

**ENGENDERING CHINESE MIGRATION HISTORY:
“LEFT-BEHIND WIVES OF THE NANYANG
MIGRANTS” IN QUANZHOU BEFORE AND AFTER
THE PACIFIC WAR**

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**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE
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Summary

In southern China, a large number of women were left-behind by their migrant spouses who departed for Southeast Asia (the Nanyang) in the first half of the twentieth century. The vital role of these women in sustaining their husbands' migration has not been fully recognized. Using archival documents, local gazetteers, literary and historical documents, newspapers, periodicals, oral history, personal writings, and other materials, this study describes and analyses the history of these "left-behind wives of the Nanyang migrants", who were known as *fankeshen* 番客婦 in Quanzhou, Fujian, China, before and after the Pacific War. It seeks to shed light on the impact of migration on these wives and their responses, thus providing an account of the historic lives and roles of these women, consequently engendering Chinese migration history.

Adopting a gendered perspective, this study examines the reasons why the women were left-behind. Then it focuses on their marital situation and the strategies they used to deal with the conjugal separation, to ensure survival when their husbands failed to provide sufficient financial support, and to struggle for a better future in the post-1949 era. It also investigates how the state and local governments such as the Fujian provincial government formulated a *qiaojuan* discourse to control the resources of Overseas Chinese through their relatives/wives in China, demonstrating the intricate relationship between migration, left-behind wives and politics.

The study shows that the *fankeshen* were important participants in, and contributors to, Chinese migration history. The migration of their husbands had inevitably affected them and the impact was multi-layered and complex. Most of them suffered from the absence of husbands in their daily lives and adopted various methods and strategies to endure the hardships and to maintain their marriages. Some of them chose to escape their painful conjugal lives through committing adultery or divorcing. Economically, they participated in various socio-economic spheres to make a living, and contributed to the maintenance of their households and the development of their hometowns. Their socio-economic activities re-shaped the gender roles within the migrant families, empowering the women within their families and the socio-economic spheres they were involved in. Nevertheless, the significance of these women was not recognized fully by the state, although the state and local government adopted and implemented a series of Overseas Chinese policies to protect or benefit the *qiaojuan*. Women' interests were protected only when they coincided with those of the state. However, despite their marginal position in both state and provincial policies, the women found space to actively use their identity and the policies to protect the interests of their families and to fulfill their ambitions.

Thus, the migration of their spouses became an important variable in the women's lives, complicated by events in modern China, Southeast Asia and the wider world, especially during the Pacific War and the period shortly after. The women responded to their husbands' migration in various ways and developed their autonomy, independence, knowledge, and skills in the process. The history of these women should not be seen merely as an appendix to the male-dominated migration history. They were instead active agents of their own history, allowing them to be one of the outstanding groups of women in Chinese history. Their experiences have also provided insights towards understanding other left-behind wives in other parts of the world.

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Weight, Measures and Currencies

A. Weights

1. 16 *liang* 两 = 1 *jin* 斤 (catty)
2. 1 *jin* = 0.5 kilogram = 1.1 pounds
3. 100 catties = 1 *dan* 担 (picul)

B. Measures

1. 1 *li* 里 = 1/3 mile
2. 6.6 *mu* 亩 = 1 acre

C. Currencies

1. Silver dollars were issued after the victory of the Northern Expedition in 1927, but circulation was forbidden in 1935 by the Kuomintang Government.
2. The *yuan* was the standard unit of Chinese currency during the Nanjing period. The value of the *yuan* fluctuated considerably. *Fabi* (法币 legal tender) was issued as currency in 1935. During the Anti-Japanese War and the civil war, *Fabi* devaluated sharply because of the inflationary policy of the Kuomintang Government. On August 19, 1948, the Kuomintang Government carried out another currency by adopting the gold standard and began issuing Gold Yuan. The exchange rate was one Gold Yuan for three million *yuan* of *Fabi*. However, the reform failed and there were further rapid devaluation.
3. Renminbi (人民币 People's currency, 'RMB') is the currency of the People's Republic of China. In late 1948, the People's Bank of China began to issue RMB. On March 1, 1955, the new version of RMB began to be issued. Old RMB was called in at the rate of 10,000 *yuan* to one *yuan* of new RMB. RMB's foreign exchange rates changed with the time.

Sources:

Ng Chin-keong, *Trade and Society: The Amoy Network on the China Coast 1683-1735*, Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1983, pp. xiv-xv.

The Editorial Boards for *A History of Chinese Currency*, Xinhua Publishing House, and People's Bank of China, eds., *A History of Chinese Currency (16th Century BC – 20th Century AD)*, Peking: Xinhua Pub. House, 1983, pp. 38-39, 129-133, 189-191.

Xu Shaoqiang 许少强 and Zhu Zhenli 朱真丽, *1949-2000 nian de ren min bi hui lu shi* 1949-2000 年的人民币汇率史 (A History of Renminbi Exchange Rates from 1949 to 2000), Shanghai: Shanghai caijing daxue chubanshe, 2002

Chapter I

Introduction

Significance, Definitions and Periodization

Chinese men tended to leave their wives at home when they travelled far away from their hometowns for various purposes and destinations. The hometown was always the base of a family in Confucian society. A wife, a mother and a daughter-in-law bore great responsibilities for the upbringing of children, taking care of the parents-in-law and maintaining the household. Previous studies have found that large numbers of the wives of the southern Fujianese who migrated to Taiwan to explore new lands were left-behind at home during the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1911).¹ Such an experience of separation was also shared by other businessmen from Guangdong, Shanxi and Anhui engaged in long-distance trade within China.²

¹ Wang Lianmao 王连茂, “*Mingqing yilai minnan haiwai yimin jiating jiegou qianshi: yi zupu ziliao weili*” 明清以来闽南海外移民家庭结构浅析: 以族谱资料为例 (An Analysis of the Family Structure of Overseas Emigrants in Southern Fujian since Ming and Qing Dynasties, Using Clan Records as Examples), in *Chuantong yu bianqian – huanan de rentong he wenhua* 传统与变迁 – 华南的认同和文化 (Tradition and Change - Identity and Culture in South China), eds. Tan Chee Beng 陈志明, Zhang Xiaojun 张小军, and Zhang Zhanhong 张展鸿 (Beijing: Beijing wenhui chubanshe, 2000), pp. 3-23; Zeng Shaocong 曾少聪, “Qingdai Taiwan yu Feilübin minyue yimin de jiating jiegou yanjiu” 清代台湾与菲律宾闽粤移民的家庭结构研究 (A Study of the Family Structure of Fujian and Guangdong Migrants Who Migrated to Taiwan and the Philippines in the Qing Dynasty), *Zhongguo shehui jingjishi yanjiu* 中国社会经济史研究 (The Journal of Chinese Social and Economic History) 3 (1998), pp. 77-84.

² On Guangdong, see Leng Dong 冷东, *Dongnanya haiwai chaoren yanjiu* 东南亚海外潮人研究 (Research on the Chaozhou People in Southeast Asia) (Beijing: Zhongguo huaqiao chubanshe, 1999), p. 62; On Huizhou merchants in Anhui province, see Zhuo Wei 周伟, ed., *Xunzhao Huishang* 寻找徽商 (In search of the Merchants from Huizhou) (Beijing: Guangming ribao chubanshe, 2003), p. 22; Wang Yanyuan 王延元 and Wang Shihua 王世华, *Huishang* 徽商 (Huizhou Merchants) (Hefei: Anhui renmin chubanshe, 2005), pp. 297-323. However, insufficient research has been done on these women. For a preliminary study on the wives of Huizhou merchants, see Wang and Wang, *Huishang*, pp. 297-323; On the wives of Shanxi merchants, see Guo Qiwen 郭齐文, “Cong muzhi ziliao kan nüxing zai jinshang zhong de zuoyong he diwei” 从墓志资料看女性在晋商中的作用和地位 (A Research on the Functions and Statuses of the Women in the Families of Shanxi Merchants Based on the Women’s Epitaphs), in *Zhongguo jinshang yanjiu* 中国晋商研究 (A Study of Shanxi Merchants), eds. Zhang Zhengming 张正明, Sun Liping 孙丽萍 and Bai Lei 白雷 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2006), pp. 452-461.

Similarly, a large number of overseas migrants had left their wives behind in China when they migrated to Southeast Asia (the Nanyang), Japan, Australia and North America, etc. to seek their fortune before the second half of the twentieth century.³ Today, we can still encounter these women in many villages in the provinces of Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi and Hainan where the migrants had departed from. The present author refers to them as Chinese “left-behind wives”. “Left-behind” is a term borrowed from an international workshop on the impact of migration on the left-behinds in Asia, which was held in Hanoi, Vietnam (10-11 March 2005). This conference provided case studies of the impact of contemporary migration on the left behinds in Asian countries such as Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.⁴ The term “left-behind” is new in academic circles and was coined to refer to those “who were closely associated with migrants but who did not, or chose not to, move”.⁵ This workshop heralded a new trend in migration studies by demonstrating a keen interest in the left-behinds. Through examining the impact of the migration on the left-behinds, new knowledge of the relationship between the migration and the left-behinds has been developed, which has in turn complicated the understanding of migration and created a chapter for the left-behinds within migration history.

A world-wide phenomenon, the creation of left-behinds occur regularly when males emigrated or worked in another region and were forced to leave their family

³ Nanyang, literally means “the southern ocean”, which covers generally the region of Southeast Asia today.

⁴ The “International Workshop on the Impacts of Migration on the ‘Left-Behind’ in Asia”, was held on 10-11 March 2005, Hanoi, Vietnam, co-organized by Asian MetaCentre for Population and Sustainable Development Analysis, and Institute for Social Development Studies, Vietnam. Due to the late timing, the present author failed to present a paper at the workshop, but has submitted a paper to the organizing committee for consideration for publication.

⁵ Liem Nguyen, Mika Toyota and BrendaYeoh, “Report on International Workshop on the Impacts of Migration on the ‘Left-Behind’ in Asia”, http://www.populationasia.org/Events/2005/The_Impact_of_Migration/Report_Impacts_of_Migration_and_the_Left-Behind_in_Asia.pdf, accessed on 14 June 2005.

members at home because of economic, social or political conditions in either the receiving or sending countries. In Kerala, an Indian state, a large number of women remained at home when their husbands migrated to work in West Asian countries like Saudi Arabia, Oman and Kuwait. As a result, there was a disproportionate number of female-headed households in Kerala, as compared to the rest of India.⁶ In Indonesia, Turkey, Egypt, and South Africa, there were also large numbers of wives who remained at home when their men migrated to seek a better living.⁷ Previous studies also show that the guest workers in Western Europe, Mexican *braceros* in the American Southwest, and Chinese migrants in pre-1965 United States all shared the split-household pattern. Evelyn Nakano Glenn points out that they were all low-wage labourers and were prevented from bringing relatives or settling permanently in the host countries, which benefited from the labour of sojourners without having to

⁶ Leela Gulati, *In the Absence of Their Men: the Impact of Male Migration on Women* (New Delhi; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, c1993); Leela Gulati, "Social Consequences of International Migration: Case Studies of Women Left behind in K.C.", in *Kerala's Demographic Transition: Determinants and Consequences*, eds. Zachariah and S.Irudaya Rajan. (New Delhi; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1997), pp. 310-345.

⁷ For example, Graeme Hugo, "Migration and Women's Empowerment", in *Women's Empowerment and Demographic Processes: Moving beyond Cairo*, eds., Harriet B. Presser and Gita Sen (New York: Oxford University Press, c2000), pp. 287-317; Rhacel Salazar Parreñas, "New Household Forms, Old Family Values: The Formation and Reproduction of the Filipino Transnational Family in Los Angeles", in *Contemporary Asian America: A Multidisciplinary Reader*, , ed., Min Zhou and James V. Gatewood (New York: New York University Press, c2000), pp. 336-353; Nermin Abadan-Unat, "International Labour Migration and Its Effect upon Women's Occupational and Family Roles: A Turkish View", in *Women on the Move: Contemporary Changes in Family and Society* (Paris: Unesco, 1984), pp. 133-158; Judy H. Brink, "The Effect of Emigration of Husbands on the Status of Their Wives: An Egyptian Case", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 23, 2 (May 1991), pp. 201-211; Barbara B. Brown, "The Impact of Male Labour Migration on Women in Botswana", *African Affairs* 82, 328 (July 1983), pp. 367-388. Reprinted in *The Sociology of Migration*, ed. Robin Cohen (Cheltenham, UK; Brookfield, Vt., US: E. Elgar, c1996), pp. 121-142; Nici Nelson, "The Women Who Have Left and Those Who Have Stayed behind: Rural-Urban Migration in Central and Western Kenya", in *Gender and Migration in Developing Countries*, ed. Sylvia Chant (London; New York: Belhaven Press, 1992), pp. 109-138; Bridget O' Laughlin, "Missing Men? The Debate over Rural Poverty and Women-headed Households in Southern Africa", *Journal of Peasant Studies* 25, 2 (January 1998), pp. 1-48. Reprinted in *Gender and Migration*, eds. Katie Willis and Brenda Yeoh (Northampton, Mass.: Edward Elgar, 2000), pp. 457-504.

incorporate them into the society.⁸ Nermin Abadan-Unat refers to this trend as physical ‘split existence’.⁹

Moreover, the appearance of left-behind wives can also result from internal migration between areas of differing levels of economic development within a country. In the United States, wives were left behind and called “women in waiting” when their husbands moved westwards so as to improve conditions for their families in the last half of the nineteenth century.¹⁰ It is well known that a characteristic feature of contemporary rural-to-urban migration in many African and Asian countries is that wives were often left behind in the rural areas.¹¹

Since the late 1960s, with the growth of feminist movements in the United States and Europe, women studies have made those women visible in male-dominated discourses and contributed to a more complete history of the human race. In 1972, Ann Oakley raised the issue of the differences between “sex” and “gender”, where “sex” is a biological term, and “gender” a psychological and cultural construct which is the result of socialization.¹² Since the 1980s, “gender” had gradually replaced “sex” and become a new analytical category of historical thought and methodology for women’s and gender studies.¹³ Gender studies locate men and women, and their lives and experiences, within their social systems and recognize that they were both subjected to complex and interwoven factors and processes. Such a reference point

⁸Evelyn Nakano Glenn, “Split Household, Small Producer, and Dual Wage Earner: An Analysis of Chinese-American Family Strategies”, in *American Families: A Multicultural Reader*, eds. Stephanie Coontz with Maya Parson and Gabrielle Raley (New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 80.

⁹ Abadan-Unat, “International Labour Migration and Its Effect upon Women’s Occupational and Family Roles”.

¹⁰ Linda S. Peavy and Ursula Smith, *Women in Waiting in the Westward Movement: Life on the Home Frontier* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, c1994).

¹¹ Biswajit Banerjee, “Rural-to-Urban Migration and Conjugal Separation: An Indian Case Study”, *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 32, 4 (July 1984), p. 777.

¹² Ann Oakley, *Sex, Gender and Society* (London: Maurice Temple Smith Ltd, 1972).

¹³ For discussions of gender as an analytical category, see Joan Scott Wallach, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), pp. 28-50; *Uncertain Terms: Negotiating Gender in American Culture*, eds. Faye Ginsburg and Anna Tsing (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990), pp. 1-16; *Engendering China, Women, Culture, and the State*, eds. Christina K. Gilmartin, Gail Hershatter, Lisa Rofel and Tynne White (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 5-24.

allows scholars to study women's history with their differing and changing positioning vis-à-vis men under various social settings, and thus contributes to a balanced knowledge of both genders. It marked "a more academic approach and a less political-minded, critical feminist approach".¹⁴

Along with the growing academic interest in women and gender, a gendered approach applied specifically to migration studies dating largely from 1980s not only makes the women visible in the migration process, but also complicates the scholarly effort to explain migration.¹⁵ Studies on gender and migration have discussed the complex experiences of migrant women under different social systems and gender differences within the migration process from a gendered perspective.¹⁶ At the same time, previous studies on the left-behind women in African, American and Asian countries have tried to shed light on the experiences of the women, especially the wives, which will be elaborated on in the literature review in the next section.

On the complex relationships between gender and migration, studies on Chinese women who participated in international migration for a variety of reasons have definitely contributed to a gendered Chinese migration history. In Chinese historical studies, gender as a concept has also enlightened scholars' new thinking on the research of Chinese history, although it "essentially exist[s] only as a part of

¹⁴ Mechthild Leutner, "Women's Gender and Mainstream Studies on Republican China: Problems in Theory and Research", *Jindai zhongguo funüshi yanjiu* 近代中国妇女史研究 (Studies on Modern Chinese Women) 10 (December 2002), p. 122.

¹⁵ G. Kelson and D. Delaet, eds., *Gender and Immigration* (London: Macmillan, 1999).

