will analyze three aspects of the continuity of the lineage: localization, institutions within the structure of the lineage, and identity.

As we have seen, during six centuries, twenty generations have passed, and the Li Lineage has developed to over 50,000 people, and from one village to dozens of villages. This offers a contrast to the well-studied Guangdong and Fujian lineages. It is the first study that shows that the Lower Yangzi River type of lineage [Beattie 1979; Ebrey 1983; Hazelton 1986] can also be found in the region of the Yellow River. The Li Lineage as a whole had their genealogy, graveyards of the ancestors of the first three generations and a generation naming system. Each year, all the segments got together in the village where the first ancestor had settled, to worship their ancestors.
In order to meet the expenses of the lineage's annual cycle of rituals and of the maintenance of ancestral halls and graveyards, they set up land as corporately held property. However, most of the land was still concentrated in the hands of each of the households rather than being corporately owned by the whole lineage. On the other hand, the bureaucratic and literate elite played important roles in the lineage. Between the early seventeenth century and the late Qing Dynasty, a number of degree holders and officials came out of the Li Lineage. These officials and their immediate descendants bore almost sole responsibility for preparing various editions of lineage and branch genealogies, and for carrying out the annual rite of ancestor worship. The continuity of the Li Lineage was the historical result of several factors. It resulted from motives and commitment that caused people, both the elite and commoners of the Li Lineage, to maintain and support the organization. What incentives lay behind these people's efforts? The prestige and protection that the lineage gained because of these degree and office-holders provided the motivation for people to strengthen their descent group identity. In addition, these elite members formed affinal relationships with those of other lineages of the same status, and became an influential group in the local area. In turn, making ties with higher-level elites became one of the motives for keeping their descent group united.

After the abolition of the examination system and the breakup of the Qing Dynasty, the Li Lineage still retained its influence in the local area by continuing its annual lineage gathering in the village of the first ancestor. During the Qingming Festival, all the lineage segments sent their representatives to Laozhuangzi to worship their first ancestors. By carrying out the rite, the Li Lineage strengthened their lineage identity, and their integration, which was necessary because the segments were far from each other, and they seldom interacted with one another. At the same time, the magnificent rites, with their pomp and ceremony, were performances that demonstrated the power, prestige and status of the Li Lineage. Another factor that should be mentioned here is that among the villages, only one village, Laozhuangzi, where the first ancestor settled, keeps the general genealogies. The other villages were not free to record the genealogy. All the newborn babies had to be registered in Laozhuangzi. When the rite of ancestor worship was conducted during the Qingming Festival, representatives from these villages went to Laozhuangzi to take part in the rite, and at the same time reported the births, marriages and deaths for the previous year. By controlling the genealogy and its membership, the Li Lineage maintained itself over the past six centuries.

After the Liberation, collectivization replaced the traditional style of household production, and the traditional lineage structure and lineage identity were defined by the state as feudal relics that disturbed the harmony of the collective. During 1958, the local government even intended to wipe out the family by separating people according to age and sex. The old ethic of lineage solidarity was to be replaced by a new ethic. In the framework of the new ethic, despite different lineages or surnames, peasants became members of the big socialist family, and people of the same class status were regarded as class brothers and sisters. Those who had a better class status
and were thus considered to be more loyal to the state replaced the landowning and educated élites. The worship of the first ancestor, which had been carried out once a year, before the Liberation, was stopped, so until 1980 there was almost no communication between Lijialou and the old home village where the first ancestor had settled. Did the lineage really lose its essence, based as it was on localization in one area and shared rituals?

To take localization first, though members of the lineage were distributed in different production teams, the basic pattern of residence remaineds. We can find a structural continuity in the formation of these teams at a deeper level. Most of the villages in northern Anhui are based around a core of a single or a dominant patrilineal descent group. Most of the lineages here have long histories and thus cover dozens of villages. Patrilineal residence was correlated with the formation of the production team. The residential structure of Lijialou had been based on kinship, with each yard located in one corner of the village. However, Lijialou was divided into three teams. On the surface, the team boundaries were drawn according to the location of the households. In fact, each of the teams was based on a core of people from the same segment. For example, households of East Yard made up most of the first team. Northeast Yard, all the Wang households, and a few households from Back Yard and Front Yard formed the second team. Back Yard, Front Yard and West Yard made up most of the third team. Brothers still tended to live near each other. Sometimes, in order to find a nearby site for a new house, they exchanged their plots for others. In terms of social composition, the production brigade or team was still based on patrilineal groups. On the other hand, after the land reform, tenancy was abolished, and most of the tenants who used to live inside Lijialou moved out. In this sense, the patrilineal composition of Lijialou was strengthened after the Liberation.

Second, there is continuity in the institutions. Since the core of the village is still the patrilineal group, the social organization based on age and seniority still remains. People still gave names to babies according to the generation words, in order to distinguish seniority and thus to maintain the lineage structure. People behave according to their status in the genealogy and maintain solidarity inside the village. The young respect the old, and the old have authority over the younger generation. On the occasions of rites of passage, people fulfilled their duty strictly according to their status in kin and affinal relations. Though large-scale ancestor worship stopped, worship of the most recent ancestors, usually three or four generations back, was continued during the collectivization period. Though some of the genealogies were burned, many of them were secretly kept. In the case of the Li Lineage during the socialist education campaign, the authorities tried to force people to hand over the genealogy. People of the old generation decided to divide the genealogy volumes into several groups, distributed and hidden in several households, and this was kept secret even from their own sons. The tombs were once flattened, but people quietly rebuilt them on a small scale in the same places.

Third, there has been continuity in social identity. Though loyalty to the
collective and to the state, and the ideology of class status were to replace former kinship and family loyalties, the social identity of the villagers still remained unchanged. Many elderly villagers still have strong emotional ties to the past, and being influenced by them, many young people also have some emotional ties to tradition. For many people, old and young, the lineage and the ancestors are still as important as their own lives. They say that as human beings, whenever and wherever they are, people should not forget their roots. The result of the responsibility system tells peasants again that these are the ties that are stable and reliable. The local cadres are like the gentry class before the Liberation. They have dual loyalty, both to their locality and to the state. Since they have lived in the local area for generations, with a wide social network, and they and their children will continue to live there for future generations, most of the cadres tend to avoid conflict with the local people. They try to maintain good relations while not losing the trust of the authorities.

After the adoption of the responsibility system, under the new economic, political and international conditions, lineage and traditional rituals are reviving rapidly. First, the administrative reforms of 1983 and 1984 disbanded the commune, and re-emphasized the importance of the natural village based on a single patrilineal group, as a unit in China's rural administrative structure. Since the natural villages in this area consist of a single lineage structure or a dominant patrilineal descent group, the old lineage village community now has an economic base and an administrative apparatus. It is once again becoming a key unit in local society. Since peasants have more influence, they tend to select their kinsmen as cadres. Thus, both lineages and segments are now strengthened. Second, the traditional household mode of production has recovered. Kinsmen tend to co-operate when doing farm work. On the other hand, as the market economy has developed, it has enlarged the range of economic activities among the peasants. A reliable network based on consanguinity and marriage is necessary for business, and with knowledge of the lineage's history or their genealogy, people can find hope even when faced with difficulties. Third, the economic and political reforms have not only given influence to the patrilineal groups, but also led to a resurgence of ancestor worship on a large scale, together with ritual presentation between agnates and affines during rites of passage and lunar calendar festivals.

From the analysis above, we can see that the basic structures and ideas have persisted unchanged. There is no doubt that when we explain the continuity of a culture and a society, we must not only describe what has changed and what has continued, but also the mechanism through which this happens. What are the mechanisms behind this continuity of social structure and culture? In other words, how can there be continuity between the pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary periods?

Structuralism and Marxism have provided us with useful frameworks for the analysis of change and continuity. Structuralism emphasizes the patterning of social life through fundamental characteristics of the human mind and it considers culture to be semantic in nature. That is to say, what people think determines how they do
things. On the other hand, Marxism stresses that the economic structure and relations of production regulate other social institutions and ideology. That is to say, what people do determines how they think. When they analyze the continuity of society and culture in Guangdong, the Potters chose a compromise road between structuralism and Marxism by arguing, “Structural tenacity is a fact, but a materialist analysis is necessary to explain the transition from one kind of social formation to another, or the failure of such a transition. We do not have to choose between structuralism and Marxism... A structure and an economic base so tightly intertwined as to be inseparable have produced a fundamental continuity too powerful to be altered by efforts to induce change that have merely scratched the surface of social life” [Potter and Potter 1990: 268–269].