¹⁶ See also Linda McDowell, "Space, Place and Gender Relations: Part I. Feminist Empiricism and the Geography of Social Relations", *Progress in Human Geography* 17, 2 (1993), pp. 157-179, 305-318; Linda McDowell, "Space, Place and Gender Relations: Part II. Identity, Difference, Feminist Geometries and Geographies", *Progress in Human Geography* 17, 3 (1993), pp. 305-18; Keith Halfacree and Paul Boyle, "Introduction: Gender and Migration in Development Countries", in *Migration and Gender in the Developed World*, eds. Paul Boyle and Keith Halfacree (London; New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 1-29; Donna J. Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: the Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective", in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: the Reinvention of Nature*, ed. Donna J. Haraway (New York: Routledge, 1991), pp. 183-201.

Chinese studies and as an independent supplement” to mainstream Chinese studies.¹⁷ Since the 1980s, more and more researchers have added a gendered picture to the history of Chinese migration through their research on Chinese women migrants in the world. The writings on history of the American Chinese women and the Chinese women who migrated to Southeast Asia have located the long-neglected women within the migration process and explored their experiences in the Chinese communities, recognizing them as visible, autonomous agents in the transnational migration. Women, including prostitutes, were also recognized for their contribution to the Chinese communities and towards the development of local society.¹⁸ This

¹⁷ Leutner, “Women’s Gender and Mainstream Studies on Republican China: Problems in Theory and Research”, p. 118. For the status of the Chinese women’s and gender studies, see Leutner, “Women’s Gender and Mainstream Studies on Republican China: Problems in Theory and Research”; Nicola Spakowski, “‘Women Studies with Chinese Characteristics?’ on the Origins, Issues, and Theories of Contemporary Feminist Research in China”, *Jindai Zhongguo Funü yanjiu* 10, 2 (June 1994), pp. 297-322; Connie Orliski, “From the Sung to the PRC: An Introduction to Recent English-language Scholarship on Women in Chinese History”, *Jindai Zhongguo Funü yanjiu* 10, 3 (August 1995), pp. 216-235; Gall Hershatter, “State of the Field: Women in China’s Long Twentieth Century”, *Journal of Asian Studies* 63, 4 (November 2004), pp. 991-1065.

¹⁸ For example, Ling Huping, *Surviving on the Gold Mountain: A History of Chinese American Women and their Lives* (New York: State University of New York Press, c1998); Yang Xiushi and Guo Fei, “Gender Differences in Determinants of Temporary Labour Migration in China: A Multilevel Analysis”, *International Migration Review* 33, 4 (1999), pp. 929-953; Anthony Pfeffer, *If They Don’t Bring Their Women Here: Chinese Female Emigration before Exclusion* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999); Zhao Xiaojian, *Remaking Chinese America: Immigration, Family, and Community, 1940-1965* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, c2002). For the studies of the migrant women to Southeast Asia, see Lim Joo Hock, “Chinese Female Immigration into the Straits Settlements, 1860-1901”, *Journal of the South Seas Society* XXII (1967), pp. 58-110; Joyce Lebra and Joy Paulson, *Chinese Women in Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Times Books International, 1980); Kenneth Gaw, *Superior Servants: the Legendary Cantonese Amahs of the Far East* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1988); Hiroaki Kani 可儿弘明, *Zhuhua: bei fanmai haiwai de funü* 猪花: 被贩卖海外的妇女 (*Zhuhua: Chinese Women Who Were Sold Overseas*) (Zhengzhou: Henan renming chubanshe, 1990); James Francis Warren, *Ah Ku and Karayaki-san: prostitution in Singapore 1870-1940* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1993); Tan Liok Ee, “Locating Chinese Women in Malaysia History”, in *New Terrains in Southeast Asian History*, eds. Abu Talib Ahmad and Tan Liok Ee (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2003), pp. 354-384; Fan Ruolan 范若兰, “Yunxu yu yanjin: minyue difang dui funu chuyang de fanyin (1860-1949)” 允许与严禁: 闽粤地方对妇女出洋的反应 (1860-1949) (Permission and Prohibition: the Response of Fujian and Guangdong to Chinese Women Going abroad, 1860-1949), *Huaqiao huaren lishi yanjiu* 华侨华人历史研究 (Overseas Chinese History Studies) 3 (2002), pp. 67-76; Fan Ruolan, *Yimin, xingbie, yu huaren shehui: Malaixiya huaren funü yanjiu (1929-1941)* 移民、性别与华人社会: 马来西亚华人妇女研究 (1929-1941) (Migration, Gender and Overseas Chinese Communities: Study on Chinese Women in Malaya (1929-1941)) (Beijing: Zhongguo huaqiao chubanshe, 2005); Lim Joo Hock, “Chinese Female Immigration into the Straits Settlements, 1860-1901”, pp. 58-110.

demonstrates the significantly useful approach of gender to research on Chinese migration history.

However, in the study of Chinese migration history, the history of the left-behinds, especially the left-behind wives, has received insufficient academic attention, which will be elaborated on in the literature review. It is meaningful to use the gendered approach to study the Chinese left-behind wives to fill the gap in our knowledge of them and the history of migration.

In 1994, *Engendering China, Women, Culture, and the State* became an important contribution to Chinese women studies. The term “engendering” “conveys the sense that new knowledge is being created”.¹⁹ By using “engendering”, the authors suggest a method of “adding women to the social and historical picture, and highlighting gender as a category of analysis”, which in turn “changes the whole”.²⁰ Thus, *Engendering China* creates a new history of China by addressing the gender issue. This new paradigm and methodology triggered my own study on the long-neglected group of the Chinese left-behind wives. It has provided this study the direction in which the concept of gender would be used to understand Chinese migration history through examining the profound interactions between the husbands’ migration and their left-behind wives in Quanzhou, Fujian province, China. This will not only initiate a new history of the wives, but also provide a new picture of Chinese migration history.

The study area of this work is Quanzhou, which is a major traditional sending area of migrants to Taiwan, Japan and Southeast Asia, etc. from which large numbers of migrants had departed for Southeast Asia since the Tang dynasty (618-907).²¹

¹⁹ Gilmartin, Hershatter, Rofel and White, *Engendering China, Women, Culture, and the State*, p. 1.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 3.

²¹ Quanzhou huaqiaozi bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Quanzhou huaqiaozi* 泉州华侨志 (Gazetteer of the Quanzhou Overseas Chinese) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui chubanshe, 1996), Chapter 1, pp. 1-16.

Quanzhou is located in the southern part of Fujian, a province on the southeastern coast of China. Its administrative boundaries had undergone several changes in its history (see Table 1-1). Nevertheless, in this study, Quanzhou refers to a geographical location which does not necessarily include the whole of Quanzhou's ancient and contemporary administrative unit. Mainly it covers the area of the districts of Licheng, Fengze, Luojiang and Quangang, the administrative cities of Jinjiang, Nan'an, Shishi, and the counties of Yongchun and Hui'an (see Map 1).²² This is because these cities and counties were the main emigrant communities in Quanzhou (see Table 1-2), where the majority of the left-behind wives of migrants to Southeast Asia lived.

²² The districts of Licheng, Fengze, Luojiang and Quangang belong to the city of Quanzhou. However, the city of Quanzhou had changed its administrative boundaries over time. For instance, in the Republican China, it referred to the city area of Jinjiang County. In January 1951, the city area of Jinjiang County and its suburb became the city of Quanzhou with the title "the district of Licheng", which was divided into the districts of Licheng, Fengze, and Luojiang in June 1997. In 2000, the city of Quanzhou was expanded to encompass the district of Quangang. See Fu Jinxing 傅金星, "Quanzhoushi gaikuang" 泉州市概况 (The General Situation of Quanzhou), *Quanzhou wenshi ziliao* 泉州文史资料 (Literary and Historical Documents of Quanzhou) 1 (September 1986), pp. 2-3; "Quanzhou lishi yange yu xingzheng quhua" 泉州历史沿革与行政区划 (Historical Administrative Boundaries of Quanzhou) http://www.qzwb.com/gb/content/2003-03/10/content_740014.htm, accessed on 15 May 2006.

Table 1-1: Historical Administrative Boundaries of Quanzhou (1368-2006)

Time	Administrative area
Ming dynasty	Jinjiang, Nan'an, Hui'an, Tong'an, Anxi, Yongchun, Dehua
Qing dynasty	Jinjiang, Nan'an, Hui'an, Tong'an, Anxi
Republic of China	Jinjiang, Hui'an, Putian, Xianyou, Tong'an, Nan'an, Anxi, Yongchun, Jinmen
People's Republic of China (presently) ²³	the districts of Licheng, Fengze, Luojiang, Quangang, Jinjiang, Shishi, Nan'an, Huai'an, Anxi, Youngchun, Dehua, Jinmen ²⁴ and Qingmeng

Sources: "Quanzhou lishi yange yu xingzheng quhua" 泉州历史沿革与行政区划 (Historical Administrative Boundaries of Quanzhou) http://www.qzwb.com/gb/content/2003-03/10/content_740014.htm, accessed on 15 May 2006. From September 1950 to May 1985, the administrative unit was known as the district of Jinjiang.

Table 1-2: Distribution of Overseas Chinese in Quanzhou Counties in 1940

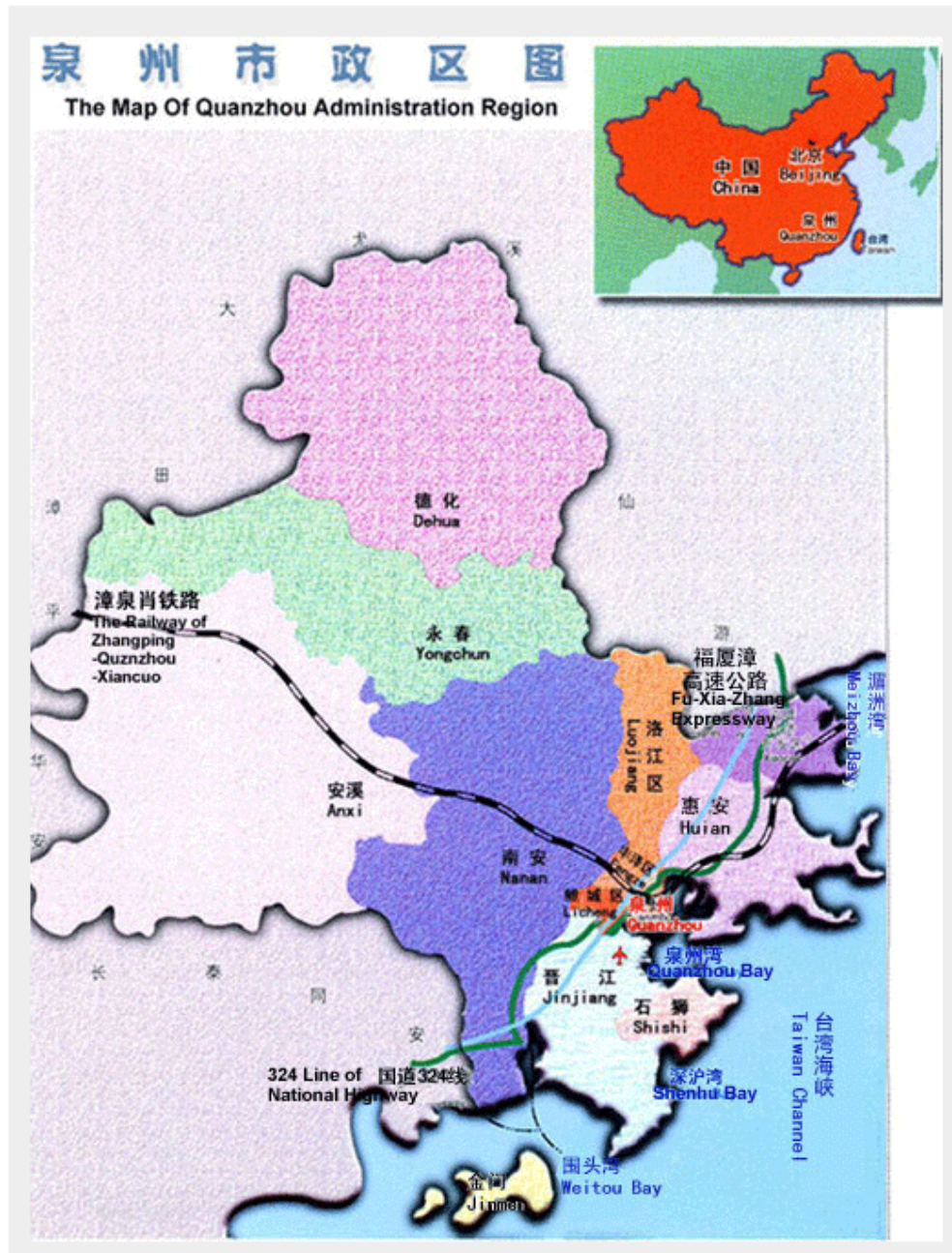
County	Numbers of Overseas Chinese	As a percentage of the population of Overseas Chinese in Quanzhou (%)
Jinjiang	262,656	25.9
Nan'an	224,325	22.13
Hui'an	154,364	15.23
Yongchun	144,694	14.27
Anxi	96,582	9.53
Jinmen	73,568	7.26
Dehua	57,542	5.68
Total	1,013,640	100

Source: Quanzhou huaqiaozhi banji weiyuanhui, ed., *Quanzhou huaqiaozhi* 泉州华侨志 (Gazetteer of the Quanzhou Overseas Chinese) (Beijing: Zhonguo shehui chubanshe, 1996), Chapter 1, p. 12. The percentage status changed little in the years after.

²³ During the People's Republic of China, administrative boundaries of towns and counties in Quanzhou also underwent changes during different decades. For instance, since December 1987, Shishi, which was once a town of Jinjiang County, has become an administrative city and has encompassed the towns of Shishi, Yongning, Hanjiang and Xiangzhi. In 1992, the county of Jinjiang became an administrative city. In 1993, the county of Nan'an also became an administrative city. For the details, see Fu, "Quanzhoushi gaikuang" pp. 2-3; "Quanzhou lishi yange yu xingzheng quhua", http://www.qzwb.com/gb/content/2003-03/10/content_740014.htm.

²⁴ Jinmen, however, is actually under the control of the Taiwanese government.

Map 1: Current Quanzhou Administration Region



Source: "Quanzhou xingheng quhuatu" 泉州行政区划图 (The Map of Quanzhou Administration Region), <http://www.fjqz.gov.cn/gov/www2/158/2005-02-22/18541.htm>, accessed on 6 February 2006.

Quanzhou was one of the most important sending areas of Chinese migrants to Southeast Asia in history. Its people had had the long tradition of migration as a family strategy for meeting adversity and seeking opportunities.²⁵ Since the Tang dynasty, facing limited agricultural lands and an increasing population, Quanzhou people began to seek a living overseas as maritime trade developed. In later periods, large numbers of them continued to seek livelihood overseas. This trend had become a custom during the Song and Yuan dynasties (960-1368), when Quanzhou became the embarkation point of the maritime Silk-Route and a prominent international port for the East.²⁶ The Ming and Qing dynasties saw an even greater and continuous population movement for about 500 years despite the intermittent prohibition policies. The movement is considered as “the most remarkable and significant event” in the history of southern Fujian, as well as one of the major international migration flows in history.²⁷ This migration pattern from the Tang dynasty to the 1850s in Chinese emigration to Southeast Asia is described by Wang Gungwu as “the trader pattern”, which “refers to merchants and artisans (including miners and other skilled workers) who went abroad, or sent their colleagues, agents or members of their extended families or clans (including those with little or no skills working as apprentices or

²⁵ On the long-standing Chinese tradition of migration as a family strategy for meeting adversity and seeking opportunities, see Edgar Wickberg, “Chinese as Overseas Migrants”, in *Migration: The Asian Experience*, edited by Judith M. Brown and Rosemary Foot (New York: St. Martin's Press in association with St. Antony's College, Oxford, 1994), p. 14.

²⁶ Quanzhou huaqiaozi bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Quanzhou huaqiaozi*, Chapter 1, pp. 1-3.

²⁷ Wang, “Mingqing yilai minnan haiwai yimin jiating jieguo qianshi”, p. 3; For its role as one of major international migration flows, see Yang Guozhen 杨国桢, “Guanyu zhongguo haiyang shehuijingjishi de sikao” 关于中国海洋社会经济史的思考 (A Reflection on Chinese Maritime Social Economic History), *Zhongguo shehui jingjishi yanjiu* 2 (1996), p. 3. In these 500 years, the other major population movements of South Fujian people saw internal migration to the Northeast, North and Northwest of the province, such as Zhengjing, Jiangxi, Guangdong, Sichuan, Guangxi and Guizhou provinces, see Wang, “Mingqing yilai minnan haiwai yimin jiating jieguo qianshi”, p. 3.

lowly assistants) abroad to work for them and set up bases at ports, mines or trading cities”.²⁸

Migration to Southeast Asia became much larger in scale after the opening of China during the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By the 1920s, a large number of southern Fujian peasants including those in Quanzhou worked as contract workers/coolie labourers in Southeast Asia, which “was certainly significant in certain parts of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula” and this is depicted by Wang as “the coolie pattern”.²⁹

At the same time, free migrants, inclined towards emigration in search of better prospects, crossed the sea and flowed into Southeast Asia continuously with the help of the developing emigration mechanisms and the networks established among their migrant relatives or fellow villagers. Furthermore, their search for more opportunities was spurred by increasing demands for labourers in the colonial ports.

According to Chen Ta, most migrants from southern Fujian and eastern Guangdong emigrated because of economic pressure (69.95%) and of previous connection with the Nanyang (19.45%).³⁰ The investigations conducted by the researchers from Xiamen University in 1956-57 on the emigrant communities (*qiaoxiang* 侨乡) in the counties of Jinjiang, Nan’an, Yongchun, Hui’an and the city of Quanzhou, etc. show that factors such as economic needs, political chaos or oppression, lineage conflict or fighting, and so on also caused the migration. Apart from these factors, the Japanese intrusion into China was found to be a significant

²⁸ Wang Gungwu, “Patterns of Chinese Migration in Historical Perspective”, in *China and the Chinese Overseas*, ed. Wang Gungwu (Singapore: Times Academic Press, 1991), p. 4.

²⁹ Quanzhou huaqiao zhi bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Quanzhou huaqiao zhi*, Chapter 1, p. 5; Wang, “Patterns of Chinese Migration in Historical Perspective”, p. 6.

³⁰ Chen Ta, *Emigrant Communities in South China: A Study of Overseas Migration and Its Influence on the Standard of Living and Social Change*, English version edited by Bruno Lasker, reprint of the 1940 edition published by the Institute of Pacific Relations, New York (New York: AMS Press, 1978), pp. 259-261.

push factor for migrants during the years between 1935 and 1937. It produced the largest numbers of migrants who left for the Nanyang in history due to the able-bodied men's desire to escape from being conscripted into the Nationalist government's army to fight in the Anti-Japanese War.³¹

In 1939, the number of Fujianese who were overseas reached 1,911,402, among whom 1,899,900 (99.4%) were in Southeast Asia. Those from Quanzhou alone numbered 1,349,528, of which 99.9% departed for Southeast Asia (see Table 1-3). Jinjiang and Nan'an provided the most migrants in Quanzhou. According to statistics of 1940, 25.9% of Quanzhou's migrants departed from Jinjiang County, and 22.13% were from Nan'an County, together providing about half of the migrants from Quanzhou (also see Table 1-2).³²

³¹ Lin Jinzhi 林金枝, Zhuang Weiji 庄为玑 and Gui Guanghua 桂光华, "Fujian Jinjiang zhuanqu huaqiaoshi diaocha baogao" 福建晋江专区华侨史调查报告 (The Report of the Investigation on the History of Overseas Chinese in Jinjiang, Fujian), *Xiamen daxue xuebao* 厦门大学学报 (Journal of Xiamen University) 1 (1958), pp. 113-114, 118; Zhang Zhenqian 章振乾, Chen Kejian 陈克俭, Gan Minzhong 甘民重 and Chen Kekun 陈可焯, "Fujian zhuyao qiaoku nongcun jingji tanlu - qiaoxiang diaocha zhi yi" 福建主要侨区农村经济探论—侨区农村调查之一 (Discussion on the Economies of the Main Migrant Villages in Fujian – One of the Investigations on Emigrant Villages), *Xiamen daxue xuebao* 厦门大学学报 (Journal of Xiamen University) 1 (1957), pp. 33-34; For the details of the investigations, see Dai Yifeng 戴一峰 and Song Ping 宋平, "Fujian qiaoxiang yanjiu de huigu yu qianzhu" 福建侨乡研究的回顾与前瞩 (*Qiaoxiang Studies in Fujian Province: Review and Prospects*), *Huaqiao huaren lishi yanjiu* 华侨华人历史研究 (Overseas Chinese History Studies) 1(1998), pp. 39-40.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 12.

Table 1- 3: Distribution of Quanzhou Overseas Chinese in the World in 1939

County/Area	Numbers	Percentage
Total	1,349,528	100
Malaya and Singapore	564,100	41.8
The Dutch East Indies	406,775	30.2
Siam	180,000	13.3
The Philippines	82,890	6.2
Burma	54,193	4.0
Indo-China	45,770	3.4
North Borneo	9,000	0.6
Others	7,000	0.5

Source: according to the table of the distribution of Quanzhou Overseas Chinese in the world in 1939 in Quanzhou huaqiao zhi bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Quanzhou huaqiao zhi* 泉州华侨志 (A History of Quanzhou Overseas Chinese) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui chubanshe, 1996), chapter 1, pp. 11-12. The numbers were estimated by the editorial committee based on the percentage of Quanzhou Overseas Chinese among the total numbers of Overseas Chinese in South Fujian and the whole Fujian province, which were the results of the Fujian provincial government's investigations of its Overseas Chinese affairs in the past.

Consequently, there were large numbers of left-behind wives in Quanzhou. In 1939, the Fujian provincial government conducted an investigation in its thirteen counties in western, middle, and southern Fujian, including Nan'an, Yongchun, Hui'an, Anxi and Jinmen in Quanzhou. These counties represented the main sending areas of the Overseas Chinese (*huaqiao* 华侨 or sojourners) to Southeast Asia in Fujian province. The result showed that 87.3% of the male migrants were in the age range of 20-44.³³ Moreover, migration was male-dominated. The percentage of female migrants was about 15.34% (10,127 among 65, 945), much smaller than the figure for male migrants in the migration flow. Furthermore, the data for female migrants had included the elderly and children.³⁴ A large number of family members were left behind. The investigation showed that among the migrant households, only 3.41% (1,288 among 37,744) of the households migrated with all family members, while the rest left some family members at home. This suggests that the number of

³³ Zheng Linkuan 郑林宽, *Fujian huaqiao huikuan* 福建华侨汇款 (The Remittances of Fujian Overseas Chinese) (Fujian zhengfu mishuchu tongjishi, 1940), p. 112, Table 27.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 45, 112.

wives of the Fujianese migrants who joined or re-joined their husbands overseas was small.³⁵ These left-behind wives were concentrated in the areas of Quanzhou, Zhangzhou, Xiamen, Longyang and Putian.³⁶

The number of left-behind wives in Quanzhou was particularly large. According to the report of the Committee for the Emergency Relief of the Returned Overseas Chinese (*Guiqiao* 归侨), the Relatives of Overseas Chinese (*Qiaojuan* 侨眷) and Overseas Chinese Students Studying in China (*Qiaosheng* 侨生) (*Fujiansheng jinji jiuqiao weiyuanhui* 福建省紧急救侨委员会) in 1942, Fujian province had a total of about 196,539 migrant households, within which there were 1,023,894 family members.³⁷ In Quanzhou alone, there were about 132,590 migrant households with about 664,835 *qiaojuan*. The Quanzhou figures represent respectively 67.46% and 64.93% of the total migrant households and *qiaojuan* of the whole province. Jinjiang and Nan'an had the most migrant households and *qiaojuan*, accounting for 59.59% and 57.19% of the total migrant households and family members of the whole province respectively.³⁸

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 45, 113.

³⁶ For the counties of Mingqing, Gutian, Minhou, Yongtai and Changle, the situation is different. These counties had been under Fuzhou district's jurisdiction and had a lot of women who migrated overseas with their relatives. This is mostly because of Huang Naishang's exploration of "New Fuzhou" in Sarawak, Malaya had provided a settlement for the couples or families to cultivate and settle down. For more details, see Yeap Chong Leng, *Wong Nai Siong and the Nanyang Chinese: An Anthology* (Singapore: Singapore Society of Asian Studies, 2001).

³⁷ The term *qiaojuan* has changed its scope with time, especially after the founding of the People's Republic of China. Generally speaking, the *qiaojuan* roughly included the relatives of the *huaqiao* during the Republican period. They were the relatives of the *huaqiao* and the *guiqiao* during the Communist period, except during the years of 1984-July 1990, when the *qiaojuan* also included the relatives of the Chinese overseas who were foreign citizens. For the discussion on who were considered *qiaojuan*, see Chapter VI, section one.

³⁸ According to the statistics of the Number of the Overseas Chinese Households in Fujian Province, Jinjiang had 60,000 migrant households (30.52%) with 300,000 family members (29.29%), and Nan'an had 57,128 migrant households (29.06%) with 285,604 family members (27.89%). *Fujiansheng dang'anguan* 福建省档案馆, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang'an shiliao* 福建华侨档案史料 (The Archival Materials of the Fujian Overseas Chinese) (Beijing: Dang'an Chubanshe, 1990), pp. 1731-1736. However, according to the investigation, some numbers of the investigation were under evaluation; some other figures were extracted from the investigation of 1939, whose scale of measurement was different. However, the numbers roughly reflect the distribution; see *Fujiansheng dang'anguan*, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang'an ziliao*, p. 1731.

On the other hand, as shown in Zheng Linkuan's demographic study of the Chinese migrants and their family members remaining in the thirteen counties of Fujian in 1939, the left-behinds consisted mostly of women, children and the old. In the age group of 20-44, there were 34,464 women, or 40.9% of the female population who stayed behind. The three counties of Nan'an, Yongchun and Hui'an had 28,661 left-behind women aged 20-44, which constituted 83% of the total population of left-behind women aged 20-44 in all the areas covered by the study.³⁹ In Nan'an County, there were 18,505 male migrants overseas in the age group of 20-44 and 16,671 women within the same age group who remained at home.⁴⁰ There is no figure for the population of the left-behind wives in Quanzhou. However, in consideration of the high marriage ratio among Chinese women, and the young marrying age in the Republican era, the number of left-behind wives in Quanzhou migrant households could be quite substantial.⁴¹

Some investigations in individual villages in Quanzhou suggest that the number of left-behind wives in some villages was big. In the 1950s, various investigations in Quanzhou *qiaoxiang* found that there were a lot of left-behind wives living without their husbands in villages. In the town of Sanwu, Jinjiang, which was considered as a typical *qiaoxiang* where most of its villagers had migrated to the Philippines, about 97.3% of the wives (144 among 148) lived separate from their

³⁹ Zheng, *Fujian huaqiao huikuan*, pp. 45, 113.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ The legal age for marriage was 16 for females and 18 for males. Fujiansheng Zhengfu mishuchu tongjishi, ed., *Fujiansheng tongji gailan* 福建省统计概览 (Overview of the Statistics of Fujian Province) (Fuzhou: 1935), p. 10. A custom of Quanzhou was that girls should marry when they were sixteen years. A girl who was over eighteen would be considered as an "old girl". Wang Yushu 王玉树, "Yima de mingyun" 姨妈的命运 (The Fate of My Aunt), in *Zuojia pinglunjia Wang Yushu juan* 作家评论家王玉树卷 (The Volume on Writer and Critic Wang Yushu), ed. Cai Youmou 蔡友谋 (Hong Kong: Xianggang renmin chubanshe, 2003), p. 126.

husbands overseas.⁴² In 1953, an investigation shows that in another town of Xinxi in Jinjiang, 60.95% of wives (140 among 226) had husbands living in foreign countries; there were only 24 wives who lived with their husbands in foreign countries (10.62%).⁴³

In other words, Quanzhou was a *qiaoxiang* with a long migration history, an area with tens of thousands of left-behind wives. The history of the left-behind wives in Quanzhou will provide an important case study of the Chinese left-behind wives in the migration history and provide a gendered perspective.

Interestingly, the left-behind wives in Quanzhou were known as *fankeshen* 番客婦 (“left-behind wives of the Nanyang migrants”) among the locals. What does *fankeshen* mean? Literally, *fan* is a Chinese character used to refer to things deemed foreign from a Sino-centric perspective. For example, the countries in the Nanyang were referred to as *fanbang* 番邦 (foreign countries). *Ke* denotes “guests”. The term *fanke* 番客 (guests from foreign countries) was originally created during the Tang Dynasty to refer to the foreign traders in Quanzhou city. There were thousands of foreign traders in Quanzhou city from the Song to the Ming dynasty, and the term “*fanke*” was well known among the local people at that time.⁴⁴ However, during the Ming dynasty, restrictive controls were introduced. As a result, fewer foreigners arrived and increasingly fewer foreigners chose to stay in Quanzhou. In contrast,

⁴² “Jinjiang xian dishi'er qu Sanwu xiang (qiaoxiang) guanche hunyinfa yundong zhong jige wenti de zongjie” 晋江县十二区三吴乡 (侨乡) 贯彻婚姻法运动中几个问题的总结 (The Analysis of the Several Problems within the Movement of the Implementation of the Marriage Law in the 12th Area of the *Qiaoxiang* of Sanwu Town, Jinjiang county) [1953], in Fujiansheng dang'anguan 福建省档案馆: file 148 - 2- 463.

⁴³ Among these women, 62 of them (27.43%) lived with husbands who returned from overseas in the towns, see “Jinjiangxian shibaqu Xinxi xiang qiaoku hunyin wenti buchong diaocha” 晋江县十八区新溪乡侨区婚姻问题补充调查 (The Supplementary Investigation on Problems within Migrant Marriages in the 18th Area of Jinjiang County, Xinxi Town) [February 1953], in Fujiansheng dang'anguan: file 148-2-463.

⁴⁴ Wang, “Mingqing yilai minnan haiwai yimin jiating jieguo qianshi”, p. 14.

Quanzhou people kept migrating overseas during the same era. For unknown reasons, the term *fanke* came to be used in the reversed sense of referring to the local Chinese who had migrated overseas.⁴⁵ Since most migrants went to Southeast Asia, these *fanke* came to be addressed as “Nanyang *fanke*” or “Nanyang *ke*”. This reversal in terminology reflects the change of Quanzhou society in terms of its external outlook and of the strategies for survival for increasing numbers of locals.⁴⁶ *Shen* is a Chinese familial form of address for the wife of father’s younger brother. As Chinese society was based on hierarchical clan relationships, the people in one village were defined by different forms of address according to their clan positions. *Shen* was used to address any wife of any “younger uncle” (*shu* 叔). However, *fankeshen* refers to the wives who were left-behind by their migrant husbands in Quanzhou, regardless of their age.⁴⁷ The term is still used today in conversations among the locals, but never in reference to other family members and relatives.⁴⁸

Chen Liepu in his book uses the term loosely by delineating two categories of *fankeshen* – wives of Quanzhou migrants who joined their husbands in the Nanyang and wives who remained at home in China.⁴⁹ The present study focuses on the second group of *fankeshen*, who were the left-behind wives in Quanzhou.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ The long standing history of Quanzhou’s international trade and migration history has aroused much interest among scholars, becoming a field of study concerned with Quanzhou, known as Quanzhou studies (*Quanzhou xue* 泉州学). For the latest works, see Zhongguo hanghai xuehui 中国航海学会 and quanzhoushi renmen zhengfu 泉州市人民政府, eds., *Quanzhougang yu haishang shicouzhi* (2) 泉州港与海上丝绸之路 (二) (The Port of Quanzhou and the Maritime SilkRoute, 2) (Beijing: zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2003).

⁴⁷ Wang, “Mingqing yilai minnan haiwai yimin jiating jieguo qianshi”, p. 14.

⁴⁸ Interview with Zheng Bingshan 郑炳山, Quanzhou city, 30 November & 1 December 2004; Interview with Cai Shijia 蔡世佳, the office of the Association of Returned Overseas Chinese in Shishi city, 12 December 2004.

⁴⁹ Chen Liepu 陈烈甫, *Fei you guangan ji* 菲游观感记 (Reminiscences of Travels in the Philippines) (Xiamen: Nanqiao tongxunshu, 1948), p. 5.

At times, *fankeshen* were also known as “*fanke niang*” 番客娘 (*fanke lady*), or *qiaofu* 侨妇 (women in migrant families).⁵⁰ After 1949, *fankeshen* in the suburb of Quanzhou city were called “*huaqiao shen*” 华侨婶 (wives of Overseas Chinese).⁵¹ During the Republican era, the government looked at them as *qiaojuan*. After 1949, the left-behind wives and other female members of the migrant families were first called “*huaqiao juanshu funü*” 华侨眷属妇女 (women family members of *huaqiao*) and later “*qiaojuan funü*” 侨眷妇女 (*qiaojuan women*).⁵² Since the generation of the *fankeshen* is fading away, the term *fankeshen* will become extinct in daily conversations among the locals in Quanzhou.