My position is that though we do not have to choose between structuralism and Marxism, we need to show the relation of the two factors, social structure and economic base, in human society. Culture is a framework, which regulates human behavior and values. At the same time, it is also the result of human adaptation, response and choice. That is to say, humans are masters of their culture, and they can adjust their culture to adapt to new situations. Economic factors regulate ways of thinking and behaving, and make people generate new strategies from their culture to respond to change. On the other hand, structure is not absolutely independent of the economic matrix. Culture is able to survive economic change to a certain extent, and to provide people with new strategies for adapting to a new situation. The economic factors are the motive force causing change and making people adjust their structure. Though there have been radical revolutions over the last 50 years, many economic elements have remained comparatively unchanged. The three periods, pre-Liberation, the collective period and the post-Mao period share the same underlying economic reality, small scale agriculture rather than a commercialized economy, a system of credit based on links with patrilineal kin or affines, and no large-scale geographical or social mobility. In other words, the lineage can survive the revolution and reform, because it still plays an important role in rural society. The peasants are actually very rational and pragmatic, and able to turn a situation to their own advantage. Therefore, they use their social, economic and political resources so that policies imposed from outside work in ways, which are favorable to them.

Then under what kind of situation would the kinship structure change? Local industrialization and urbanization may lead to increased geographical and social mobility among the agrarian population. Whether the traditional structure will provide new strategies for the new situation will remain an interesting subject for future research. For instance, the Potters’ study about Zengbu in Guangdong to certain degree has provided answers. They mentioned the business network between Hong Kong and Zengbu, which is based on consanguinity and affines.
2. HOW CAN WE ASSESS THE IMPACT OF COLLECTIVIZATION AND DE-COLLECTIVIZATION?

In assessing the effects of collectivization and de-collectivization, recent studies can be again divided into two groups: the ones seeing de-collectivization positively and the others negatively. The Potters and Huang belong to the former, while Endicott belongs to the latter. Endicott argued "In spite of the difficulties experienced in trying to find ways to link spiritual goals with the material realities of village life, there is no significant movement for a return to large collectives. But as time passes, it is also clear that small individual farms, lacking sufficient scale and funds for capital investment and further mechanization, will prove less effective for the long-term modernization of agriculture" [1988: 151]. "Why,' I wondered, 'did the Communist Party, which had labored so hard for a generation to bring individual peasants families into co-operatives, now seem bent on doing the opposite?" [1988: 212] Endicott's conclusion is probably related to his field site and his informants. First, Shifang County used to be a Dazhai-type county that managed to achieve a large increase in its production of pigs. There was even a report about them in the People's Daily. Conjunction Commune and Ma Gaoqiao Village succeeded in the collective economy. In addition, during his six months of investigation, between 1980 and 1986, Endicott interviewed 87 people, and most of them were local cadres who certainly would have provided different views from those of the common peasants.

On the question of assessing the effects of the recent economic reform, my position is more similar to those of the Potters and Huang, rather than to that of Endicott. In the case of northern Anhui, though the achievement of some success in collectivization had brought some economic benefit to the countryside, in fact, through the collectivized structure, the state established a grain monopoly, procuring and distributing the basic food supply of the whole country. Strictly speaking, collectivization benefitted the urban areas much more than the rural areas. As a result, though crop yields did increase compared with those before the Liberation, most of the products were sold to the state at a low price. Second, collectivization mobilized manpower as never before, and enabled the carrying out of some gigantic projects, which had failed before the Liberation, such as building dams and reservoirs and digging canals. From a long-term perspective, these projects were valuable, but the immediate results were chaotic and uneconomic. These projects affected the agricultural production of lower level collectives and the life of the villagers as well. Third, moral exhortation was used as an incentive, while material incentives were underemphasized. The state only emphasized grain production, and banned sideline production and free markets. These measures not only affected the income of the collectives but also reduced the incomes of the villagers. As a result, the peasants remained poor and therefore they lost enthusiasm for production. That is why the peasants enthusiastically asked the cadres to adopt the responsibility system, and in fact, they did indeed benefit from this economic reform. The achievements after the adoption of the responsibility system support the view that the fundamental defect of
the Maoist system was its inability to motivate labor. Under the responsibility system, responsibility was moved from the production brigade and team to the individual farm family. Peasants decided what to plant and what area to plant, and their products could be sold at free markets locally. The increase in prosperity and the economic growth of Lijialou and the whole of Xiao County have been remarkable. There are four significant economic improvements: first, yield and income have been increased; second, there has been a surge in scientific farming and mechanization; third, there are irrigation projects completed under the leadership of the xiang government; and fourth, the traditional grain economy is being gradually replaced by a diversified economy.

On the other hand, the economic reform brought great changes to the local political structure. The main focus of attention shifted from class struggle and socialist education to economic construction. At the level of the xiang, internal reorganization divided its functions into politics, administration and economics. The new administrative reform freed the initiative of the peasants from the control of the party. Second, with land in their hands, the peasants and their lineage became more powerful, so they began to influence local politics. On the other hand, because of the changes in financial institutions, now cadres get their salary from the za zhi, which is paid by the peasants, and villagers have begun to feel that they are the masters of the village, and they have become enthusiastically involved in village affairs.

3. CHANGING WOMEN’S STATUS

Women’s position in China has attracted the attention of feminists and social scientists in the West since the 1960s. Many observers have argued that, despite all the communist efforts at family reform, the Chinese household remains a patriarchal institution. After 1980, household-based production began to replace collective production, and this led Western scholars to a more pessimistic conclusion: that the gender hierarchy would be reproduced in household production and that the individual economic contributions of women would become an invisible part of the family income. They argued that strengthening the household and the position of the household head was a threat to the development of Chinese women [Croll 1981, 1988; Davin 1988; Diamond 1975; Stacey 1983; Potter and Potter 1990]. These arguments share a common assumption that the household is the place where the subordination of women is enforced. In contrast, the Anhui data that I gathered recently suggests that the economic reforms have benefitted women, partly because of their increasing importance in sideline and cotton production, and their greater engagement in farm work as a result of mechanization, and partly because of the increasing importance of affinal links in access to credit and labor. As a result, women now have increased power in both agricultural and financial decision-making.

Before the revolution, women usually had bound feet and never worked in the fields, but cooked and wove cloth at home. Because they were unable to convert their labor into cash, and more money could be made by doing farm work, they had lower
economic status than men did, and so dowries were much greater than bride-wealth. During the commune period, from 1958 to 1979, women were encouraged to take part in farm work, and to earn workpoints, a unit based on the quantity and quality of labor performed. Women, through farm work, were now contributing more to the family income than before, and so they achieved a higher status in the rural economy than before the revolution. But even in the commune period, their work was not valued as highly as that of men: women were only allocated eight points for a full day’s work, compared with ten for men. In addition, the state encouraged the staple crop production of cash crops such as maize, sorghum and wheat that involved strenuous labor that was not suitable for women. Less well-paid and less active than men, women also earned fewer workpoints.

Since the economic reforms began, the motivation of the peasants has been stimulated. Because of the increasing importance of sideline production, the adoption of new planting methods and increasing use of machines in farm work, more and more women were not only able to take part in production, but also began to play a more important role in agrarian production. In the case of Lijialou, cotton production grew rapidly because of favorable pricing policies. Women are responsible for harvesting and drying the raw cotton before it is sold. Now the money from cotton accounts for 60% of their annual income. By being engaged in cash crop production, women are able to play a more important role in the rural economy than any time before. The increasing value of female labor is also reflected in the changes in marriage payments, leading to rapid inflation in marriage-related expenditure by the groom’s family, but not by that of the bride, and major shifts in the power relations between wifegivers and wifetakers during marriage negotiations. On the other hand, household production has also strengthened affinal links. Because of the comparatively large amount of land available in this region, and the insufficient mechanization of farm work, shortage of labor is a serious problem. Married women, whose economic value and authority in decision-making have increased, are no longer merely a passive bridge between two patrilineal groups, but active creators of social networks. In turn, the networks created by women strengthen their status. In short, the strengthening of the household after the economic reforms does not necessarily lead to the tightening the bounds of women’s subordination. Now leadership in the household is not simply the prerogative of the men. To adapt a saying of Mao’s, only now for the first time have peasant women realized the ideal of “holding up half of the sky”.

4. NARRATIVES OF THEIR FUTURE

Despite the benefits since the introduction of the responsibility system, the local people and cadres do not see the future of the area as being without problems. First, there is the problem of the government of Anhui Province. Both local peasants and cadres distrust their provincial leaders. There is a popular saying in Anhui: Shandong hen, Jiangsu wen, Anhui zheng ce na bu zhun, “Shandong is vigorous; Jiangsu is stable; the policies of Anhui are changeable.” The secretary of the Women’s Association of
Xiao County explained to me that:

There are two factors that have made Anhui fall behind. First, the provincial leaders have changed frequently. The new leader was transferred to the central government before his seat had even gotten warm. Second, the provincial leaders follow new policies very quickly, without understanding them very well.