This study covers mainly the decades from the 1930s to the 1950s, with occasional mentions of earlier or latter developments whenever necessary. Before the Pacific War which broke out on 8 December 1941, Quanzhou had been an important emigrant community and a *qiaoxiang* model had emerged. On the one hand, it received a huge annual flow of remittances from the sojourners to feed their family members; on the other hand, the sojourners also impacted their home village and towns in almost every aspect ranging from politics, economy, culture, and education,

⁵⁰ Huai Dan 怀丹, “Minnan de fankeniang” 闽南的番客娘 (The Wives of Overseas Chinese in Southern Fujian), *Minqiao* 闽侨 (Overseas Chinese of Fujian), 6 (December 1939), pp. 33-40; “Jinjiang qiaofu shenghuo de jinxi” 晋江侨妇生活的今昔 (The Lives of the Women in Migrant Families in Jinjiang in the Past and at Present), *Funü gongming* 妇女共鸣 (Collective Voices of Women) 12, 9&10 (October 1943), p. 22.

⁵¹ Chen Hanyun 陈汉云, “Xianzai jiaowo bu laodong ye buxing le” 现在叫我不劳动也不行了 (It Is Impossible to Ask Me not to Labour Now), *Qiaoxiang bao* 侨乡报 (Reports on the Emigrant Communities), 12 June 1958.

⁵² “Fujian Yongchun xian disanqu Nantong cun diaocha” 福建永春县第三区南幢侨村调查 (An Investigation of Nantong Village in Yongchun County, Fujian), *Qiaoxun* 侨讯 (Bulletin of Overseas Chinese Affairs), 9 (October 1950), p. 7; “Yongchun Maoxia xiang guiqiao qiaojuan canjia hezuohua qingkuang baogao” 永春茂霞乡归侨侨眷参加合作化情况报告 (Report on the Participation of *Guiqiao* and *Qiaojuan* in Co-operation in Maoxia Town, Yongchun County), *Fujian qiaowu gongzuo tongxun* 福建侨务工作通讯 (Bulletin of Overseas Chinese Affairs Work in Fujian), 1 (1955), p. 27; “Dui qiaojuan funü de jidian xiwang” 对侨眷妇女的几点希望 (Several Wishes of *Qiaojuan Women*), *Fujian qiaoxiangbao* 福建侨乡报 (Newspaper of Fujian Emigrant Communities), 7 August 1957.

to language, and even life-style.⁵³ The years of 1929-41 especially saw a golden age for the development of *qiaoxiang*, and Jinjiang had become the richest county in China with remittances and investments coming from its Overseas Chinese.⁵⁴ The early development of *qiaoxiang* in Quanzhou before the Pacific War provides this study with the basis to discuss the impact of migration on the *fankeshen*. The Pacific War was considered as a period of discontinuity in the development of *qiaoxiang*, during which communication and migration between Southeast Asia and China was almost completely severed and the people in the *qiaoxiang* lived with hardship because of the low remittances. About 83.3 % of the *qiaojuan* whose relatives migrated to Malaya, Singapore, the Dutch East Indies, the Philippine, Burma, etc suffered seriously from the severance of remittance and the remaining 16.7 % of the *qiaojuan* whose relatives migrated to Siam and Indo-China received a small number of remittances.⁵⁵ It is interesting to investigate the history of the *fankeshen* during the

⁵³ Quanzhou huaqiaozhi bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Quanzhou huaqiaozhi*, pp. 282-83. See also Huang Zhongyan 黄重言, “Shilun woguo qiaoxiang shehui de xingcheng, tedian he fazhan qushi” 试论我国侨乡社会的形成、特点和发展趋势 (An Analysis of the Formation, Characteristics and Trends of *Qiaoxiang* Society in China), in *Huaqiao huaren lishi luncong* 华侨华人历史论丛 (1) (Compilation of Research Papers on the Research of Overseas Chinese History, volume 1), ed. Zhongshan daxue dongnanya lishi yanjiusuo 中山大学东南亚历史研究所 (Guangzhou: 1985), pp. 6-14; Quanzhou huaqiaozhi bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Quanzhou huaqiaozhi*, pp. 281-286; Zhuang Guotu, “The Social Impact on Their Home Town of Jinjiang Emigrant’s Activities during the 1930s”, in *South China: State, Culture and Social Change during the 20th Century*, eds. Leo Douw and Peter Post (Amsterdam; New York: North-Holland, 1996), pp. 169-181. For the investment of overseas Chinese in Quanzhou, see Zhou Jiliang 周基亮, “Huaqiao touzi yu Quanzhou gongshangye” 华侨投资与泉州工商业 (Overseas Chinese Investment and the Industry and Commercial Development of Quanzhou), in *Quanzhou Huaqiao shiliao (1)* 泉州华侨史料 (第一辑) (Historical Materials on Overseas Chinese in Quanzhou, Vol.1), ed. Quanzhou huaqiao shiliao bianweihui 泉州华侨史料编委会 (Quanzhou: Quanzhoushi guiguo huaqiao lianhehui & Quanzhoushi qiaowu bangongshi, 1984), pp. 77-89; Lin Jinzhi 林金枝, “Jindai Jinjiang diqu huaqiao de guonei touzi” 近代晋江地区华侨的国内投资 (The Domestic Investment of Overseas Chinese in the Jinjiang District in Modern Times), in *Huaqiaoshi* 华侨史 (2) (History of Overseas Chinese, vol.2), pp. 187-223, ed. Jinjiang diqu huaqiao lishixuehui choubuizu 晋江地区华侨历史学会筹备组 (Quanzhou: 1983).

⁵⁴ Quanzhou huaqiaozhi bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Quanzhou huaqiaozhi*, p. 283; Zhuang, “The Social Impact on Their Home Town of Jinjiang Emigrant’s Activities during the 1930s”, p. 177. Only two villages in the suburbs of the national capital, Nanjing, could have competed with it.

⁵⁵ Huang, “Shilun woguo qiaoxiang shehui de xingcheng, tedian he fazhan qushi”, p. 13; Quanzhou huaqiaozhi bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Quanzhou huaqiaozhi*, p. 283, 174-75. Only in May 1943 did a Remittances Receiving and Sending Bureau (*minxin ju* 民信局), Jinjiang Wenji Xinju, received some

war. Since the end of the war, the political and economic environments have dramatically altered with the decolonization of Southeast Asia and the founding of People's Republic of China (hereafter PRC), which in turn have affected the development of the Chinese communities in Southeast Asia. More and more Overseas Chinese chose either to stay in their host countries and change their nationalities or return to China.⁵⁶ These transitions must have brought about new changes in the *fankeshen*'s lives. Thus, it is important to examine how the changes had affected them and how the women responded to these changes. In addition, most *fankeshen* interviewed in this study were at the age of seventies or eighties, who were born around 1920-30s and married the *fanke* in about 1930s or 1940s. They experienced the years before and after the Pacific War, and this has greatly enriched the available pool of oral materials providing women's perspective for this study.

remittances from the Philippines through Gulang Island in Xiamen once. See Quanzhou huaqiao zhi bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Quanzhou huaqiao zhi*, p. 175.

⁵⁶ For example, Jennifer Cushman and Wang Gungwu, eds. *Changing Identities of the Southeast Asian Chinese since World War II*, (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1988); Ng Lun Ngai-ha 吴伦霓霞 and Chang Chak Yan 郑赤琰, eds., *Liangci shijie dazhan qijian zai yazhou zhi haiwai huaren* 两次世界大战期间在亚洲之海外华人 (Overseas Chinese in Asia between the Two World Wars) (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Chinese University Press, 1989); Wen Guangyi 温广益, ed., *Er zhan hou DongnanYa Huaqiao Huaren shi* “二战”后东南亚华侨华人史 (A History of the Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia after the World War II) (Guangzhou: Zhongshan daxue chubanshe, 2000).

Literature Review⁵⁷

As Edgar Wickberg observes, the migratory Chinese were “both a migrating people and one with a deep attachment to home place”.⁵⁸ While male migrants sought a living overseas, most of them kept in touch with their family members or other relatives through sending home remittances. Some of them returned home every several years to visit their families or to marry local girls. Since at least the sixteenth century, a small number of counties in coastal Fujian had established “regular patterns of overseas migration, family separation, remittance receiving and dependence”.⁵⁹ The migration phenomenon has attracted much interest within academic circles and become a popular subject in China and the outside world. Overseas Chinese studies and *qiaoxiang* studies have shown keen interest in migration history and yielded important findings.⁶⁰ Previous studies have found that migration was a survival

⁵⁷ The present author needs to state that when she submitted this dissertation, Siumi Maria Tam, an anthropologist, simultaneously published her article, “Engendering Minnan Mobility: Women Sojourners in a Patriarchal World”. Based on data from her in-depth interviews of 48 women, including some *fankeshen*, in Hong Kong and Quanzhou, Tam argues that the woman’s “identification of herself as keeper of her husband’s family was the underlying force for her survival”. Tam also notices the “central role” of the women “in the sustenance of patrilineal families left-behind by the men”. Furthermore, she explores the inner feelings of the woman towards her “bitter life”. Tam’s findings are not included in this literature review, but some of her findings and observations are cited in the main body. For Tam’s article, see Siumi Maria Tam, “Engendering Minnan Mobility: Women Sojourners in a Patriarchal World”, in *Southern Fujian: Reproduction of Traditions in Post-Mao China*, ed., Tan Chee-Beng (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, c2006), pp. 145-62. The present author has also learnt that Ding Yuling apparently discusses the *fankeshen* in her Master’s thesis. However, Ding’s Master’s thesis was not listed in her Phd. dissertation bibliography, and thus, this author was unable to locate it.

⁵⁸ Wickberg, “The Chinese as Overseas Migrants”, P. 12.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁶⁰ *Qiaoxiang* studies are part of the studies on Chinese history. They reflect the impact of international migration on social, political and economic development in emigrant communities. Thus they provide a window to look into the change of southeastern China society. The studies also explore changes in the lives of the *qiaojuan*, which help to look into the impact of the migration on the individuals. However, they often regard *qiaojuan* as inactive dependants on the migrants. Women especially were included in the group. For the state of the field, see Huang Zisheng 黄滋生, “Lun qiaoxiang yanjiu de xianzhuang ji yiyi” 论侨乡研究的现状及意义 (A Discussion on the State and Significance of the Research on Emigrant Communities), *Huaqiao huaren lishi yanjiu* 4 (1991), pp. 1-3; Huang Kunzhang 黄昆章, “Lun qiaoxiang yanjiu de xianzhuang ji yiyi” 论侨乡问题研究 (A Discussion on the Research on the Emigrant Communities), *Huaqiao huaren yanjiu* 4 (1997), pp. 8-11; Dai and Song, “Fujian qiaoxiang yanjiu de huigu yu qianzhu”, pp. 38-47; “Introduction”, in *Fujian qiaoxiang diaocha: qiaoxiang rentong, qiaoxiang wangluo yu qiaoxiang wenhua* 福建侨乡调查: 侨乡认同、侨乡网络与侨乡文化

strategy for most migrants from Fujian and Guangdong. By migrating and making their fortune overseas, migrants not only supported their families through their remittances, but also built wealthier or more prosperous emigrant communities in their hometowns or in the coastal cities like Xiamen, Shantou and Guangzhou, even though the migration of great numbers of able-bodied men concurrently produced manpower shortage, and loss of capital thus adversely affected agricultural productivity in their places of origin.⁶¹ Scholars have discussed the migration processes, economic successes, *qiaoxiang* society building, and political loyalties of the Overseas Chinese, as well as modifications in the structure of family units and their functioning as a result of migration.

Since the 1990s, scholars have noticed the need for academic study on women who remained at home when men migrated overseas, and called for in-depth studies on them.⁶² However, little work has been done on the profound effects of the

(The Investigations on Fujian *Qiaoxiang*: *Qiaoxiang* Identity, Networks and Culture), ed. Li Minghuan 李明欢 (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue chubanshe, 2005), pp.1-34.

⁶¹ For positive effects of the migration, see, for example, Lin Jinzhi 林金枝, *Jindai huaqiao touzi guonei qiyesi yanjiu* 近代华侨投资国内企业史研究 (The Research on the History of Overseas Chinese Investments in Domestic Enterprises in the Modern Era) (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1983); Lin Jinzhi 林金枝, *Jindai huaqiao touzi guonei qiye gailun* 近代华侨投资国内企业概论 (A General Discussion on Overseas Chinese Investments in Domestic Enterprises in the Modern Era) (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue chubanshe, 1988); Li Guoliang 李国梁, Li Jinzhi 林金枝, and Cai Renlong 蔡仁龙, *Huaqiao huaren yu zhongguo geming he jianshe* 华侨华人与中国革命和建设 (Overseas Chinese and the Revolution and Building of China) (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1993); Leo Douw, "Overseas Chinese Entrepreneurship and the Chinese State: the Case of South China, 1900-49", in *Chinese Business Enterprise in Asia*, ed., Rajeswary Ampalavanar Brown (London; New York: Routledge, 1995), pp.115-135; Douw Leo M., Huang Cen and Michael R. Godley, eds., *Qiaoxiang Ties: Interdisciplinary Approaches to "Cultural Capitalism" in South China* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1999); James A. Cook, *Bridges to Modernity: Xiamen, Overseas Chinese and Southeast Coastal Modernization, 1843-1937* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI, 1999). For the negative effects, see, for example, Sun Qian 孙谦, *Qingdai huaqiao yu minyue shehui bianqian* 清代华侨与闽粤社会变迁 (Overseas Chinese and the Transition of Fujian and Guangdong Society during the Qing Dynasty) (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue chubanshe, 1999).

⁶² Xiao Zhao 晓照, "Yige zhide kaituo de yuandi - tan huaqiaohuaren funü wenti de yanjiu" 一个值得开拓的园地—谈华侨华人妇女问题的研究 (A New Study Field to Explore – Discussion on the Research of Chinese Women Overseas), *bagui qiaoshi* 1 (1992), pp. 16-22; Sucheta Mazumdar, "What Happened to the Women? Chinese and Indian Male Migration to the United States in Global Perspective", in *Asian/Pacific Islander American Women: A Historical Anthology*, eds. Shirley Hune and Gail Nomura (New York: New York University Press, 2003), pp. 58-74; Michael Szonyi,

international migration on the women, including the left-behind wives. Previous studies originated from nationalist and economic perspectives, which are largely male-oriented. The left-behind wives were discussed as part of the *qiaojuan* who remained in China and took care of the families of the male migrants. The detailed lives and roles of the wives have often been under-studied and are not available in current migration history writings.

Most of the previous discussions also focused on the years before 1949 and concentrated on the impact of the international migration on the structure of family unit and migrant marriages resulting from the long-term geographical separation and emotional or economic needs of the migrants. These approaches can be found in the studies on Chinese migration to Southeast Asia and North America, which were two main destinations of Chinese international migration.

Since the 1930s, scholars have studied the effects of international migration to Southeast Asia on the emigrant communities in South China. Chen Ta, a sociologist who studied the influence of overseas migration on the standards of living and social changes in southern Fujian and eastern Guangdong in the mid-1930s, finds that many migrants founded separate families in foreign countries. As a result, the phenomenon of having dual families had become common. The second family established overseas existed simultaneously with the family in southern China. Girls in the villages got married with migrants through their parents' arrangement and maintained the families after the men left for overseas. They kept their low social position like their sisters in other parts of China. Chen suggests that they accepted their husbands' second marriages and appreciated the overseas wives for caring for their husbands.⁶³ He also finds that the marriage pattern of arrangements for betrothal and marriage, through an

"Mothers, Sons and Lovers: Fidelity and Frugality in the Overseas Chinese Divided Family before 1949", *Journal of Chinese Overseas* 1, 1 (May 2005), pp. 43-64.

⁶³ Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, Chapter VI, Family.

intermediary, was in general similar to that in other parts of rural China. This led him to state that migrant marriage was of “no particular interest” to study.⁶⁴ Although Chen’s study is considered as a classic study on *qiaoxiang* in China, providing a foundation for later studies, he had not paid enough attention to women.⁶⁵ Another deficiency in his studies is that he had left out current Quanzhou, which was an important emigrant-sending region.

The 1990s saw increasing academic interest in the impact of migration on *qiaoxiang*. Sun Qian’s work shows that the family functions and structure were changing in the process of migration. He argues that the migration from Fujian and Guangdong provinces during the Ming and Qing dynasties took away the able-bodied men and reduced the size of the family. Consequently, it affected agricultural production and increased the burden on the family members who stayed at home. Yet with the support of remittances, the families often engaged in commercial activities for livelihood.⁶⁶ One would like to explore further how the functional changes within the family had affected the socio-economic lives of the left-behind wives.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 134.

⁶⁵ On Chen’s impact on later scholars who discussed migrant families and marriages, see for example, Ye Wencheng, Pei Ying and Li Minghuan had similar findings, see Ye Wencheng 叶文程, “Minnan qiaoxiang chuantong hunsu yu funü diwei” 闽南侨乡传统婚俗与妇女地位 (The Marriage Tradition and Women’s Position in Southern Fujian *Qiaoxiang*), in *Huanan hunyin zhidu yu funü diwei* 华南婚姻制度与妇女地位 (Marriage System and Women’s Position in South China), eds. Ma Jianzhao 马建钊, Qiao Jian 乔健, and Du Ruile 杜瑞乐 (Nanning: Guangxi minzu chubanshe, 1994), pp. 58-69; Pei Ying 裴颖, “Huaqiao hunyin jiating xingtai chutan” 华侨婚姻家庭形态初探 (A Preliminary Investigation of the Marriage and Family Patterns of the Overseas Chinese), *Huaqiao huaren lishi yanjiu* 1 (1994), pp. 41-45; Li Minghuan 李明欢, *Ouzhou huaqiao huaren shi* 欧洲华侨华人史 (A History of Overseas Chinese in Europe) (Beijing: Zhongguo huaqiao chubanshe, 2002.), pp. 467-482.

⁶⁶ Sun Qian 孙谦, “Shilun qingdai minyue haiwai yimin de yingxiang” 试论清代闽粤海外移民的影响 (An Analysis of the Impact of Overseas Migration on Fujian and Guangdong during the Qing Dynasty), *Nanyang wenti yanjiu* 南洋问题研究 (Southeast Asian Affairs) 2 (1996), pp. 60-65; Sun Qian 孙谦, “Qingdai minyue qiaojuan jiating de bianhua” 清代闽粤侨眷家庭的变化 (The Changes in Emigrant Families in Fujian and Guangdong during the Qing Dynasty), *Nanyang wenti yanjiu* 4 (1996), pp. 68-75; Sun, *Qingdai huaqiao yu minyue shehui bianqian*; Yang Guozhen 杨国桢, Zheng Fuhong 郑甫弘 and Sun Qian 孙谦, *Mingqing zhongguo yanhai shehui yu haiwai yimin* 明清中国沿海社会与海外移民 (China’s Coastal Society and Emigration Overseas during Ming and Qing Dynasties) (Beijing: Gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe, 1997).

It is interesting to note that, since the 1980s, there has been rising academic interest in the impact of migration on emigrant communities pertaining to migration movement towards North America, where most migrants came from Siyi (Sze Yup or four counties) in Guangdong province.⁶⁷ In North America, only a minority of the American Chinese remarried and began a second family, in contrast to those who migrated to Southeast Asia. As suggested by Evelyn Nakano Glenn, the Chinese American migrant family remained essentially a “split-household family” or “trans-Pacific family”, given the situation of geographical distance and restrictive laws on Chinese migration that separated the family. For a trans-Pacific family, their members lived separately but continued to be an economic unit.⁶⁸

Glenn’s argument was supported by Madeline Hsu’s study of transnational “Gold Mountain families” in Taishan, Siyi. Hsu describes how a surprising number of transnational Gold Mountain families survived and eventually reunited after absences of several months to several decades. Her chapter on the split-household families shows that Confucian norms were reinforced to meet the new realities of transnational family life and to ensure the marital fidelity of “Gold Mountain wives”. Hsu has also touched on the emotional suffering of the left-behind wives. She provides a discussion on the wives’ adaptation to the absence of their husbands through remarriage and adoption of sons, and has thus contributed to our understanding of an inner picture

⁶⁷ See for example, Paul C.P. Siu, John Kuo Wei Tchen, eds. *The Chinese Laundryman: A Study of Social Isolation* (New York: New York University Press, c1987); Woon Yuen-fong, *Social Organization in South China, 1911-1949: the Case of the Kuan Lineage of Kai-ping County* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1984); Glenn, “Split Household, Small Producer, and Dual Wage Earner”; Bonnie Thornton Dill, “Fictive Kin, Paper Sons, and Compadrazgo: Women of Color and the Struggle for Family Survival”, in *American Families: A Multicultural Reader*, eds. Stephanie Coontz with Maya Parson and Gabrielle Raley (New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 2-19; Adam McKeown, “Conceptualizing Chinese Diasporas, 1842 to 1949”, *The Journal of Asian Studies* 58, 2 (May 1999), pp. 306-337; Madeline Yuan-yin Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home: Transnationalism and Migration between the United States and South China, 1882-1943* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000).

⁶⁸ Glenn, “Split Household, Small Producer, and Dual Wage Earner”.

within migrant families in *qiaoxiang*.⁶⁹ Moreover, she discusses the wife's status in an emigrant community and within the family, as well as the pressures on a migrant marriage.

Certainly, more can be done to understand the changes in the marital lives of the left-behind wives resulting from the impact of migration on Confucian society and their internal feelings. Michael Szonyi's recent research on the relationship between male migrants and their family members in both Fujian and Guangdong before 1949 did exactly that by showing an academic interest in the internal relations among the family members. His discussion on the adultery of the left-behind wives, especially between wives and adopted sons, demonstrates the tension between migrants overseas and family members left behind. It shows that family members' aspirations and survival needs had threatened the original motivations of the male migrants that intended to raise the material and social status of the family. Szonyi recognizes that men and women had experienced differently during the migration process and suggests a gendered approach to study the Chinese migration history.⁷⁰ To fulfill this suggestion, more investigations on women's experiences during the migration process would be most interesting.

Conjugal separation in migration is well-recognized in previous studies on Chinese Diaspora in different parts of the world.⁷¹ However, they seldom provide a

⁶⁹ Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold*, chapter 4.

⁷⁰ Szonyi, "Mothers, Sons and Lovers".

⁷¹ Scholars, including prominent figures who studied overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia, have noticed the phenomenon of male domination of Chinese international migration and the impact of the imbalances in the sex ratio on the communities, as well as the phenomenon of separated marital life of migrant couples. See for example, Wu Ching Chao, "Chinese Immigration in the Pacific Area" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1929; Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms International, 2005); G. William Skinner, *Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, c1957); Victor Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965, 2nd ed); Jacques Amyot, *The Manila Chinese: Familism in the Philippine Environment* (Quezon City, Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University, 1973, 2nd ed.); C. Y. Choi, *Chinese migration and settlement in Australia* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1975); Yen Ching-hwang, *A Social History of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya 1800-1911*

discussion about the left-behind wives in the circumstances of conjugal separation. Since the late 1980s, some writings have started to pay attentions to the suffering of the wives. In general, Paul Siu, Sun Qian, Xiong Weixia, Pei Ying, Wang Lianmao and Madeline Hsu all have pointed out the unseen and heavy sufferings of these women.⁷² More specifically, Xiong Weixia states that the marital life of a left-behind wife was greatly affected by her husband's migration. She lived a miserable separated life, bearing a heavy burden of family affairs for most of her lonely life.⁷³ For the left-behind wives in Siyi, Bonnie Thornton Dill believes that they suffered "considerable sacrifice" and needed to adjust themselves for the separation.⁷⁴ Furthermore, Wang Lianmao observes that the *fankeshen* painfully pined for their husbands and experienced the feeling of sexual anxiety in the absence of their husbands. Wang suggests the need to study the inner world of these women.⁷⁵ Other scholars find that in the wives' search for self-survival, some of them committed adultery, and were punished by husbands and clansmen.⁷⁶ Michael Szonyi also reveals that some wives

(Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1986); Wang Gungwu, "Tonghua guijua yu huaqiaoshi" 同化, 归化与华侨史 (Assimilation, Integration, and History of the Overseas Chinese), in Ng and Chang, *Liangci shijie dazhan qijian zai yazhou zhi haiwai huaren*, pp. 11-23; Wu, *Dongnanya huaqiao tongshi*; Huang Zhisheng 黄滋生 and He Sibin 何思兵, *Feilubin huaqiaoshi* 菲律宾华侨史 (A History of the Overseas Chinese in the Philippines) (Guangzhou: Guangdong gaodeng jiaoyi chebanshe, 1987); Lin Yuanhui 林远辉 and Zhang Yinglong 张应龙, *Xinjiapo Malaixiya huaqiaoshi* 新加坡马来西亚华侨史 (A History of the Overseas Chinese in Singapore and Malaysia) (Guangzhou: Guangdong gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe, 1991); Huang Kunzhang 黄昆章, *Yinni huaqiao huaren shi (1950 zhi 2004 nian)* 印尼华侨华人史 (1950 至 2004 年) (A History of the Overseas Chinese in Indonesia, 1950-2004) (Guangzhou: Guangdong gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe, 2005).

⁷² Siu, *The Chinese Laundryman*; Sun, "Shilun qingdai minyue haiwai yimin de yingxiang", Sun, "Qingdai minyue qiaojuan jiating de bianhua"; Sin, *Qingdai huaqiao yu minyue shehui bianqian*; Wang, "Mingqing yilai minnan haiwai yimin jiating jieguo qianshi"; Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold*; Pei, "Huaqiao hunyin jiating xingtai chutan".

⁷³ Xiong Weixia 熊蔚霞, "Jindai minyue shehui ruogan wenti yanjiu" 近代闽粤侨乡社会若干问题研究 (Research on Several Problems of the Emigrant Communities' Society in Fujian and Guangdong in the Modern Era), (Master's thesis, Xiamen University, 1993), pp. 14-16.

⁷⁴ Dill, "Fictive Kin, Paper Sons, and Compadrazgo", p. 8.

⁷⁵ Wang, "Mingqing yilai minnan haiwai yimin jiating jieguo qianshi", pp. 14-15.

⁷⁶ Xiong Weixia 熊蔚霞 and Zheng Fuhong 郑甫弘, "Kangri zhanzheng shiqi minyue qiaoxiang de qiaojuan shenghuo" 抗日战争时期闽粤侨乡的侨眷生活 (The *Qiaojuan's* Lives in Emigrant Communities in Fujian and Guangdong during the Anti-Japanese War), *Nanyang wenti yanjiu yanjiu* 4 (1992), pp. 39-48; Xiong, "Jindai minyue shehui ruogan wenti yanjiu", p. 15; Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold*, Chapter 4.

committed adultery with locals even when there were no survival problems.⁷⁷ This can be understood as a way these women cope with the conjugal separation, which forms another direction towards understanding the left-behind women. Despite the separation, Paul Siu finds in his anthropological study of Chinese laundrymen in America who came from Siyi that many husbands and wives had maintained their marriages through letter communication.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, more discussions are needed to gain insight into the complex situation in order to understand the happiness, sadness, loneliness and helplessness of the wives who experienced the spousal separation as well as the strategies adopted by them to maintain their transnational marriages.

An examination of the population statistics of Taishan, Xinhui and Kaiping in 1964 and 1982 indicates a low divorce rate for the left-behind wives in Guangdong, whose husbands migrated to America in 1900-04 and 1935-39.⁷⁹ An investigation in Fenghuang village in Chaozhou, eastern Guangdong, also shows that a certain number of old women lived in poverty and remained single because their husbands who had migrated overseas did not maintain contact with their families.⁸⁰ As Li Minghuan's work shows, some women lost their sons after years of suffering, because their husbands returned to take their sons to Europe.⁸¹ These accounts seemingly suggest

⁷⁷ Szonyi, "Mothers, Sons and Lovers".

⁷⁸ Siu, *The Chinese Laundryman*.

⁷⁹ Fang Di 方地, "Cong renkou pucha ziliao zhong fanying chulai de qiaoxiang laonian funü qiaoshu tedian" 从人口普查资料中反映出来的侨乡老年妇女侨属特点 (The Features of the Old Women in Migrant Families in Emigrant Communities Reflected by the Population Census), in *Huaqiao huaren yanjiushi yanjiuji* 华侨华人史研究集 (1) (Paper Collection of Overseas Chinese Studies, Vol.1), eds. Zheng Min 郑民 and Liang Chuming 梁初鸣 (Beijing: Haiyang chubanshe, 1989), pp. 304-314.

⁸⁰ Zhou Daming 周大明, "Chaozhou Fenghuang cun shehui wenhua de bianqian" 潮州凤凰村社会文化的变迁 (The Socio-cultural Transformation of the Village of Fenghuang, Chaozhou), in *Huanan nongcun shehui wenhua yanjiu lunwenji* 华南农村社会文化研究论文集 (Compilation of Papers on the Socio-cultural Research of the Countryside in South China), ed. Zhuang Yingzhang 庄英章 (Taipei: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan minzuxue yanjiusuo (1998), pp. 194-195,199.

⁸¹ Li, *Ouzhou huaqiao huaren shi*, p. 476.

that the left-behind wives led life-long lonely lives after their husbands migrated. Such a hypothesis, however, need to be substantiated by more studies.

In other words, previous studies demonstrate the powerful impact of transnational migration on the two institutions of family and marriage. There is room for further studies on the profound effect of the changes within the family unit and marriage. Earlier studies have been largely male-centered discourses, neglecting the women's perspective and thus failing to examine migration history through the lens of both genders. One needs to push the question further to discuss the wives' family and marital lives, as well as their relations with overseas husbands, in-laws, natal family members and adopted sons. Moreover, how they dealt with the dual marriages of their husbands overseas and how they handled their marital situations in the absence of husbands are subjects waiting for more in-depth research.

Moreover, existing studies offer at times contradictory observations of the left-behind wives. Firstly, the left-behind wives were said to have benefited financially from remittances sent back to them by their husbands overseas. Chen Ta's study is a case in point. He observes that 81.4% of the income of 100 families of Overseas Chinese derived was from remittances. His research also shows that the families of Overseas Chinese had a different mode of living from that of the non-Overseas Chinese families because of the remittances. They lived in material comfort in terms of food, clothes and spent more on wedding, funeral and festivals.⁸² Other studies also suggest that a considerable percentage of family members of migrants were financially dependent on, and lived a luxurious life with, remittances.⁸³ This however,

⁸² Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*.

⁸³ For example, Pei, "Huaqiao hunyin jiating xingtai chutan"; Sun, "Shilun qingdai minyue haiwai yimin de yingxiang"; Xiong, "Jindai minyue shehui ruogan wenti yanjiu", pp. 26-28; Zheng Fuhong 郑甫弘 and Xiong Weixia 熊蔚霞, "Haiwai yimin yu jindai minyue qiaoxiang shehui guannian de bianqian" 海外移民与近代闽粤侨乡社会观念的变迁 (Migration Overseas and Transformation of Social Thoughts in Fujian and Guangdong in Modern Times), *Bagui qiaoshi* 2 (1995), pp. 41-45;

contradicts the descriptions of the wives' lives as being fraught with suffering. How we explain the contradicting experiences of the left-behind wives requires further exploration.

Secondly, some scholars tended to perceive the left-behind wives as traditional Chinese women who did not change under different situations. For instance, in Joyce Lebra and Joy Paulson's study of Chinese women in Southeast Asia, the left-behind women in China were subsumed under the bulk of Chinese women, without any differentiation. They were misunderstood as a traditional, oppressed and miserable group in a patriarchal society. These women were "weak, subordinate and subservient, exhorted to be dependent" to father, husband and son in Confucian China.⁸⁴ Similarly, in his outstanding study of the prostitutes in Singapore, James Warren considers that women in emigrant communities in China were exploited financially, physically, sexually and emotionally by the patriarchal society. They "had no say in family matters, except towards the end of her life as a mother-in-law or widow". The social system and women's position in family "foster a simple-minded subordinate".⁸⁵ The left-behind wives whose husbands migrated to the United States from Siyi, as discussed in Paul Siu's study, were those who kept asking for either money or the men to return home.⁸⁶ The women were portrayed as demanding and inconsiderate. Together with the perceived status of these women in the studies mentioned above,

Zheng and Xiong, "Kangri zhanzheng shiqi minyue qiaoxiang de qiaojuan shenghuo", pp. 39-48; Shen Yanqing 沈燕清, "Jinjiang guiqiao, qiaojuan zai qiaoxiang shehui he jingji bianqianzhong de diwei he zuoyong" 晋江归侨、侨眷在侨乡社会和经济变迁中的地位和作用 (The Status and Functions of the Jinjiang Returned Overseas Chinese and *Qiaojuan* towards the Emigrant Communities' Social and Economic Transition), (Master's thesis, Xiamen University, 1999); Glenn, "Split Household, Small Producer, and Dual Wage Earner"; Paul, *The Chinese Laundryman*; Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold*; Dill, "Fictive Kin, Paper Sons, and Compadrazgo"; McKeown, "Conceptualizing Chinese Disaporas, 1842 to 1949"; Szonyi, "Mothers, Sons and Lovers".

⁸⁴ Lebra and Paulson, *Chinese Women in Southeast Asia*, p. 1.

⁸⁵ Warren, *Ah Ku and Karayuki-san*, p. 29.

⁸⁶ Paul, *The Chinese Laundryman*.

Chinese left-behind women before 1949 were generally portrayed as dependent, rich, oppressed, demanding and inconsiderate women.