Many people in Anhui told me the same. They said the provincial leaders accumulated political capital for themselves by following the party closely, in order to move up into the central government.

The second set of problems comes from insufficient specialization and enterprise in rural areas. This is related to the weak industrial base and the problems of provincial leadership. For instance Lu, the secretary of the Women's Association of Xiao County, told me in 1990 that:

Our neighbor, Tongshan County (in Jiangsu Province), used to be at the same economic level as Xiao County and have the same population as Xiao County. Now the output of Tongshan is equal to the total of three counties in Anhui: Xiao County, Su County and Dangshan County. The main revenue of Xiao County is from the wine factory, and the main expenditure in Xiao County is administrative payments. Since the wine factory is in a depression, recently our salaries have been consistently delayed, partly because of the low level of development, partly as a result of loose tax management.

The gross output value of industry and agriculture in 1985 was 48,425,000 yuan, and of the industrial output was only 13,401,000 yuan, or 27.7% [Xiao Xian Difang Zhi Bianzhuan Weiyuanhui 1989: 1–5].

Since more and more peasants have moved to the urban areas, the central government began to control immigration. In 1988, the state established a new policy on enterprises. According to the new policy, enterprises are divided into three levels. Those with a license for a national second degree enterprise can do business outside the province. Those with licenses for national third degree enterprises can only do business inside the province. Provincial government has the authority to confer the licenses. The local cadres of Lujing District in Xiao County told me that the provincial leaders in Anhui are not enthusiastic about developing enterprise in the rural area.

Our chief administrator and party secretary of Lujing have been to Hefei several times to apply for a license, but in vain, although we have met the conditions for obtaining the license. The attitude of the provincial leadership towards enterprises is not positive. The department involved wanted money, so they blocked us. The current situation of our enterprises is terrible, whereas the Jiangsu provincial government awards licenses to people who have the right resources to run enterprises. Since the people of Jiangsu have licenses, they
become bosses, and we can only be hired by them as labor hands. They make a profit out of us.

Because of the negative attitude of the provincial government and the weak industrial base in Xiao County, enterprises are not so popular in this area, and the value of their output is low. In Lilou Xiang, there are only four enterprises, two of which are brick kilns run by the xiang, but which now are contracted out privately. There is also a building team that was founded by a village in the 1970s, and an antiseptic team formed by the xiang in Lilou in 1984, but that is now also contracted out privately. In Lijialou or the administrative village, there are no enterprises at all.

In addition, insufficient economic diversification remains a problem. In Lijialou, most of the households still engage in crop production. Each household raises chickens, ducks, lambs and cows. When they need money, they sell some poultry in the nearby market. Since they do not raise these animals on a commercial basis, their economic activity is still small-scale and self-sufficient. Now two types of people are doing far better than others. The first group includes those who work in the mines or factories or other units in the town. They get a salary every month, and at the same time, they still hold contract land in the village. The second type includes those who have special skills, such as driving a tractor or running a flour mill. If their annual income from these sideline businesses accounts for 60% or more of the whole, they will be registered by the xiang and county as zhuan ye hu, “specialized households”. After the responsibility system, the campaign for creating specialized households has become the central political task of the party. However, in Lijialou there is only one official “specialized household”, that runs a flour mill. Compared with MaGaoqiao Village in Sichuan, the percentage of specialized households here is very low. Endicott reported that in the autumn of 1982, within six months, MaGaoqiao claimed 145 specialized households—31% of the total number of households in the village [1988: 139]. In Xiao County, more specialization in agriculture and the formation of enterprises requires more education, capital and a better market situation than is to be found here.

To take the market system as an example, the market is not sufficiently established yet. Xiao County pears, grapes and peaches are famous. They have been planted here for 100 years. In 1990, 0.5 kilogram of peaches could only be sold at a price of one jiao in Xiao County. Since that price was too low, villagers seldom sold in the market, but just consumed the fruit themselves or sent it to their friends. Villagers complained about the cadres: they had forced them to plant fruit trees or cut them down in the collective period. If the number of fruit trees went down, the authorities would force them to plant fruit trees. If it went up, they would command them to cut the trees down. The cadres had no long-term plan. However, during the commune period, the co-op was in charge of purchasing the fruits and selling them to other provinces. At that time, sales were good. Now, instead of the co-op, private fruit brokers are in charge of buying fruit from the villagers and selling them to other cities or provinces. Since nearly every village here plants fruit, and there are not
enough brokers, fruit brokers only buy peaches from big orchards. Most villages like Lijialou have no chance to sell their products.

On the other hand, though the adoption of the responsibility system, the openness of the free market and the abolition of the commune have stimulated the economy, at the same time they have affected social control, and to some degree have caused social instability as well. One of the significant negative consequences of the new economic policies is an increasing number of criminals. Theft and robbery are on the increase. For instance, crops to be harvested are suddenly stolen. In order to avoid this, some villages in Xiao County have established hu qing dui, “field protecting” vigilante teams. The worst crime is the abduction of children. In Lilou Xiang, during 1990, two children, one less than one year old, and the other about twelve, were abducted. People say that now the world is changing. Good people are afraid of bad people. None of this ever happened during the collective period.

The reasons given by the cadres in official pronouncements for the change of mood among so many people have included reference to recently imported films and TV programs produced in the West. In fact, the most important factor in the slippage in social behavior is related to weak control by the government and changes in moral values, which are shifting away from the idea of upholding the collective interest, as a result of the household contract system.

How should social order be re-established? As the situation became unstable, the central party started a corrective ideological campaign in the winter of 1983, calling for the creation of “a spiritual civilization”. The aim of this campaign was to link the material world and spiritual world. One of the solutions was to publicize successful villages that still maintained good social behavior. Lijialou was granted the status by the CCP committee of Xiao County of a “civilized village” in 1989. The certificate of merit is hung on the wall of the home of the village head. Most of the villagers are very proud of this, but some of the villagers do not think it is appropriate to have won this title, because in Lijialou, like other villages, there is also a problem of theft.

Another solution attempted was the campaign launched by the Women’s Association to discover model households or “five good” households. These moral exemplars were judged according to five criteria: studying Marxism-Leninism well and observing social discipline and the law; loving the country and society while working hard to become productive and prosperous; observing the family planning directives and contributing to children’s education; being conscious of public health and safety; and respecting the aged and daughters-in-law while helping neighbors. In Lijialou, the household of the accountant Li Tianxiang (Sc37) was selected as one of the best “five good” households not only in Xiao County, but also in Anhui Province (Photo 18). However, the social effects called for by the “five good” household’s campaign are seldom found. Now the world is changing, and the previous methods used for encouraging social stability by moral exhortation rather than by legal means are out of date. In this sense, the rapid growth of Christianity in northern Anhui is not merely a matter of religion. It not only reflects people’s confused identities during the period of transition, but also reflects people’s search for methods of solving
problems of illness, poverty, loneliness, crises of belief, bad relations between members of the family and with neighbors.

The history of the last forty years tells us that simply relying on criticism and struggle, or launching campaigns is not sufficient. Some peasants believe that it will perhaps also be useful to encourage Confucianism once more, and to strengthen family discipline. Because of the increasing movement of people, an increasingly information-oriented society and globalization—morality, ethics and value judgments are becoming more and more pluralistic.

How do villagers assess the present responsibility system and how do they foresee their future? When I talked about the Tiananmen incident with the villagers, I asked them, “Whom do you peasants support, Deng Xiaoping or the students?” Li Cixiang (Sc43), a man in his middle forties said, “We peasants want stability”. My landlord Wanxian (Sb12), Fanhong (Ra6) and Xiangkuan (Sb21) said, “These students are heartless. How can we enjoy such a happy life without Deng?” On the walls of their houses, most people still hang portraits of Mao Zedong and other leaders; on the other hand, they also hang the portraits or photos of their dead ancestors and parents, even when they are alive, while young people hang the pictures of Chinese or foreign singers and movie stars as well. This can be taken as a symbolic statement of the peasants’ threefold identities that, on the one hand, they still remember the leaders who they thought brought them a happy life. They say, “chi shui bu wang da jing ren,” “While drinking water do not forget the people who sank the well”. On the other hand, the household production system reinforces the importance of family and identity. Also, at the same time, the new generation looks forward to a way of life based on consumerism, different from both the traditional and socialist ways of life.

When I asked them what Lijialou will be like after ten years, Lingxian’s (Ta8) wife told me that, “As long as the policy does not change, our life will be better and better. There will be no difference between town and country. We will get electrification. We will have a color TV set, washing machine and refrigerator”. Most of the villagers hope the current policy will continue forever, because they think it is the best policy that has been tried during the last forty years. What they worry about most is whether the central government will take land from them or not.