Thirdly, contradicting the above-mentioned perception of their dependency, some writings also found that women had been somewhat empowered by migration and they played important roles in the family, especially in consideration of the domestic and production work of women in migrant families. Chen Ta and later scholars find that women became the de facto household heads of the families and took charge of the family affairs and outside affairs such as family investments.⁸⁷ Chen finds that some wives managed the families and made decisions on “important questions having to do with business, education, marriage and religious observances”, as well as other decisions that required considerable judgment.⁸⁸ Sun Qian argues that women improved their status and reduced their dependency on men when they managed problems in daily life which were usually done by men. He argues that within the dual family, the wives remained at home to care for the old and children and family affairs. Women raised their power of controlling the family expenses and functioned as decision makers in matters such as food and clothing. They became “true” heads of their respective households. The control of males on them was obviously lax.⁸⁹ Specifically, Wang Lianmao states that *fankeshen* played significant roles within and outside of the family. They cared for parents-in-laws and children,

⁸⁷ Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*; Sun, “Shilun qingdai min yue haiwai yimin de yingxiang”, p. 62; Pei, “Huaqiao hunyin jiating xingtai chutan”; Xiao, “Yige zhide kaitou de yuandi - tan huaqiaohuaren funu wenti de yanjiu”, p. 18; Zheng and Xiong, “Kangri zhangzheng shiqi minyue qiaoxiang de qiaojuan shenghuo”; Szonyi, “Mothers, Sons and Lovers”; Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold*; Zheng Tianhua 郑天华 and Wu Xingci 吴行赐, “Yipi you jiazhi de huaqiaoshi ziliao - Taishan jiefang qian chuban de zazhi zukan pingjia” 一批有价值的华侨史资料—台山解放前出版的杂志、族刊评价 (Valuable Documents for the Study on Overseas Chinese History - Evaluation of Magazines and Clan Publications Published before the Liberation of China), in *Huaqiao huaren lishi luncong* 华侨华人历史论丛 (1) (Discussions on the History of Overseas Chinese), ed. Zhongshan daxue dongnanya yanjiusuo, pp. 214-215; Woon Yuen-fong, “From Mao to Deng: Life Satisfaction among Rural Women in an Emigrant Community in South China”, *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 25 (January 1991), pp. 139-169.

⁸⁸ Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, p. 123.

⁸⁹ Sun, “Qingdai minyue qiaojuan jiating de bianhua”, p. 72.

ensuring the continuation of the family line. They did housework and labored in fields, and frugally managed the family. At the same time, they fostered harmonious relationships with villagers. Moreover, some of them also took charge of the family's investments, which was in line with Michael Szonyi's findings.⁹⁰ Wang's words suggest that the *fankeshen* carried much of the burden of the migrant families, playing significant roles within families in the absence of their husbands. However, how the *fankeshen* played these roles was inadequately explained. To what extent they gained their independence and autonomy has yet to be investigated.

It is noticeable that most previous studies focused on the history before either the Second World War or 1949 when the PRC was founded. Chen Ta's study ends in the mid-1930s. Sun Qian and Wang Lianmao's study focuses on the Ming and Qing dynasties, while Madeline Hsu's work ends before 1943 and Michael Szonyi's terminates before 1949.

There are only a few writings on the left-behind wives after 1949, but most of them do not distinguish the wives from the bulk of *qiaojuan*. These writings highlight generally the concern on the lives of *qiaojuan* under the control of a new government. For example, a few writings on domestic Overseas Chinese policies in 1949-1976 show that the *qiaojuan* experienced complicated political lives because of the changing political environments and party-state policies. They were called on to change their lifestyle and they suffered persecution at the hands of local communist cadres, especially during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976).⁹¹ Several writings on

⁹⁰ Wang, "Mingqing yilai minnan haiwai yimin jiating jieguo qianshi", p. 15.

⁹¹ See for example, Stephen Fitzgerald, *China and the Overseas Chinese: A Study of Peking's Changing Policy, 1949-1970* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 1972); Glen D. Peterson, "Socialist China and the *Huaqiao*: the Transition to Socialism in the Overseas Chinese Areas of Rural Guangdong, 1949-1956", *Modern China* 14, 3 (July 1988), pp. 309-335; Zhuang Guotu, "The Policies of the Chinese Government towards Overseas Chinese (1949-1966)", in *The Chinese Diaspora: Selected Essays* (vol.1), eds. Wang Ling-Chi and Wang Gungwu (Singapore: Times Academic Press, 1998), pp. 14-18; Zheng Fuhong 郑甫弘, "Wenge shiqi de guonei qiaowu yu guiqiao qiaojuan

migration history and *qiaoxiang* in Fujian in the 1950s present a new face of the *qiaoxiang* and the changes of old customs of superstition, waste and dependency on remittances among the *qiaojuan*, as well as the economic activities of the *qiaojuan* in agriculture before the mid-1950s.⁹² Woon Yuen-fong surveys Guangdong *qiaojuan* women in the Communist era in a new socio-economic environment and under the changing government policies in different stages of China's political development. She analyses in particular the life satisfaction of rural women in Kaiping, in the western part of the Pearl River Delta region, as well as the experiences of the left-behind women in emigrant communities. Woon considers that during most of the era, the left-behind women in Chikan town "bore a heavy burden in the domestic sphere and yet were in an inferior position in the public sphere". They were not liberated through economic or political participation.⁹³ The women "suffered more than other rural women from persecution and the fear of persecution".⁹⁴ While the writings mentioned above provide a general profile of the *qiaojuan* women, other questions such as how the lives of the women were changed or how they interacted with their socio-political environments may reveal some more complex aspects of women's lives in the Maoist era.

Since the end of the Cultural Revolution, Woon's study asserts that the *qiaojuan* women were restored to the lifestyles they enjoyed in the Republican era. She also argues that, compared with their counterparts in other parts of China, the *qiaojuan* women "have been much more dramatically affected by the transition from the Mao to the Deng model of economic development and by the difference in the

shenghuo" 文革时期的国内侨务与归侨侨眷生活 (On the Affairs Concerning Overseas Chinese and the Lives of Returned Overseas Chinese and *Qiaojuan* during the Cultural Revolution), *Nanyang wenti yanjiu* 南洋问题研究 (Southeast Asian Affairs) 2 (April 1995), pp. 40-47.

⁹² Lin, Zhuang and Gui, "Fujian Jinjiang zhuanqu huaqiaoshi diaocha baogao", pp. 123-127; Zhang, Chen, Gan and Chen, "Fujian zhuyao qiaoqu nongcun jingji tanlu – qiaoxiang diaocha zhiyi".

⁹³ Woon, "From Mao to Deng", p. 156.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

Overseas Chinese policies of these two regimes” due to their extensive Overseas Chinese connections.⁹⁵ After 1978, these women changed their previously unfavorable position to becoming beneficiaries of Deng Xiaoping’s new Overseas Chinese policy and open-door economy. They led a materially satisfying life and once again lived as they did before 1949. They did not occupy a productive role and were waiting for their men in Hong Kong or Macao to make enough money for the family, or looking forward to successful processing of their applications for family reunification overseas. They caused envy and admiration among local women in non-*qiaojuan* households. Matching their daughters to either an Overseas Chinese or a member of a *qiaojuan* household was believed to be a way to share the good fortune of the latter.⁹⁶

The changes of the *qiaoxiang* in Fujian during the Deng era have also attracted academic interest in their economic, social and cultural development.⁹⁷ In particular, Shen Yanqing studies the *guiqiao* and *qiaojuan*, who formed 75% of the Jinjiang population presently. She explores the historical impact of migration on two groups of people, namely *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* through remittances, and concludes that they were abandoning their consumptive habits and involving themselves in production work in a socialist society during 1949-1978. Since the late 1970s, they contributed to the development in Jinjiang by investing the remittances they had received in local society and economy. They developed modern enterprises in the three forms of Sino-foreign joint venture, cooperative business and exclusively foreign-owned enterprises

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 167.

⁹⁶ Woon, “From Mao to Deng”.

⁹⁷ On state of the field, see Li, *Fujian qiaoxiang diaocha*, p. 16.

(*sanzi qiye* 三资企业), taking advantage of their overseas connections with relatives living in Hong Kong, Macao and foreign countries.⁹⁸

Woon and Shen's above-mentioned works suggest that the left-behind wives sought economic improvement through different approaches ever since the late 1970s. Woon tends to look at them through the conventional perception and categorizes them as dependants, confined and inactive women after 1978 in comparison to the female wage earners and the farm women. In contrast, Shen's study demonstrates that the left-behind wives in Jinjiang had in fact gradually changed their old lifestyles, beginning since 1949 to shed their dependency on remittances and lead independent lives. However, she put *guiqiao* and *qiaojuan* in one monolithic group. More efforts are needed to differentiate them from each other and view the left-behind wives as a group in their own right.

The inadequacy of existing research about the lives of the left-behind wives after 1949 has prevented us from understanding the impact of migration on these women throughout their life course. Although the founding of the PRC in 1949 virtually led to a stoppage of overseas migration, the impact of migration on the left-behind wives did not end under the new socio-political environment, as the present study of the *fankeshen* will show.

Although the topic of Chinese left-behind wives has been understudied in the existing literature on Overseas Chinese, *qiaoxiang* and Chinese women, multi-disciplinary studies on left-behind women in other parts of the world are inspiring and refreshing. For example, studies on contemporary South African women show the

⁹⁸ Shen, "Jinjiang *guiqiao* *qiaojuan* zai *qiaoxiang* shehui he jingji bianqianzhong de diwei he zuoyong"; Shen Yanqing 沈燕清, "Guiqiao *qiaojuan* yu jinjiang xiangzhen qiye" 归侨、侨眷与晋江乡镇企业 (Returned Overseas Chinese, *Qiaojuan* and Town-ownership Enterprises in Jinjiang), in *Zhongguo qiaoxiang yanjiu* 中国侨乡研究 (New Studies on Chinese Overseas and China), eds. Zhuang Guotu 庄国土, Tanaka Kyoko 田中恭子, Zhao Wenliu 赵文骝, and Huang Cen 黄岑 (Xiamen: Xiamen University Press, 2000), pp. 172-190.

transition of the women's roles and lives under the impact of international migration. Four arguments on this topic have attempted to interpret the impact of migration on the women.⁹⁹ The first states that "economic inequality puts women in a position of economic and social dependence on men"; the second counter-hypothesizes that "women actually gain greater economic and social freedom through male labour migration"; the third one argues that "in a situation of oscillating migration, the migrant and his wife are mutually dependent, with each partner needing the other: the man needs a home to which he can return and children who will be recognized as his so that they can support him in his old age, while the woman relies on the man to supplement her farming income."¹⁰⁰ The fourth, presented by Barbara B. Brown in her study on the impact of male labour migration on women in Botswana in southern Africa, argues that the mutual dependence "fails to perceive the reality of different levels of dependence" and ignores "the fact that family ties and economic relationships have been so profoundly altered that it is no longer possible simply to consider the women and the migrant men as a unit".¹⁰¹ She provides a detailed study on the changes of marriage patterns, family relationships and productive activities of women in contemporary Botswana to show the impact of migration on women. She concludes that women in Botswana engage in a variety of economic activities such as farming, raising children, caring for their parents and working for wages, in order to care for themselves and their families in their isolated circumstances. However, "women's work produces less than the work that men do, partly as result of a culturally derived division of labour and partly due to government policies."¹⁰²

⁹⁹ Brown, "The Impact of Male Labour Migration on Women in Botswana".

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., pp. 386-387.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 387.

¹⁰² Ibid., pp. 386-387.

In terms of Chinese left-behind wives, parallels with the first three arguments are discernible, that the women were dependent on the remittances for a living, and became de facto heads of households taking charge of family affairs because of the absence of men, or they support each other in the family economic unit, which has been discussed above.

The migration brought profound effect on gender relationships. Brown finds that within the family, the ties of support and cooperation between men and women have weakened. Moreover, she points out the profound impact of migration on both men and women respectively, that migration “became a necessity to insure the economic survival of the family, even when it undermined the family. Consequently, both women’s and men’s lives became structured by migrancy [migration] patterns.”¹⁰³ However, a left-behind woman’s status in the migration process needed to be carefully considered, because “women’s relationship to migrant labour is largely mediated through men, and women’s social and economic position has become less secure and more isolated, as their ties to these men have become more tenuous.”¹⁰⁴

Brown’s study provides a useful guide to the present study. She focuses on how left-behind woman dealt with what the men left on their shoulders within the local social setting, taking account into the culturally derived division of labour in local society and the governmental policies. The study thus demonstrates the profound effects of migration on women and the changing gender roles in Botswana society during the migration process. A study on left-behind wives of the Nanyang migrants also needs to take into consideration the Chinese social settings including its cultural, political and social systems, focusing on women as active and independent agents

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 387.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

who were involved in a variety of activities, to cope with the responsibilities and roles left to them by their migrant husbands.

Together with Brown's research, a gendered perspective which has developed since the late 1980s helps to look into the impact of migration on gender relations and gender roles in migration process. On this issue, Delia Davin argues that migration has the potential to affect gender relationships and gender roles in many complex ways".¹⁰⁵ In this study, how the transnational migration has affected the gender roles and gender relations is an important angle.

Writings on the impact of migration on Egyptian and Turkish women further complicate the picture by showing that left-behind women in different categories of families, such as nuclear family and extended family, received different profound effects from migration of husbands.¹⁰⁶ Also, case studies suggest that there was diversity among the ways the "left-behind" women were affected by the migration of the men, and also differing extents of their independence and autonomy in different social settings.¹⁰⁷ This further indicates a variety of experiences of left-behind women in different environments. In this sense, this study on Chinese left-behind wives will definitely provide the scholarly world with useful accounts of Chinese experiences.

Research Questions

This study examines the left-behind wives of the Nanyang migrants in Quanzhou at three levels. At the first level, it will re-examine and create a new history of the migration from the southeastern coastal area of China. By studying the roles of

¹⁰⁵ Delia Davin, "Gender and Migration in China", in *Village Inc.: Chinese Rural Society in the 1990s*, eds. Flemming Christiansen and Zhang Junzou (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998), p. 230.

¹⁰⁶ Brink, "The Effect of Emigration of Husbands on the Status of Their Wives"; Abadan-Unat, "International Labour Migration and Its Effect upon Women's Occupational and Family Roles".

¹⁰⁷ Linda and Smith, *Women in Waiting in the Westward Movement*; Abadan-Unat, "International Labour Migration and Its Effect upon Women's Occupational and Family Roles"; Nelson, "The Women Who Have Left and Those Who Have Stayed behind"; Laughlin, "Missing Men?".

the *fankeshen* in the migration history from a gendered perspective, migration history thus becomes rightfully engendered. It is not only about the intricate and interwoven relationships between men and women, but also a history of women as an independent agent in the migrant society. The study explores the impact of migration on ordinary women's lives through individual woman's experiences during the migration process. Moreover, it further explores women's knowledge, abilities and feelings which had been developed in the process. Correspondingly, it investigates how gender roles and relations within migrant families had been re-structured through the migration.

At the second level, following the Overseas Chinese or *qiaoxiang* studies which discuss the Overseas Chinese from the perspective of their contribution to nation building and the development of local society, the present study expands the issue and examines the socio-political status of the left-behind wives by looking at policies affecting them at different levels of the Nationalist and Communist governments. The study of the left-behind wives and politics highlights the importance and sensitivity of *qiaojuan* politics in a Nationalist and Communist state and its impact on them. It also shows the interactions between the state, *fankeshen* and male migrants.

At the third level, by focusing on the lives of the women, especially through their self-evaluation and recollection, the study provides an inner history of the mentality of ordinary women in Chinese society, including their pressures, motives, feelings and values. In other words, the present work presents an account of women history at the psychological and emotional levels. Consequently, the discussion carves gender into the history of Chinese migration and makes it a multifaceted history.

There are several sets of key questions the present study attempts to answer. Firstly, what were the complex interactions between the male migrants and the

fankeshen in the international migration process? What was the impact of the husband's migration on the wives' marital, family and socio-economic lives? What adaptation strategies did the wives take to deal with a variety of situations when husbands migrated? What feelings and self-perceptions did they have? How did migration re-construct the gender role of husbands and wives? What significance do the *fankeshen* have in the history of migration? What were their statuses in Chinese history?

Secondly, what is the political status of the *fankeshen* in the formulation of state policies towards migration and *qiaojuan*? How were they represented? What was the interplay among the wives, the migrant husbands and the governments at different administrative levels? How did the *fankeshen* react to the changes in political environments? What position did they occupy in the state if their interests conflicted with those of their husbands?

Thirdly and more specifically, what did the women experience in the complex historical development during the 1940s which witnessed nationalist movements, Japanese invasion and the Pacific War? How did they strive for survival after 1949 when they faced a new socio-economic and political environment of Communist China, the decolonized Southeast Asia, and the Cold War? What efforts had they made to migrate to transcend their spatial boundaries and make a living for their families in Hong Kong in the post-1949 era?

Methodology & Data

As discussed, this study on left-behind wives of the Nanyang migrants in Quanzhou requires an interdisciplinary approach. Apart from the traditional angles of socio-economic and political history, approaches to contemporary gender studies and “history from below” will be applied.

It is not easy to uncover and constitute the history of the left-behind wives of the Nanyang migrants, giving the paucity of writings and records on the women. Thus the present author has to rely on a range of sources including archival documents, local gazetteers, literary and historical documents (*wenshi ziliao* 文史资料) published by the Political Consultative Committee of the People's Government of the People's Republic of China in cities and counties, newspapers, periodicals, oral history, and personal writings. Since these sources inadvertently present a biased point of view, they would have to be used with great care, evaluation and discretion.

In Fujian Provincial Archives and Jinjiang Municipal Archives, the present author found archival sources which contained rich information about the people in emigrant households and the different levels of the government's policies towards the Overseas Chinese and their families in the entire period of Republic of China (hereafter ROC) and PRC. Special documents covered the governmental efforts to provide them relief during the Pacific War and others focused on the implementation of the 1950 Marriage Law in the 1950s. At the same time, two archives provide other research materials including investigation documents on the *qiaojuan*, the *qiaoxiang*, and relevant reports from the Overseas Chinese Affairs offices at the province, district, county, town, and village levels. Although archival documents are biased and incomplete, the official reports provided inner pictures on the government's conceptualization of the *qiaojuan*, revealed its methods of policy implementation, and reflected a general situation of the women in emigrant communities. They allow the present author to trace the position of the women in political sphere and the complicated implementation of concrete policies and measures.

Local gazetteers and *wenshi ziliao* constitute important research materials on the women because they provided useful sources dealing with emigration and the

political, economic, social, and cultural issues of local society in the cities and counties of Quanzhou. The *wenshi ziliao* are somehow inaccurate and incomplete because they were written some time after the events based on the individuals' memories. However, for the women who were ignored largely by the mass of writers, the *wenshi ziliao* are particularly important because they provide detailed accounts on the women's activities. For instance, the women's suffering as a result of the severance of the remittances and their struggle for survival during the Pacific War were described in details and thus provide possibility to constitute the women's history during the war.

Newspapers published by governments, organizations or individuals have become significant resources for researchers who study Republican history, although they themselves also contains bias, inaccuracies and distortions.¹⁰⁸ In Fujian, particularly during the decades from the 1930s to the 1940s, many local newspapers existed. Newspapers such as *Quanzhou ribao* 泉州日报 (Quanzhou Daily), *Minsheng bao* 民声报 (Voices of the People, renamed *Minsheng ribao* 民声日报 later), *Fujian ribao* 福建日报 (Fujian Daily), *Fujian xinwen* 福建新闻 (Fujian News), and *Nanguang ribao* 南光日报 (Nanguang Daily), *Xiamen dabao* 厦门大报 (Xiamen Newspaper), *Xiamen minbao* 厦门民报 (The Newspaper of Xiamen People), etc. were produced in Overseas Chinese's hometowns – Quanzhou, Zhangzhou and Xiamen. They reported serious news in China and abroad which demonstrates that they were not tabloid newspapers. These newspapers are crucial because they contained many reports focusing on the local events in the emigrant communities, especially the left-behind wives' activities. Besides, they included the *fankeshen*'s

¹⁰⁸ The *Twentieth-Century China* has a special issue focusing on newspaper as subject and source in Republican-era China, see *Twentieth-Century China*, Vol.31, no. 2 (April 2006).

announcements of the severance of their marital relationship or family relationship. Although some reports were written in a novelist's style and had to be used carefully, most of the resources including both the reports and announcements documented the activities and view of the *fankeshen*, revealed the communities' overview on the women, and described the interactions between the women and other people. On the other hand, they provided rich information about migrant households and migrant marriages, as well as the politics, economy, and culture of the emigrant communities, which have remained largely untapped until now. The women's divorce announcements especially provide a rare insider's view of the migrant marriage and the women's relationships with their husbands.

The above mentioned newspaper and other newspapers such as *Zhongyang ribao* 中央日报 (福建版) (Central Government Daily, Fujian edition), *Nanfang ribao* 南方日报 (South Daily), *Fujian shibao* 福建时报 (Fujian Times), *Dongnan ribao* 东南日报 (Dongnan Daily), etc. also chronicled the provincial government work and attitudes towards the people in emigrant households, reflecting the position of the *qiaojuan* in Fujian and describing the political, economic and cultural condition[s] in Fujian at that time. There are also newspapers such as *Fujian qiaoxiangbao* 福建侨乡报 (Newspaper of Fujian Emigrant Communities) (later renamed *Qiaoxiang bao* 侨乡报) and other newspapers which were published in the 1950s. Although these newspapers contained government propaganda, they provide a crucial resource for this study. For instance, reports on the propaganda campaign and socio-economic development of emigrant communities in the 1950s revealed the women's activities, pressures and struggles during the new regime.

There are periodicals which directly focused on Overseas Chinese and governments' policies towards Overseas Chinese affairs, such as *Minqiao* 闽侨 (Overseas Chinese of Fujian), *Fujian yu huaqiao* 福建与华侨 (Fujian and Overseas Chinese), *Minzheng yuekan* 闽政月刊 (Journal of Political Affairs of Fujian), and *Xin Fujian* 新福建 (New Fujian) etc. Their articles are directly related to impact of the emigration on the Fujian government and people. For sources that deal with the PRC era, periodicals including *Qiaoxun* 侨讯 (Bulletin of Overseas Chinese Affairs), *Fujian qiaowu gongzuo tongxun* 福建侨务工作通讯 (Bulletin of Overseas Chinese Affairs Work in Fujian) which provided large quantities of research materials for the study. These periodicals, especially *Qiaoxun* and *Fujian qiaowu gongzuo tongxun*, are also inaccurate and distorted because they are media tools of the authorities. Nevertheless, they described the official policy and process of policy implementation towards the women, showed the government's perspective of the political and socio-economic position of the women, and gave information on the women's activities and experiences.

Oral history has been one effective tool for researchers who have difficulties in locating resources and hearing the voice of the marginalized, especially women.¹⁰⁹ To cite Judy Yung's words, oral history "allows ordinary folks ...to speak for themselves, fill in historiographical gaps, and challenge stereotypes, as well as validate their lives",¹¹⁰ despite "the drawbacks of faulty or selective memory and

¹⁰⁹ For the discussion on oral history as a method for women history study, see for example, Judy Yung, "Giving Voice to Chinese American Women: Oral History Methodology", in *Unbound Voices: A Documentary History of Chinese Women in San Francisco*, Judy Yung (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 511-26. Reprinted in *The Chinese Overseas, Vol. II*, ed. Liu Hong (New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 341-355.

¹¹⁰ Yung, "Giving Voice to Chinese American Women: Oral History Methodology", p. 341.

retrospective interpretations”.¹¹¹ In this study, In-depth interview were conducted with 20 left-behind wives including 19 *fankeshen* in their villages and towns in the cities of Quanzhou, Jinjiang and Shishi and 1 left-behind wife in Zhangzhou in November 2004. They were introduced to the author by village officials or officials from Overseas Chinese affairs office (such as Lin D, Wu Z, Chen ZL, Wu SM, Lü SH, Cai XX, Nee Wu, Cai CL, and Chen XL), by the author’s friends (such as Chen LD, Xu XC, Yang LQ, Xu WQ and Lu Y), or by the interviewed *fankeshen* themselves (such as Hong Q, Wu F, Xu LD, and Yang SH). These women were aged from their mid-70s to one hundred years at the time of the interview. They cover a range of the kinds of *fankeshen*, including the *fankeshen* who did not see their husbands since they left for overseas after their wedding ceremony, the *fankeshen* who had seen their husbands who returned at least once in their lives, and those who had seen their husbands in Hong Kong or their husbands’ host countries. With reference to their remittance income, they covered women who received remittances rarely, irregularly or regularly. Most *fankeshen* were interviewed at their home. The language of communication was Hokkien dialect and Chinese Mandarin. The duration of each interview lasted from about half an hour to ten hours, with some of them being interviewed a second time due to the reason that their experiences were fascinating and historically important. Most of them were willing to talk about their lives and views on their experiences and environments. As my study indicates, oral history is one crucial resource for this study. It not only give the women opportunities to speak for themselves, but also reveals their inner stories – their feelings, values, pressures or opinions about themselves and their circumstances.

¹¹¹ Judy Yung, *Unbound Feet: A Social History of Chinese Women in San Francisco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, c1995), p. 11.

In-depth interviews were also conducted with other men and women (including 10 men and 4 women) at their homes or offices. They aged from their twenties to seventies. Each interview lasted from about half an hour to eight hours. The language of communication was Chinese Mandarin and Hokkien dialect. Most of the men had known about the migration history of Quanzhou. They were returned Overseas Chinese, previous or current cadres who worked on Overseas Chinese affairs. Some of them had also published their observations, research on local history or novels on the *fankeshen*. The rest are 3 family members (1 man and two women) of the *fankeshen* and 1 female returned overseas Chinese from the Philippines. Their narratives provide the perspectives of the local people on the *fankeshen* and information on the unrecorded experiences of the women, and indicate the women's relationship with other people in their communities.

Although the present author realized that there will be few personal writings or memoirs by the *fankeshen* who were mostly illiterate, she luckily located one copy of Lin Juzhen's autobiography and the biography of Lin Guipan. Personal writings of the *fankeshen* are awaiting further discovery. This study has already benefited from the rare sources. For instance, Lin Juzhen's autobiography reveals the inner feeling and self-valuation of Lin towards her life and her relationship with her husband, contains citation of private letters between her and her husband, and records the crucial roles of the letters in their respective lives when they were apart.

Scope and Content

In looking at the intersections of migration and left-behind wives of the Nanyang migrants in Quanzhou, the discussion begins with the historical background and then progressively moves towards the experiences of the *fankeshen* before and after the Pacific War, starting with the impact of the husbands' migration on their

marital lives and their variety of strategies to cope with the situation, moving to their expanding socio-economic activities and to their political position.

Following this introduction chapter, Chapter II focuses on why the *fankeshen* were left behind, and the factors affecting the women's non-migration are examined. This examination provides a historical backdrop of their lives.

Chapter III deals with the binding tie of marriages between the *fankeshen* and their husbands overseas and the women's isolated lives as a result of the special marriage pattern. Women's suffering from the separation is highlighted.

Chapter IV looks at the *fankeshen*'s strategies and wisdom in their dealings with the conjugal separation in the changing internal and international settings. Women's autonomy within the marriage is discussed. The various experiences of the *fankeshen* and outcomes of their marriages are traced to investigate the impact of migration on the women's lives at a micro-level.

Chapter V focuses on the *fankeshen*'s survival strategies and discusses changing gender roles and relations within migrant family unit and the women's empowerment. The years after the outbreak of the Pacific War are highlighted. The discussion traces to their adaptation to changes during the years of the transition to socialism and investigate the *fankeshen*'s experiences in Hong Kong.

Chapter VI analyses the *fankeshen*'s reactions to the shifting state policies at different levels in the context of interactions between the state and society. It scrutinizes the *qiaojuan* discourse, discusses Fujian province's implementation of protection & relief policies during the Pacific War and the implementation of the 1950 Marriage Law in Quanzhou in 1950-58.

A concluding chapter summarizes the discussion and provides suggestions on the study of the history of Chinese left-behind wives.

Chapter II

Reasons for Being Left-behind

Throughout the centuries of overseas migration, most of the *fankeshen* could only live on in the villages and towns, longingly awaiting their husbands' return visits and remittances. This chapter explains why the *fankeshen* did not migrate to join their husbands even after women were allowed to in theory by the Chinese government since 1860.¹¹² It sheds light on the internal and external factors which affected their lives, thus providing a backdrop to their history.

Despite the loosening of state control over women migration since the late nineteenth century, research shows that female migration to Southeast Asia was still relatively insignificant even by the 1920s, compared with male migrants.¹¹³ Although the 1920s onwards saw more female immigrants arriving from China, large numbers of the wives of the migrants in Southeast Asia “chose” to stay at home. As mentioned in the first chapter, Fujian provincial government's investigation in 1939 showed that only 3.41% of migrant households migrated with all the family members. Why did these wives remain at home when an increasing number of them had left?

The phenomenon of some people electing not to follow others in migration despite sharing similar circumstances has aroused much academic interest since the 1950s. In his pioneering study of a topological understanding of migration, William Petersen notes that “sometimes the basic problem about migration is not why people migrate out, but rather why not”.¹¹⁴ Recently, this question has been raised again.¹¹⁵

¹¹² For the change in Chinese government policy, see Fan, “Yunxu yu yanjin”, pp. 67-69.

¹¹³ Lim, “Chinese Female Immigration into the Straits Settlements, 1860-1901”; Tan, “Locating Chinese Women in Malaysia History”; Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, pp. 85, 387.

¹¹⁴ William Petersen, “A General Typology of Migration”, *American Sociological Review* 23, 3 (1958), p. 5, cited in *Theories of Migration*, ed. Robin Cohen (Cheltenham, UK; Brookfield, Vt., US: E. Elgar, c1996), p. 258.

Scholars who study the left-behind women have provided some clues to it. For instance, Nermin Abadan-Unat attributes the non-migration of the left-behind wives in Turkey to the increasing restriction and control of international migration in the twentieth century, especially after the Second World War.¹¹⁶ Evelyn Nakano Glenn further points out that the large differences in the level of economic development between the receiving and sending regions and legal/administrative barriers were factors underpinning the separation of families.¹¹⁷

What led to the phenomenon of large numbers of Chinese wives being left behind in China during the processes of international migration? Very recently, Sucheta Mazumdar raised the question of “why did the women not come?” in her comparative study of the left-behind women in Siyi, Guangdong, China, and those in India whose husbands had migrated to the United States.¹¹⁸ Although the institutional barriers was invoked as the chief reason behind the scarcity of Chinese women migrating to the United States, Adam McKeown and Sucheta Mazumdar’s research demonstrate that the Chinese Exclusion laws “played little role in creating a gender imbalance among Chinese immigrants in the United States”.¹¹⁹ Adopting the women’s perspective, Mazumdar further argues that it was more due to “the economic system” that “built around male migration and female domestic labour” to explain the

¹¹⁵ See for example, Judith M. Brown and Rosemary Foot, “Introduction: Migration – The Asian Experience”, in *Migration: The Asian Experience*, eds. Judith M. Brown and Rosemary Foot (New York, N.Y.: St. Martin's Press in association with St. Antony's College, Oxford, 1994), pp. 2-3; Andreas Demuth, “Some Conceptual Thoughts on Migration Research”, in *Theoretical and Methodological Issues in Migration Research: Interdisciplinary, Intergenerational and International Perspectives*, ed. Biko Agozino (Aldershot, Hants.: Ashgate, 2000), p. 24; Mazumdar, “What Happened to the Women?”, pp. 58-74.

¹¹⁶ Abadan-Unat, “International Labour Migration and Its Effect upon Women’s Occupational and Family Roles”.

¹¹⁷ Glenn, “Split Household, Small Producer, and Dual Wage Earner”, p. 76.

¹¹⁸ Mazumdar, “What Happened to the Women?”, p. 58.

¹¹⁹ Adam McKeown, “Transnational Chinese Families and Chinese Exclusion, 1875-1943”, *Journal of American Ethnic History* 18, 2 (Winter 1999), p.78; For Mazumdar’s research, see Mazumdar, “What Happened to the Women?”.

phenomenon.¹²⁰ The women were heavily needed to work “in the fields; in the cattle sheds, pigpens, and chicken coops; in the silk filatures and markets; in the kitchen and at the loom”.¹²¹ Their work sustained the households, and “if the women left, the entire household collapsed”.¹²² In addition, “control of their labour by the husbands’ families”, “immigration restrictions”, and “other reasons” also explain the small numbers of Chinese women migrating to the United States.¹²³ As a result, “the migration of women along with their men was the exception rather than the rule in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries”.¹²⁴

The findings mentioned above provide illuminating insights into the present discussion on the relative paucity of Chinese women who had migrated to Southeast Asia. Nevertheless, the investigation of the somewhat complex question requires the examination of a multitude of historical, cultural, economic and political factors around the women’s non-migration. At the same time, the nature of China-Southeast Asia migration itself, the transnational networks across the South China Sea, the women’s individual circumstances, and possible institutional barriers to the women’s migration also require careful examination, although it has been noticed that the exclusion laws played little roles in Chinese women’s migration to the United States.

Sojourning and Transnational Nature of Migration

To explore why the *fankeshen* were left-behind, one should to look at the practice of China-Southeast Asia migration itself. Firstly, the original intention of most of the migrants was only to make their fortunes in their host places rather than to settle down overseas. It is well-recognized that the bulk of Chinese migrants to

¹²⁰ Mazumdar, “What Happened to the Women?”, p. 60.

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 71.

¹²² Ibid., p. 65.