In November 1991, The Eighth Plenum of the Thirteenth Party Congress was held. This congress was especially about agriculture and the problems of the rural areas. In the congress, the party decided to protect the stability of agricultural policy and policy for the countryside during the 1990s, and stressed that agriculture is the foundation of economic development, social stability, and the independence of the state. In his recent speech: “The Recent Economic Work” on April 1st, 1993, the party secretary, Jiang Zemin, stressed again that agriculture is the basis of the national economy and the foundation of social stability. Therefore, the interests of the peasants should be protected and their incentive should be taken into account. On the other hand, he stressed that the way forward for the economy at the deep structural level is economic reform, and establishing a socialist market economic system. Here,
a socialist market economic system means more of a market orientation than an ideological one.

China and Hungary share some similarities in the process of economic reform. In 1979, China sent a delegation to Budapest specially to study reform procedures. The most obvious characteristics the two countries share is a strong market orientation in their agricultural policy and successful management to encourage peasants to work with greater effort. Despite the similarities, there are some differences. First, Hungary developed a prosperous farming sector on the basis of a combination of socialist collective work and private family work, while China has turned the previous collective production completely into family production. As for the reason, Paul Hare's analysis is that, “Hungary had the investment resources to make collective agriculture succeed and China did not.” [Hare 1988: 61] Second, 20 years after the adoption of economic reform in 1968, Hungary claimed to have abandoned communism, while the Chinese government still holds on to its socialist ideology. Early in the 1980s, the party decided that it would have to maintain greater continuity with the former regime of Mao Zedong by placing certain ideological limits on reform. The party repeatedly stressed “the four cardinal principles” to guide political life in China: the socialist road, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the leadership of the Communist Party and ideology of Marxism-Leninism, and Mao Zedong thought. There are two reasons for the difference. First, in East European Countries, the socialist revolution was imposed by the Soviet Union, though socialism had been foreign to their cultures and societies. These countries historically had been on the margins of empires such as those of Rome, Turkey, Austria, Germany and Russia or the Soviet Union. They had a tradition of resistance. The Chinese people, in contrast, made a socialist revolution by themselves. The socialist ideas of economic and social equality share some characteristics with traditional Chinese ideas. To a certain extent, socialism became part of Chinese culture. In this sense, the commune period was just a variation of a long unbroken tradition. Second, in a country with a history of centralization for thousands of years, the Chinese peasants became used to obeying good authority, because it could provide them with security and stability. In countries with a Christian tradition, the position of the monarch has been less emphasized, and the value of the individual is stressed, rather than the harmony of the group. The disintegration of the former Soviet Union and the abandonment of socialism by eastern European countries tell us that market economy and the socialist political system cannot coexist in these countries.

Will China have to choose between these two as in these former socialist countries, or will it provide a different solution to the problem of economic development for the rest of the developing world? The Chinese peasants and the government will provide their answers in the new century.
Appendix 1 Doing Fieldwork

I began my preliminary fieldwork in north Anhui in October 1989. Having visited four villages in two counties, I selected Lijialou Village as my field site. A student of my father-in-law was born in this village, in which his parents and sisters still lived. Because of my father-in-law, his parents agreed that I could stay at their house. My landlord, Li Wanxiang (Sb12), nearly 60 years old at that time, had worked as the director of the national supply and marketing cooperative in a township for many years, and his wife was also known as a very hardworking woman. They had five children, a son, the former student of my father-in-law who was now working in a teacher’s college, and four daughters, two of whom were married.

I selected Lijialou as my fieldwork site for the following reasons. First, Lijialou is only eight kilometers away from the south bank of the former channel of the Yellow River, which for thousands of years has nourished the Han people both materially and spiritually. Second, it is a village consisting mainly of members of the Li Lineage, which has a long recorded history spanning over 1000 years. The village of Lijialou has remained almost entirely a single surname village for 200 years. It suited my purpose of finding a settlement in which the transition from pre-revolutionary peasant existence to a socialist society could be traced. Third, Lijialou was famous in the area before the revolution, because it was a village of landlords and controlled much of the land, a fact that was important during the land reform in 1950. Thus, the present work will provide a reconstruction of history from the point of view of rich peasants.

Having gained permission from my landlord to live with him, I went to the county government to get official permission to do the research. This proved to be not so straightforward, despite the fact that two of my father-in-law’s students were working there, as deputy secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, and as the chief of the education bureau. First, my father-in-law and I visited the chief of the education bureau, one of his students. Hearing that I had already been to the village, the chief started to criticize me. “You were wrong to go to the village without obtaining our permission. What you want to do should be arranged by the CCP.” Then he looked at my name card and at me for a long time, and finally said: “We have a foreign affairs office. You should go there and ask them to help you.” My father-in-law asked why it was necessary for a person with Chinese nationality to go to the foreign affairs office. He answered that it was because I had come back from abroad. I knew that to ask the help of the foreign affairs office would lead to limitations on my research. In disappointment, we went to the other former student, the party deputy secretary. He was an older man and did not ask so many questions. He just told the subordinate in his office to write two letters of introduction to the district and the local village party committees.

The evening following my arrival, my landlord invited ten men from the village to his home to meet me. They were village cadres and influential people in the village. My landlord introduced me to them, saying that I was his son’s classmate, and I
wanted to investigate the history and present life of the village. We talked about a lot of things: the history of the village, their ancestors and the present villagers of Lijialou; and the period of collective agriculture, and the “responsibility system” which gave more independence to individual farmers which had replaced it. The ten villagers told me that they would like to help me with anything I needed. However, I knew that this was no more than a kind of polite greeting, and they were being kind to me mainly because of my landlord’s good reputation and his status as a patron in the village. Real cooperation would depend on the relationship I could establish with the villagers.

As I was Chinese, it was somewhat easier for me to gain acceptance than it might have been for foreigners. I had shared similar experiences of the revolutionary storm with the villagers: I had entered elementary school in the second year of the Cultural Revolution, with a bag of Chairman Mao’s quotations on my left shoulder and a schoolbag on my right. During my school days, I became a well-trained Little Red Guard and, later, a Red Guard, and believed myself to be a qualified successor to the cause of the proletarian revolution. However differences in residence, education, dialect and social class constituted a barrier. I thought that another possible problem might be that I had been studying in Japan. Japanese troops had occupied this area for eight years, from 1937 to 1945, and many of the villagers still had bitter memories of this period, so I was afraid that this would to a certain extent affect my relations with my informants.

In the early stages I tried to respect the customs of my hosts and behave as they did. I considered carefully how factors such as dress and speech might affect my relations with the villagers. I tried to dress as they dressed and use their local dialect in conversation. By doing so, I was trying to give them a kind of message about my identity. It was not easy at first. Although the village is in an area, which the government regards as speaking standard Chinese, I found in fact that the local dialect was different from standard Chinese both in intonation and, often, in vocabulary. At first I found it difficult to understand the villagers, and they found it difficult to understand me, though in general the children found it easier than the adults did.

I paid particular attention to forms of greeting. From the first day of my arrival, I noticed that when my landlord introduced villagers to me, he first described their relationship in the genealogy, and what I should call them. For instance, he would tell me: “This man is called Li Xianghan, and he belongs to Front Yard. He and I share the same great-grand mother, so you should call him uncle”. I also found that the villagers themselves greeted each other frequently every day, before or after the three main meals, strictly according to their seniority in the genealogy. They greeted people who were senior to them using their personal name or a number showing their position in the generation, followed by a kinship term such as “uncle” or “grandfather”. In China, the family name comes first, and most of the people in the village had the same surname, “Li”. This is followed by a personal name of one or two characters. When people greeted those of the same or a junior generation they
simply called them by their last, personal names or by nicknames. Since my age was close to that of my landlord’s children, I addressed other people in just the same way they did. After several weeks, I was able to remember all the names of the adults and the relationship between the villagers and myself, as my landlord’s “daughter”, and to greet them correctly. To my surprise, this made the villagers very happy. They said that although I had been living in a city, I understood their rules and respected them. Greeting villagers as they did went far beyond a method of communication. It functioned as a ritual through which an outsider could be accepted. Greeting them correctly was one of the factors that help me establish my position in their group. In comparison, my landlord’s daughter-in-law had been married for three years, yet the people in Lijialou had not accepted her as a village member, because she did not greet people correctly, and sometimes did not even greet them at all.

In addition, I often helped my landlady cook the meals, and joined in with their farm work and other activities, such as going shopping in the local markets and visiting their affines. My landlord and landlady seemed very happy with me. By trying to participate fully in village life, I seemed to have been accepted as a member of the family. The story soon spread all over the village, that, despite the fact that I was a well educated person from the city, I didn’t look down on the peasants, but dressed, spoke and greeted people as they did. I lived in Li Wanxiang’s house, ate the same food as the family and helped with the cooking and the farm work. In short, to the villagers, I had become like another daughter of Li Wanxiang.

Gradually, as I became part of their lives, to them I was no longer merely a student, a person from the urban world outside, but a friend and one of their own people, and to me they were no longer merely “subjects” or informants but friends, associates and kinsmen. Young girls came to me to complain about their parents giving them little chance to get an education; boys complained about their parents choosing brides for them without considering what they themselves wanted; women complained about their parents-in-law’s stinginess, while the parents complained about their sons and daughters-in-law taking too much from them, and leaving them with too much work. Parents in the village began to use me as an example of the importance of education, and they sometimes came to me for advice. I myself often talked with children, asked about their problems, and encouraged them to study hard. After my arrival, for the first time people began to dream about studying abroad. Another small thing that made the villagers happy, particularly the older ones, was that I was able to take color photographs of them, which in this area was normally difficult and expensive.

After six months, the villagers began to cooperate in my research more actively than I had anticipated, though their cooperation reflected their estimation of the scientific merits of the research less than their response to me as a person. For instance, Han Baoying was a married woman of Front Yard. Her native home was in Shaanxi Province, so she had few relatives in Lijialou. She was the only other person with the surname “Han”. After several months, she suggested that we should become “fictive sisters”, a common way of marking a close relationship in China.
When I hesitated about whether to refuse the offer, in case we should be seen to be too close, her three children began to call me “aunt”, whereas in the usual way they should have called me “sister”. As a result, I had to accept. She liked to talk with me and often complained that women in Lijialou were not sensitive enough. She told me who were the best informants and some strategies for getting information from them. One of the informants she suggested was Li Xiangjia (Sd54), a very well educated old man of West Yard, who had been classified as a landlord at the time of the revolution. Han Baoying told me that Li Xiangjia had not been sure of my purpose during my first interview, so he did not tell me very much. Since the relations between Han’s family and his were good, Han told Xiangjia that my aim in the research was to write a history of the peasants, and I could be trusted. Thanks to my fictive sister’s help, when I visited the landlord again, he talked with me a lot about his experiences and the conflicts within West Yard. He even showed me his dairy. We later became good friends.

When I needed to observe a funeral or wedding, or visit informants outside Lijialou, villagers would strongly suggest to me that I should use their networks of agnates or affines, and this worked very well. On the other hand, when I interviewed people without the help of their networks, then I would fail to get important information. This made me focus my attention on how these networks were established and how they were maintained. For the peasants, a network that has been built up over generations is the most reliable. All this made me understand better the function of the frequent ritual exchanges of gifts between them.

Doing my fieldwork, however, I still experienced two kinds of culture shock: one was due to the difference between the northeast area of China and the Yellow River basin area; the other was due to the differences between the urban and rural areas in history and in people’s historical consciousness of the last 40 years. This last difference in particular made me for the first time begin to doubt whether the peasants had in fact become the owners of the country as they were said to have done after the Liberation in 1949. What has been the status of the peasants in China’s history from the imperial period until the present? Have the peasants ever shared the socialist victory equally with the people in the urban areas? Having lived 14 months with them, I realized that peasants today still stand at the bottom of the social hierarchy, and sometimes they had even lost out in terms of their human rights and suffered much more than before the liberation. They seldom have a chance to make their bitter experiences known to the wider world. They have just suffered silently, carrying the main burden of the national budget while sharing the fewest benefits. Since I grew up in a city, what I knew about the rural life was based on explanations in official ideological accounts. Apart from these, I hardly knew anything about the real life in the countryside. In this sense, I was an outsider in rural society, so the fieldwork was a good chance for me to make a comparison between the social reality and the stereotypes of official ideology.
Appendix 2  The Main Characters in This Book

Here are brief descriptions of the main characters in this book. It is divided into three parts: the first part includes members of the Li Lineage and the non-Li in Lijialou; the second part deals with members of the Li Lineage outside Lijialou; the third part includes non-Li outside Lijialou. This first part has been compiled on the basis of the registration kept by the village accountant, my database and fieldwork notes. The second part is based on genealogies and stone monuments. The third part is based on my fieldwork notes. Here, an asterisk "*" in front of some of the names refers to those who have died.

1. THE LI AND NON-LI IN LIJIALOU

A. East Yard
*Li Xiandong (Qa3), a xiu cai, one who passed the imperial examination at the county level in the late Qing Dynasty. His father, Li Zhaoxu (Pa2), was a xiu cai as well. People said that he was just a poor xiu cai, who taught at a traditional private school, and who never became an office holder. Xiandong (Qa3) died before the Liberation. Until then, he had been the representative of Lijialou, attending the annual ancestor worship held in Laozhuangzi.
*Li Fande (Ra2), born in 1914.5. His class status was poor peasant. He was a cadre of the Peasants' Association during the land reform. He and his wife were supported by the "five guarantees".
Li Fanlian (Ra3), born in 1917.5. He is Fande's (Ra2) younger brother. He used to cook for the Japanese during the war. He is the only man in Lijialou who can speak a bit of Japanese.
Li Xianghua (Sa2), Li Fanlian's (Ra3) eldest son. He works in Wuqi Mine, 30 kilometers from Lijialou. He joined the PLA in 1958 as a middle school student, and worked in an air unit as a member of the ground crew for 8 years. He is one of the richest men in Lijialou. He owns a tractor and a truck. He and his only son are engaged in a private transport business. One of his daughters is married to his wife's sister's son, who has joined them in the business.
Li Xianggan (Sa4), Li Fanlian's third son, born in 1957.7. He works in Wuqi Mine as a temporary worker. He attended high school. He married a woman from Sichuan through a marriage broker.
Li Xiangfei (Sa5), born in 1929.5. He attended an old style private school for nine years. He began to work at a supply and marketing cooperative in 1950 and came back to Lijialou later in the 1960s. He has run a grocery shop in the village for nine years.
Li Lingchang (Ta7), Xianfei's (Sa5) eldest son joined the PLA during the Cultural Revolution and became a deputy regimental commanding officer later on. He was transferred to Hekou Town in 1984 as a deputy administrator. Two years
later, he became the chief administrator of Hekou Town. Relatives and villagers
go to him to ask for help all the time.

Li Lingxian (Ta8), Xiangfei’s (Sa5) second son, born in 1951.4. His career as team
leader has lasted for about eighteen years, one of the longest careers as a cadre in
Lijialou. He attended middle school. He bought a tractor ten years ago, the first
one in Lijialou. He is now engaged in a transport business. His family moved into
a new house in 1990, which was the first building with two stories in Lijialou.

*Li Fanhong (Ra6), poor peasant, born in 1918.5. He used to be addicted to opium,
and by 1989 his health was poor because of a lung complaint. He had a reputation
for meanness. His wife was bed-ridden for years. Two of his sons, Xianglai (Sa
8) and Xiangbei (Sa10), one nearly forty and the other over forty, are still
unmarried. He and his wife died in 1992.

B. Back Yard

*Li Zhaotan (Ob5), the founder of Back Yard.

Li Wanxiang (Sb12), my landlord, born 1930. Before the revolution, he attended a
traditional private school for about seven years. After the revolution, he often
helped the cadres with their work and he led the Children’s Corps. In 1953, he
was chosen by the authorities to work in a supply and marketing cooperative in
Lujing Town. At first, he was a shop assistant, and then in 1956 became a cadre
and party member. He was serious about his work, and at the same time, he was
kind to the members of the Li and helped them a lot. He avoided political
mistakes and was never officially criticized. He was only transferred once during
37 years, so he is famous for his steady career. He retired as chairman of the
cooperative of Yanglou Town at the end of 1989.

Wu Cuiping, Wanxiang’s (Sb12) wife, born in a rich family in 1930.11. She attended
a private school and a Western school for some months but stopped after the
Japanese came to her town. She said when she was a child, the population of the
family was so big that they used a clapper to announce the meal. Her grandfather
was a big landlord. After he became addicted to opium, he sold hundreds of mu
of land. When the land reform began, her father was classified as a rich peasant.
She got married the year after land reform. 1990 was the 40th anniversary of her
marriage. I asked her when was the happiest time in her life. She replied, “Was
there any happiness? As soon as I entered this door, I began to work hard. I have
been bearing hardship all my life. In 1957, I bore a son. In 1958, I had to take
part in digging up rivers, so I left my son with my mother-in-law. My son got ill,
so I came back later and took him to Xuzhou. It was too late. The doctors were
unable to cure him, so he was lost. In 1970, we were going to build a new house.
Your eldest sister and I did farm work in the team during the day, and spun and
wove cloth or sheets at night. Then we sold them to buy wood. At that time, your
uncle was working in Yanglou Co-op. He received wood coupons, so we could
buy cheap wood. At that time, we had parents and children, so we made three or
course kinds of steamed bread, though in the same cauldron. The best bread was for
our parents; the next best were for my son; and the others were for my daughters
and me. Since we did not have enough labor in our home, your eldest sister
married very late." In 1999, she became a Christian.

*Li Fanyin (Rb8), received 150 mu of land in Quanlou, 7 kilometers away, in the
early 1930s and lived there until the land reform. During a period of 20 years, he
lost most of his land, because he spent a lot of money on two funerals for his
wives and on his daughters' marriages.

Li Yingxiang (Sb13), Rb8's only son, a landlord, born in 1936.8.

*Li Difan (Rb9), a rich peasant, born in 1918.12. He used to be jia head before the
Liberation.

*Li Faxiang (Sb19) died in 1960. At that time, he was a brigade storehouse man.
People said that one day when he was on duty, a large quantity of seed was
stolen. He was so afraid that people would say that he stole the seed that he
hanged himself.

Li Lingwen (Tb28), born in 1943.2. He attended middle school. He and his two
brothers Tb29 and Tb30 are all skilled house builders.

*Chen Congxia, Tb28's wife, born in 1950.12. She got married in 1972. Persuaded by
the leaders, she was sterilized in a clinic after she bore her third child. She died
soon after of a postoperative infection.

Li Lingxiang (Tb30), Tb28's younger brother, born in 1958.8. He graduated from
high school. He married a girl from Sichuan in 1988.

Li Sunshi, Tb28's and Tb30's mother, born in 1926.2. Now she is one of the Christian
converts in the village.

Li Xiangkuan (Sb21), born in 1941.9. He married a woman from Yunnan in 1987.

Li Pengxiang (Sb22), born in 1931.1. He attended an old style private school before
1949. In the early 1950s, he worked in a supply and marketing cooperative in
Maoshan, but he soon gave up the work and returned to Lijialou. He has been a
clerk for a long time.

Li Xiangshan (Sb25), Sb22's younger brother, born in 1950.12. In the early 1980s he
was introduced to a woman from Shanxi Province through a marriage broker.
She produced a daughter. Eventually she left him.

Qian Zhihong, Rb14's wife, born in 1914.3. She got married in 1935.10. Her husband
died two years later. After the revolution, she became the first woman chairman
in charge of women's affairs in both Lijialou and the xiang. During the earlier
collective period, she was the chief of one of the cooperatives. She now lives on
the "five guarantees". In the autumn of 1989, she became a Christian. However,
she later gave up Christianity on the advice of friends, and became a Buddhist

C. Front Yard

*Li Zhaokun (Oc6), the founder of Front Yard.

*Qc10 and Qc11 used to be teachers at old style private schools.

*Yunting (Qc6), began to practice martial arts, namely archery, horsemanship and
fencing, in childhood, hoping that he would pass *wu ju*—the imperial military examination. The imperial civil and military examination systems were abolished in 1901, so Yunting (Qc6) lost his chance. However, he still continued his martial arts, but gradually got involved with bandits and sometimes joined them. Thinking that it would ruin the Li's reputation, his stepmother and his uncle Xianzhao (Pe5) discussed the matter and decided to kill him.

Li Xiangxun (Sc28), Qc6’s grandson, landlord, born in 1921.3. He had studied at an old style private school.

Li Lingshan (Tc46), Sc28’s son, born in 1950.2. Villagers call him “Robot”, because he works very hard and seldom has a rest. He runs a flourmill inside the village and his family is the only county-registered specialist economic household in the village.

*Li Fanfang (Rc16), poor peasant, used to be a leader during the land reform.

Li Nanxiang (Sc30), Rc16’s son, poor peasant, born in 1932.12. He attended old style private school. He began to work in a commercial co-operative in 1954, and was a village clerk from 1962 to 1985. People call him “Little Poisonous Insect”, both because of his cruelty during the collective period, and because it was believed that he used to embezzle money. However, because his account books were the best kept of the ten brigades, so nobody was ever able to prove it.

Li Lingchi (Tc51), born in 1956.11. He joined the PLA in 1981. In 1987, through an introduction by a broker, he married a girl from Shaanxi Province.

Shan Shulan, Rc18’s wife, born in 1920.6. People call her, the “fourth grandmother”. Her mother was a big and able woman. She began to work as a go-between when she was 22. She arranged many marriages in Lijialou. She also knows some techniques for curing children and adults who are easily frightened. She always complains that her destiny is no good. People told her that because her son has no son and her daughter-in-law has already been sterilized.

Li Xianghou (Sc33), born in 1938.5. He is the elder brother of the village head. He married a woman who was ten years younger than he. She was mentally unbalanced and was infertile. He beat her often and eventually she ran away, in about 1982.

Li Xiangguo (Sc34), born in 1943.11. He is a party member and the village head of Lijialou. He has eight children, all of whom are sons. His fourth son joined the PLA in Hebei in 1990.

Li Lingwei (Tc54), eldest son of the village head, born in 1967.10. He attended middle school. When he was 16, he became insane and his mother took him to a female shaman, and he recovered soon after. From then on, the family began to worship the goddess, *guniang*, following the shaman’s advice. He bought a tractor in the spring of 1990. His mother-in-law helped to get him a very cheap loan. However, six months later he had earned very little money, so his mother-in-law has been complaining to him.

Li Lingyao (Tc55), the second son of the village head, born in 1969.1. He works in a joint defense team in Lilou Xiang. He is also a fictive son of Wu Guangmin, the
head of the administrative village, Wu has no son and the two families are on good terms.

Li Fanshan (Rc20), poor peasant, born in 1919.5. He knows a lot about local history and concerns himself with the affairs of the Li lineage, the village and the state. He also has a wide social network in the local area. He entered the anti-illiteracy evening school run by the GMD a month before the Japanese invasion. The text was a thin book about the Three People's Principles (Nationalism, Democracy and the People's Livelihood, proposed by Sun Zhongshan). He was a leader of the peasants' association during the land reform period, and worked as a stockman of the team for 13 years. Since the 1960s, he has been in charge of all kinds of village affairs, including marriages and funerals. In each village in the area, the peasants have ritual specialists who also acted as mediators, intervening in disputes, and he has acted as one of these.

*Li Buting (Qc8), Rc20's father, was a teacher. Dozens of villagers learned to read and write in his private school.

Li Tianxiang (Sc37), Fanshan (Rc20)'s second son, born in 1955.4. He is a party member, and has been accountant of the administrative village for 10 years, since 1980. Before that, his elder sister had been the accountant for 18 years. He graduated from high school. His first three children are all girls, so he sent the second girl to live with his sister and the third child to live with other people. The fourth child is a boy. When the boy was two years old, Tianxiang brought his second daughter back from his sister. He built a new house in 1989. In his main room, is hung a certificate of merit which was awarded by the Anhui provincial government to the “five good” households, of which there were only six in the whole county.

*Li Fanqian (Rc22) born in 1924.5. He attended the anti-illiteracy evening school. During the anti-Japanese war, through an introduction by Fanshan (Rc20), he joined one of the GMD army units fighting against the Japanese.

Li Xiangzhu (Sc38). Li Fanqian's only son, born in 1955.12. He has six young children, the eldest of whom is less than ten.

*Li Fanlin (Rc23) used to be bao head and xiang head before the revolution.

Li Xiangwen (Sc39), Rc23's only son, born in 1946.3. Some years ago, he bought an old tractor from Li Lingxian (Ta8), and is engaged in the transport business.

*Li Fanmin (Rc24). He finished six years of education in elementary school. He began to work at a supply and marketing cooperative in 1950. Then he went into the fireproof material factory, and afterwards went to the present Wuqi Mine. He was chief accountant at the mine, retiring in 1990.

Song Xueyan, Fanmin (Rc24)'s wife, born in 1938.5. She gossips a lot, and during the commune's period, she often quarreled with other villagers. People said she is the village trouble-maker.

Li Laixiang (Sc40), Rc24's eldest son. He used to be a team leader during the collective period, but now he works in Wuqi Mine.

Li Bangfan (Rc25), born in 1922.5. He attended an old style private school for many
years. He is fond of reading classic novels. The old people always gather at his house to listen to him read.

Li Cixiang (Sc43), Li Bangfan (Rc25)'s elder son, born in 1940.11. He attended elementary school. Some time between 1958 and 1960, he went the city of Huangling in Shaanxi Province, looking for help from his fourth uncle, Li Fanxun (Rc28), who had gone there earlier. Several years later the factory where he worked was closed, so he and his wife came back to Lijialou. His family was the first household in Lijialou to begin to operate a well in their own yard equipped with a hand pump. Before this, there were only two old wells in Lijialou, and people had to carry water from them every day to their houses. At first, villagers had doubts about the quality of the water, but gradually they began to accept this type of well. Now they all have similar wells in their own yards. Since the introduction of the responsibility system, he and his wife, Han Baoying, have often tried new strains of wheat. Beside this, they have set up one mu of land for growing vegetables, which provides them with more than 5,000 yuan a year.

Li Lingbin (Tc17), Cixiang's (Sc43) only son, born in 1969.1. He is at the Teachers' College of Xiao County and will graduate in the autumn of 1991. Since his test scores were two points lower than the standard, he had to pay 3,000 yuan for college fees. Because of this, his parents began to plant vegetables to support him, and one of his sisters was forced to leave middle school in 1989 when she was a second year student.

Li Fanjie (Rc26), born in 1925.5. He is cripple. He, together with Li Fanshan (Rc20) has been in charge of marriage rituals and funerals in the village for years.

D. West Yard

*Li Xianxi (Pd6) was married twice. The first wife bore him a son called Heting (Qd13); the second wife bore him a son called Yuting (Qd14).

*Heting (Qd13). When West Yard was divided, his stepmother gave him land in Quanlou Village and left her own son land in Lijialou. Heting (Qd13) died soon after the land reform. At that time, villagers in Quanlou were not as active as they became at the time of the Cultural Revolution, and they even lent Heting's (Qd13) son money and helped him complete the burial.

Li Xiangjia (Sd54), Heting's (Qd13) only son, born in 1918.6. His class status is landlord. He graduated from Teachers College before the revolution and taught in Xuzhou afterwards. His mother's brother and father were Shao Shien and Shao Jingsheng, both of whom used to be magistrates in Xiao County under Japanese control. People said that they were traitors to the Chinese. However Xiangjia (Sd54) joined the army that fought against the Japanese.

*Li Yuting (Qd14) was the biggest landlord in Lijialou. He often engaged in lawsuits with other surnamed groups before the Liberation. During the land reform, he and his family ran away. His grandson sent him back to Lijialou before the Cultural Revolution, during which he was often criticized and denounced at
public meetings in Zhangji Village, until one day he was found burned to death.

Li Xiangzhong (Sb56), Yuting’s (Qd14) grandson. He was the only middle school student in a Western style school in Lijialou before the revolution. He entered the Agricultural Technology College in 1959. Three years later, having graduated from the college, he worked in agricultural technology until 1983. Li Xiangzhong now works in the government of Xiao County, in charge of agriculture. Villagers said he introduced the new technique of planting cotton to the village. Now he and his son’s family live together in the township.

Li Fanchang (Rd31), Yuting’s (Qd14) second son, went away to Taiwan just at the outbreak of the revolution. He is in Taipei, doing administrative work.

E. Northeast Yard

*Li Guangyuan (N7). People said that long ago, Northeast Yard was much richer than the other three yards. He was one of the richest and most famous men in the local area, and people could recognize his cart just by seeing his leather coat on it.

*Li Lekai (Qe15) used to the secretary to the head of the xiang before the Liberation. He was Yuting’s (Qd14) tenant farmer in the pear orchard, and was killed by Yuting (Qd14) during the Japanese occupation.

Li Fanying (Re32), Lekai’s (Qe15) eldest son, born in 1916.4. His and his wife have no son, so they receive the “five guarantees” support. In fact, his wife had nine daughters, but eight of them died when they were young. In 1960, they lost two daughters, one of whom was eight, and the other seven. The wife is blind, and her husband cooks for her.

*Li Fanlong (Re33), Lekai’s (Qe15) second son, born in 1920.10. He graduated from Longcheng Shu Yuan, which was founded in 1794 and was run by the county government. He was one of the graduates in the 17th year from the Reijin Branch of Huangpu Military Academy. After that, he joined the anti-Japanese War, and came back to the village after the GMD left the mainland in 1949. Fanlong is good at acupuncture and moxibustion, and he often helps the other villagers.

Li Zhaoxiang (Sc60), Re33’s only son, born in 1959.10. He graduated from high school. He married a girl from Sichuan in May 1988.

Li Fanlun (Qe34), born in 1922.4. He spent 4,000 yuan on his second son’s new house. His elder son is illiterate and still unmarried. In order to make more money to get married, his elder son learned to make bean curd in 1990 from his father’s sister’s husband.

F. Li from a different descent group

*Li Jindi, born in 1925. His class status was poor peasant. He died in 1991. Before the Revolution, he worked for Yuting (Qd14). He used to be the president of the Peasants’ Association during the land reform.

Li Yindi, Jindi’s younger brother, born in 1936.3. He joined the CCP in 1958. His career as team leader was the longest in the village.
G. Wu
Wu Delin, born in 1936.5, a poor peasant. His grandfather came from Pengzhuang Village, four kilometers away, where he escaped from disaster. Before the revolution, his family borrowed about 10 mu of land from Yuting (Qd14). Wu Delin used to be team head during the collective period.

Song Yuzhen, born in 1938.8, Wu Delin’s wife. She raised livestock with Fanshan (Rc20) for 13 years during the commune period. Later, she was in charge of looking after the collective crops. She is an important woman in Lijialou. When there are quarrels in the village, people ask her to mediate, which she often does successfully, restoring good relations. She spent 3,000 yuan to obtain a job in a textile factory in Hekou Town for her only son.

H. Li from a different descent group
*Li Qingyun, born in 1920.8 in a village in Kaifeng of Henan Province, was sold to her husband as a child bride. She received the “five guarantees” until she died in 1990. She was buried 100 meters away from village to the northeast. Within one year, four old people died after her death, so villagers call the place where her tomb is situated er lang pu shi, “hungry wolf springing on food”. They say that its location is having a bad effect on the entire village, so all the villagers want to dig up her coffin.

*Wang Jixian, Li Qingyun’s husband. He came to Lijialou before the revolution. He had four brothers and some sisters. He married several times, but his wives ran away because of his poverty.

I. Li from the fifth junior segment
Li Xiangji, born in 1942.12. He is a member of the fifth junior segment, who graduated from elementary school. His father had been a tenant farmer until his death around 1950. Xiangji was an accountant in the 1970s.

J. Yu
Yu Zhongxuan, born in 1909.5. He receives the “five guarantees”. His wife was an affinal relative of the Li. She committed suicide by drinking poison in the autumn of 1990, during my fieldwork. The reason was that she had something wrong with her legs and she had not been able to walk for a long time. Her husband was often out playing cards or majiang and did not take good care of her.

K. Wang
*Wang Anheng was born in Yuncheng County, Shandong Province in 1916 and died in 1990. He fled from disaster in his hometown to Lijialou with his father and grandfather in 1920. His father arranged his marriage to a child bride who later died. Before the Liberation, he bought more than 15 mu of land from Fanlun (Re 34), and borrowed 35 mu of land from Fanding (Rd30). He also owned two cows and one donkey. He used to be the village head after the revolution. People
told me that if, “Wang Anheng stamped his foot, the villages of Lijialou and Dongzhuang would shake”. At that time, there was a gully beside his home. All the villagers used livestock to carry earth to fill the gully for him. If somebody was late, Wang would swear at him. On the other hand, the constitution of his family was unique in Lijialou. He and his wife had between them three sons by two mothers and three fathers. The last son was the only son of Wang and his second wife. After the Liberation, he became the fictive father of Fanshan’s (Re 20) daughter.

Wang Suying, Wang Anheng’s daughter. She works in Wuqi Mine, and her husband is the head of the commercial bureau of Xiao County.

L. Ding
Ding Guanying fled from famine from Shandong Province to Lijialou before the revolution. His father worked for Difan (Rb10), while he himself worked for Pingfan (Rb9) as da ling. He was one of the four group chiefs in the village during the land reform. He went back home during the People’s Commune period.

M. Liang
The Liang family also escaped from famine to Lijialou before the revolution. During the land reform, they were allocated a brick house with a tiled roof and three rooms belonging to Yuting (Re20). In 1955, bricks were needed to build wells, so the brick house was pulled down. The Liangs left Lijialou and used wood to build a house in Dongzhuang Village, which was a tenants village.

2. LI OUTSIDE LIJIALOU (IN ORDER OF SENIORITY)

*Li Zhou, born in the Han Dynasty. According to the genealogy, he is the founding ancestor of the lineage.

*Li Qing (A1), left Hongdong County, Shanxi for Laozhuangzi of northern Jiangsu in the early Ming Dynasty. He is the founding ancestor of the Li lineage in northern Anhui and northern Jiangsu.

*Yike (I3), sheng yuan of Dangshan County next to Xiao County.

*Jimin (J1), Yike’s (I3) eldest son. He used to be a si pin zhi fu, forth degree office holder and the head of a prefecture.

*Yaoba (J2), second son of Yike (I3), ancestor of the seven junior segments. Yaoba (J2) was a xiang sheng too. He used to be an office-holder, shao ci shi, “a deputy governor of a prefecture”.

*Lin (K6), Yaoba (J2)’s sixth son, ancestor of the Li of the Five Yards in Lijialou. He was a tai xue sheng, student at the Imperial College in the capital, Beijing. Li Xianyin, a member of the fifth senior segment, living in Laozhuangzi. He has been keeping the general genealogy for many years.

*Li Xianzhi, a member of the fifth senior segment, lived in Laozhuangzi, and died of
hemiplegia in 1989, at the age of seventy-five. Before the revolution, he was a
district and township administrator under both the CCP and Guomindang
governments. After the revolution, he began to travel around as a fortuneteller,
geomancer, and doctor of acupuncture and moxibustion. He took part in
rewriting the genealogy twice, the second time in 1983. The new generation poem
was mainly composed by him.
Li Fanshu, a member of the second senior segment of the Li lineage. His old home
was in Yuanlou Village in Xiao County. He was the last magistrate of Xiao
County. He is also known as Li Gongda. Xiangjia (Sd54) was his close friend. At
the end of 1948, he took his subordinates to Taiwan through Xuzhou. Now he
lives in America.
Li Fanen, a member of the junior fifth segment, lives in Lilou Village.
Li Xiangzhe, a member of the junior seventh segment. He is a party secretary of the
administrative village. He was in charge of the restoration of the tombstone in
Li Lingda, a member of the senior sixth segment, lives in Loulizhuang Village. He
preserves two old genealogies, one of which is exactly the same as the one in
Laozhuangzi, and the other of which records the lineage from the Han Dynasty.
Li Lingkun, a member of the fourth junior segment, lives in Anlou Village. He is a
party secretary, and knows a lot about the Li Lineage, and has compiled some
notes on Li history.
Li Lingrong, a member of the eldest of the seven junior segments. He used to be a
cadre, and has retired from the Public Security Bureau of Fujian Province.

3. CHARACTERS OF NON-LI OUTSIDE LIJIALOU (IN ALPHABETICAL
ORDER)
Dong Guangyi lives in Dongzhuang, one kilometer away. He used to be a tenant in
Lijialou. During the land reform, he became the village head and joined the CCP.
Fei Secretary lives in Yangzhuang Village. He has been the party secretary of the
brigade (administrative village) since 1958.
*Gai Sanxuan, minister of Suzhou Prefecture Church. He was 82 years old in 1989,
and died in 1992. He began his career in the Protestant church when he was
young. He had been preaching in this church as an only minister for many years.
Guo Hongjie, a party secretary of Guozhuang Brigade, Suoli Commune. He led the
commune members in overcoming saline-alkaline soil, and as a result Guozhuang
Brigade became the model “learning from Dazhai” village in Anhui Province.
Guo Hongjie himself therefore became the party secretary of Xiao County, was
later secretary of Anhui Province and finally became a member of the Party
Central Committee. Guo was dismissed from these posts in 1977. During his
tenure of office, between 1970 and 1977, he was mainly engaged in the “learning
from Dazhai” campaign, as for him, Dazhai was an ideological model rather than
a model of collective production. He launched “socialist education” campaigns
on six occasions.
Luo Zilu, the Fei Secretary's son-in-law. He is the president of Yangzhuang Elementary School.
Sun Qilu, lives in Zhangji Village, and used to be a brigade cadre. He is Lingxian’s (Ta8) fictive father.
Sun Shanqin, a minister in charge of a meeting place in rural Xiao County. He is over 50. His class status is landlord. He graduated from high school, and was called xiu cai, a talented man. Having been trained, he began to preach at home in the middle of the 1980s. Since his congregation increased rapidly, in 1989, he used 5,000 yuan of “thankful money” to buy a house with five rooms from an elementary school.
Wan Li, the former party secretary of Anhui Province.
Wang Yuzhao, the former party secretary of Chuxian Prefecture, Anhui Province.
Wu Guangmin lives in Yangzhuang Village. He has been a brigade cadre for many years. He is Lingyao’s (Te55) fictive father.
*Yang Wenhao lived at the eastern end of Lilou Village, 1.7 kilometers from Lijialou. In 1960, when he was a teacher at the workers’ and peasants’ teaching institute, he wrote a letter to the Anhui provincial government that many people say “saved thousands of lives”. He died in 1992.
Zhang Yufa, a young minister in Suzhou Prefecture Church. Zhang was born in Hefei in 1963. He sat the examination for the clergy training institute of Hefei which was set up in 1986, and passed. Two years later, he graduated and was sent to the Suzhou Church.
Zhu Secretary, the CCP secretary of Lilou Xiang, who started doing revolutionary work in 1952.
Appendix 3  Glossary

Anhui
ba gong zi
ba zi
bai he
ban fan
bao jia
bao pai
bao xi
Bianshui
Bu xiao you san, wu hou wei da.
Cai Yuanpei
Chi shui bu wang da jing ren.
chu gong bu chu li
chuan zong jie dai
cu liang
da ban jia
da ling
da men da hu
Dangshan
ding zu
du shu zuo guan
dui ban fen zu
er ba fen zu
er ling
re tong tuan
fan shen
fang
fang tou
Fei Huanghe
Fu Nu Quan Yi Bao Zhang Fa
gan en fei
gai zui
Ge jin suo neng, an lao fen pei.
Gen shen zhi ye mao,
yuan yuan quan mai chang;
Qin jian wei jia ben,
shi dai yong rong chang.
Geng di bu yong niu,
di li tao zhe jian fa tou.
gong sheng
gong ren
jong xiao she
Guo Hongjie
Guo jia gan bu
Guozhuang
Guomindang
Hao tie bu da ding,
  hao ren bu dang bing.
he ju
he tian ming
Hongdong
Hongwu
hu zhu zu
Huabei
Huanghe Gudao
hui men
ji zhuang zi
jia tang miao
jia zhang
jia zhang
jian mian li
jian sheng
jie mei tuan
jie nuo wo
jie xin ren
jin shi
jing jiao
ju ren
Kaifeng
lao san pian
lao si shu
Lei Feng
Li Gongda (Li Fanshu)
li pi zi
li shang wang lai
lin di
Liu Bang
Longhai (railway)
Longxi shi jia
Longxi tang
men dang hu dui
mian dian
mian piao
Appendix

Min shi huang, ren xiang shi.
ming fu
Nan Zhang bei Li yao li Wu.
Nian (troops)
ni uer duo
piao hua
qing jia dang
pei qian huo
po lan di zhu
ren gan qin
san ling
San tian bu xue xi,
Mao zhu bu xin bu shang Liu Shaoqi.
san zhuan yi xiang
Shaanxi
Shandong hen, Jiangsu wen,
Anhui zheng ce na bu zhun.
shang che li
Shang che yi shen lan,
yi bei zi bu zuo nan.
Shang che yi shen he,
yi bei zi bu chi kui.
She nan she bei qi sheng ai,
fu ji tian chang ce na bu zhun.
nan shen dao lu cao song sheng.
sheng yuan
shi nian ji hua yi nian wan,
ku gan san nian gan jiang nan.
si pin guan
Si Shu (Da Xue, Zhong Yong,
Lun Yu, Meng Zi)
si xiang ji ben yuan ze
song zhu mi
Su li
Suxian (Prefecture)
tang hao
tai bao
tai xue sheng
Taiping (troops)
ti pai
ti qin
tong gou tong xiao

民食蝗,人相食。
命妇
南张北李腰里吴
捻（军）
牛耳朵
瞧花
请客当
赔钱货
破烂地主
认干亲
三领
三天不学习,
毛主席赶不上刘少奇。
三转一响
陕西
山东狠，江苏稳，
安徽政策拿不准。
上车礼
上车一身蓝，
一辈子不作难、
上车一身黑，
一辈子不吃亏。
社南社北齐声哀，
腹饥饿长夜难挨。
饥皮面黄少人形，
村中道路草丛生。
生员
十年计划一年完，
苦干三年赶江南。
四品官
四书（大学、中庸，
论语，孟子）
四项基本原则
送祝米
苏黎
宿县（地区）
堂号
台胞
太平（军）
赐派
提亲
统购统销
童生
童试
童养媳
桐城
铜山
脱产干部
万般皆下品、唯有有读书高。
卫星田
问事的
五大财产
五服
五经（诗经、史记、春秋、易经、礼记）
武举
五绝
细粮
库生
项羽
萧（县）
小土地出租者
携子上朝
心诚则灵
行来往
兴毓传继广、
肇宪卓敷祥;
令德惟垂佑、
钦 giorn选扬。
辛亥（革命）
秀才
徐州
学大寨、赶郭庄。
压岁钱
要日子
义工
一天吃一钱、
饿不死炊事员。
院
杂支
知府
知县
知州
邹鲁
Appendix

zhu lu zhong yuan
Zhu Yuanzhang
zhuan ye hu
zuo ding hun yi
zuo zhuang hui
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