¹²³ Ibid., p. 71.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

Southeast Asia, including those from Quanzhou before 1949, were sojourners in the sense that they did not plan to settle down in another country and were ready to return when it was possible. Wang Gungwu argues that this is because, in the Chinese experience, they “have never viewed migration as a voluntary act but rather as a great evil or calamity to be avoided, something that would occur only when rendered absolutely necessary by war or natural disaster”.¹²⁵ The migrants perceived themselves as “being only temporarily absent from China” when they were overseas.¹²⁶ They travelled to and fro between the host countries and China during their sojourning years. It was only after 1949 that the migrants faced challenges to their sojourns by the Communist takeover of China and the decolonization and subsequent independence of the host nations who began to demand their political loyalties.¹²⁷ Since they saw their departure as only temporary, it is reasonable that many of them preferred to leave their wives behind to maintain the families during their absence.

Secondly, the transnational China-Southeast migration networks allowed the migrants to retain connections with their home families, local society and even the state. Tan Chee Beng remarks that the concept of transnationalism, a term used by Nina Click Schiller, Linda Basch and Cristina Blanc-Szanton to refer to “the process by which immigrants build social fields that link together their country of origin and their country of settlement”, is suitable for use to explain the connection between the nineteenth-century Chinese sojourners and their families back home.¹²⁸ By sending

¹²⁵ Wang Gungwu, “Sojourning: The Chinese Experience in Southeast Asia”, in *Sojourners and Settlers: Histories of Southeast Asia and the Chinese: in Honour of Jennifer Cushman*, ed., Anthony Reid with the assistance of Kristine Alilunas Rodgers. St. Leonards (New South Wales: Asian Studies Association of Australia in association with Allen and Unwin, 1996), p. 3.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹²⁷ Wang, “Patterns of Chinese Migration in Historical Perspective”; Wang, “Sojourning”.

¹²⁸ Tan Chee Beng 陈志明, “Guojia jiangjie huaren wenhua yu rentong” 国家疆界、华人文化与认同 (National Border, Chinese Culture and Identity), paper presented at the International Conference on

remittances to their relatives who remained at home, the early migrants built transnational networks between themselves and China, which led to profound impact on home communities and the Chinese state.¹²⁹

Transnational flows of people, remittances, information were frequent in the process of international migration between Quanzhou and Southeast Asia. In Quanzhou, an emigrant village (which is also called as a *qiaoxiang*) was a global village, where migrants remained in frequent contact with their home family members through visits, remittances, correspondence, oral messages passed through go-betweens, information transmission via newspapers, and so on.¹³⁰ The various agents including Remittances Receiving and Sending Bureaus, the networks among the villagers in Quanzhou and migrants in host countries, and overseas Chinese associations, served the needs of the migrants overseas and their families in China.

As a result, the dynamics of the transnational flows, networks and connections allowed a migrant to not only support his family back home in spite of the geographical distance but also preserve his social status. If he was unmarried, he could even return home briefly to marry a wife and entrust her with the traditional

National Boundaries and Cultural Configurations, Nanyang Technological University, June 2004. Singapore; For the definition of transnationalism, see Nina Click Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton, "Transnationalism: A New Analytic Framework for Understanding Migration", in *Towards A Transnational Perspective on Migration*, pp. 131-151, eds. Nina Click Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton (New York: The New York Academy of Sciences, 1992).

¹²⁹ Tan, "Guojia jiangjie huaren wenhua yu rentong".

¹³⁰ McKeown, "Conceptualizing Chinese Diasporas, 1842 to 1949", p. 318; Ding Yuling's study of Shudou village, a famous *qiaoxiang* in Quanzhou, has shown the transnational characteristic of a village in the migration era, see Ding Yuling 丁毓玲, "Kuaguo wangluo zhong de qiaoxiang: haiwai huaren yu Fujian Shudou cun de shehui bianqian" 跨国网络中的侨乡: 海外华人与福建树兜村的社会变迁 (Emigrant Communities within Transnational Networks: Overseas Chinese and the Social Transition in Shudou Village, Fujian), (Ph.D dissertation, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2004). In Quanzhou, there were transnational newspapers, like *Quanzhou ribao* and *Minsheng bao*, which had overseas branches in some host countries like the Philippines. see Huang Meiyu 黄梅雨, "Jiefangqian de Quanzhou baojie (2) – Quanzhou ribao" 解放前的泉州报界(二) – 《泉州日报》 (The Status of Quanzhou Newspapers before the Liberation of China – *Quanzhou Ribao*), *Quanzhou wenshi ziliao* 泉州文史资料(新 17) (New Literary and Historical Documents of Quanzhou) 17 (December 1999), pp. 107-110; Pan Yuren 潘玉仁, "Qiaoxiang houshe *Minsheng bao* jianjie" 侨乡喉舌《民声报》简介 (A Introduction to the *Minsheng Bao* in Emigrant Communities), *Jinjiang wenshi ziliao xuanji* 晋江文史资料选辑 (Selected Literary and Historical Documents of Jinjiang) 6 (July 1985), pp. 187-193.

responsibilities to his family. Obviously, the sojourning nature of Chinese migration and the convenience of using transnational flows, networks and connections to maintain connection between husbands and wives had played a significant role in the creation of large numbers of the *fankeshen*. At the same time, there are other important factors which produced the phenomenon.

Cultural Restrictions and Social Norms

Apart from the effects of the nature of the migration on the women's non-migration, the impact of Confucian culture on gender relations (including gender roles in family, female social status, family maintenance strategies) and the social norms played the most powerful roles in the women's non-migration decision. Quanzhou society had been strongly influenced by Confucian traditions. Its community was dominated by the clans and people's lives centred around the family unit.¹³¹ Quanzhou people put a high value on their families, a practice which could be described as familism, as defined by David Harrison Kulp in the 1920s when he discussed the family system of Phenix village in Guangdong province. According to Kulp, familism is:

...a social system wherein all behavior, all standards, ideas, attitudes and values arise from, center in, or aim at the welfare of those bound together by the blood nexus fundamentally. The family is therein the basis of reference, the criterion for all judgments. Whatever is good for the family, however

¹³¹ See, for example, Zheng Zhenman 郑振满, *MingQing Fujian jiazuzhi yu shehui bianqian* 明清福建家族组织与社会变迁 (Family Lineage Organization and Social Change in Ming and Qing Fujian) (Changsha: Hunan jiaoyu chubanshe, 1992); Su Liming 苏黎明, *Quanzhou jiazuzhi wenhua* 泉州家族文化 (The Culture of Family and Lineage in Quanzhou) (Beijing: Zhongguo yanshi chubanshe, 2000); Chen Zhiping 陈支平, *Jin 500 nian lai Fujian de jiazuzhi yu wenhua* 近 500 年来福建的家族社会与文化 (The Families, Lineage, Society and Culture of Fujian during the Last 500 Years) (Shanghai: Sanlian shudian, 1991); Zhuang Weiji 庄为玑, "Quanzhou lu yin (ni) fei qiaocun de diaocha yanjiu – Shudouxiang, Tingdianxiang qiaocun shenghuo de renshi" 泉州旅印 (尼) 菲侨村的调查研究 – 树兜乡、亭店乡侨村生活的认识 (The Investigation and Research on the Villages Whose Emigrants Were Migrating to Indonesia and the Philippines – Knowledge of the Emigrant Village Lives in Shudou and Tingdian), *Quanzhou Huaqiao shiliao*, ed. Quanzhou huaqiao shiliao bianweihui, pp. 6-7.

that good is conceived, is approved and developed; whatever is inimical to the family, however they are formulated, is taboo and prohibited.¹³²

Research on the gender factor with respect to migration has debated that the migration decisions, although made at a household level, “represent inequalities in intra-household power relations and reflect local-level gender relations”.¹³³ Conversely, Delia Davin points out that “the gender system of the sending areas is an important influence on migration. It helps to determine who goes and for how long”.¹³⁴ Accordingly, the *fankeshen* were left behind because of the entrenched Confucian concept of familial roles that “males handle affairs outside of the home, and females should handle those inside it”.¹³⁵ Women’s domestic roles included their responsibilities in caring for the elders, young siblings-in-law and the children, daily domestic work such as cooking and cleaning, as well as assisting in the performance of rituals, etc.

Chinese family law required the wife to stay at her parents-in-law’s home and care for their in-laws, fulfill religious duties, and manage the family, while the men sought economic opportunities abroad.¹³⁶ The decisive role of the family law on the wives’ fate when their husbands migrated overseas was described by Lim Joo Hock as follows:

¹³² David Harrison Kulp II, *Country Life in South China: the Sociology of Familism, Vol. I: Phenix Village, Kwantung* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1925), p. xxix.

¹³³ Katie Willis and Brenda Yeoh, “Introduction”, in *Gender and Migration*, eds. Katie Willis and Brenda Yeoh (Northampton, Mass.: Edward Elgar, 2000), pp. xiii-xiv. For such research, see Victoria Lawson, “Hierarchical households and Gender Migration in Latin America: Feminist Research Extensions to Migration Research”, *Progress in Human Geography* 22, 1 (1998), pp. 39-53.

¹³⁴ Davin, “Gender and Migration in China”, p. 231.

¹³⁵ Hsu Francis L. K., “Chinese Kinship and Chinese Behavior”, in *China in Crisis*, v.1 pt.2, *Chinese Heritage and the Communist Political System*, eds. Ho Ping-ti and Tang Tsou (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 593.

¹³⁶ Part of the observations, see also McKeown, “Transnational Chinese Families and Chinese Exclusion, 1875-1943”, p. 97; Lim, “Chinese Female Immigration into the Straits Settlements, 1860-1901”, pp. 63-64; Kani, *Zhuhua*, p. 18; Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, p. 26; Fan, “Yunxu yu yanjin”, p. 70; As discussed in Chapter I, previous studies, such as Chen Ta’s study, have shown that left-behind women lived under the control of Confucian culture, displaying Confucian filial piety, maintaining morality and managing their families. Although these scholars did not explain why women were left behind, it indicates that such factors could in turn prevent women from migrating when their husbands migrated.

As the purpose of marriage was to keep the family line continuous so as to assure that offerings to the ancestors could always be made, the most important duty of wife was to rear children, especially male children, and secondly to look after the parents of the husband. Such being the case, wives could not be expected to accompany their husbands overseas if the latter had aged parents left behind.¹³⁷

Furthermore, Victor Purcell also considers ancestral worship “a strong force in discouraging the Chinese from emigrating”.¹³⁸ Moreover, Lim Joo Hock points out that it was necessary for women to remain behind so that they could perform the religious rites in homage to deceased ancestors during festivals such as *qingming* 清明 and *quji* 秋祭, when their men were forced by poverty to leave their homeland.¹³⁹

Apart from their culturally prescribed roles in the families, the traditional inferior status of women was a factor which contributed to their lack of freedom to leave their homes.¹⁴⁰ In traditional China, a female had to obey her parents before she got married. After marriage, she had to obey her parents-in-law and her husband. When her husband died, she depended on her son. This was known as “triple obedience” for Chinese women. In a family where she had to live with her parents-in-law, the social status of the young wife of a migrant was even lower than that of an older woman – the mother-in-law – and correspondingly, she had no right to request to accompany or join her husband overseas.¹⁴¹ In contrast, parents-in-laws could order

¹³⁷ Lim, “Chinese Female Immigration into the Straits Settlements, 1860-1901”, p. 64. However, in some migrant families, wives didn’t migrate with their husbands even after the parents-in-law have passed away. For example, an interviewee Xu LD whose parents-in-law had passed away did not migrate with her husband yet. Interview with Xu LD, Huazhou village, Chidian town, Jinjiang city, 18 December 2004. Chen Ta has also found such a wife who remained at home and managed the family, Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, pp. 118-121.

¹³⁸ Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, p. 26.

¹³⁹ Lim, “Chinese Female Immigration into the Straits Settlements, 1860-1901”, pp. 63-64.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 64; Lebra and Paulson, *Chinese Women in Southeast Asia*, p. 6.

¹⁴¹ Interview with Hong Q, Huazhou village, Chidian town, Jinjiang city, 22 November 2004; Interview with Lin D, Huazhou village, Chidian town, Jinjiang city, 22 November & 18 December 2004, and Chen CL, Chenzhou village, Quanzhou city, 1 December 2004; *Fankeshen* Lin Juzhen also had the experience. Lin Juzhen 林居真, *Wushiyi nian zhi xinsheng* 五十一年之心声 (Reflections of the Past Fifty-One Years) (Quanzhou: 1991), p. 8. On lower social position of women, see Ye, “Minnan qiaoxiang chuantong hunsu yu funü diwei”. On the power of the mother-in-law, see Wolf, Margery, *Women and the family in rural Taiwan* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1972).

the daughter-in-law to remain at home as a strategy for gleaning more remittances from her husband and taking care of them.¹⁴² To cite an example from the fieldwork in Quanzhou conducted by this author, an interviewee Lin D and her sister-in-law, the other *fankeshen* in the family, did not dare request to join their husbands overseas.¹⁴³ Their mother-in-law even prohibited Lin's husband from coming back to visit her because a visit would possibly result in her migration and the consequent reduction in or loss of the son's remittances.¹⁴⁴ The issue of the migration of the *fankeshen* reflects the inequalities in gender relations (including the relations between women) within the migrant household in Quanzhou.

Another dimension of Confucian familism which bore significance in restricting the womenfolk's capacity to migrate relates to economic considerations; a wife's migration had to be considered carefully because it affected the interests of the family. As Douglas S. Massey observes, leaving the wife behind was also driven by economic considerations in the migrant family not only to maximize household earnings, but also to minimize risk.¹⁴⁵ Since the objective of migration was to increase family income in the first place, the loss of income that the migration of the wife as well would bring would be inadvertently unacceptable.

It may be a common strategy for a society where people valued familism to leave family members behind, although at times such patterns are also found in many modernizing societies. For Filipino transnational migrants who migrated to the United

¹⁴² Chen Da [Chen Ta] 陈达, *Nanyang huaqiao yu minyue shehui* 南洋华侨与闽粤社会 (Nanyang Overseas Chinese and Fujian and Guangdong Society) (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1938), p. 149; Fan, "Yunxu yu yanjin", p. 70; Si Nan 司南 and Pei Ying 裴颖, "Huaqiao Funü Chuguo shilue" 华侨妇女出国史略 (A Discussion on the Emigration History of Chinese Women), *Huaqiao huaren lishi yanjiu* 3 (1993), p. 63.

¹⁴³ Interview with Lin D.

¹⁴⁴ Interview with Chen SM, Qingyang town, Jinjiang city, 21 December 2004. Chen was Lin's close neighbour and she learnt the information from one of Lin's complaints.

¹⁴⁵ Douglas S. Massey, "Social Structure, Household Strategies, and the Cumulative Causation of Migration", *Population Index* 56, 1 (1990), pp. 3-26.

States, Rhacel Salazar Parreñas points out, that in order to maximize the benefits of migration under a restrictive and competitive environment, Filipino families had to split their households by leaving some family members behind while the others migrated. As a result, Filipino migrants took advantage of “the lower costs” of reproduction and the raising of a family in the Third World to “maximize resources and opportunities in the global economy”, influenced by ideals of *pakikisama* (familism). Consequently, old values were maintained within transnational families in the transnational migration process.¹⁴⁶ For Chinese migrants who were originally from Quanzhou and valued their families highly, many of them could not afford the cost of propagating the family overseas; thus to leave their wives behind was to save the costs of family raising and the expenditure of wife’s migration.¹⁴⁷ At the same time, from the family’s perspective, to leave the wife behind was also a form of buying an insurance policy because it not only saved the traveling expenses of the wife, but also helped to maintain a home that the migrant could return to should he fail to make his fortune overseas.

Apart from the impact of Confucian culture, there were some *fankeshen* who were left behind out of adherence to social norms, where they decided to conform to the examples set by other women who shared the fate of being left-behind. In Quanzhou’s long history, leaving wives behind was prevalent among the long-distance merchants who went out to do business in North China and Taiwan, or who were overseas traders to Japan, the Philippines, the Malay Peninsula, Java, etc.¹⁴⁸ The wives of these traders constituted the historical group of the left-behind wives, when the traders preferred to reside in the host areas in the Nanyang to reduce expenses and

¹⁴⁶ Parreñas, “New Household Forms, Old Family Values”, pp. 339-344.

¹⁴⁷ For the fact that many migrants could not afford the cost of the reproduction of the family, Lim, “Chinese Female Immigration into the Straits Settlements, 1860-1901”, pp. 64-65; Pei, “Huaqiao hunyin jiating xingtai chutan”, p. 41.

¹⁴⁸ Zeng, “Qingdai Taiwan yu Feilubin minyue yimin de jiating jieguo yanjiu”, pp. 74-84.

for the convenience of contact with their clients.¹⁴⁹ Wang Lianmao's study on the migration of two families in southern Fujian suggests that most male migrants involved in internal and international migration had left their wives behind since the Qing dynasty. During late Qing times, the trend began to alter, except for the male migrants to Southeast Asia who continued to leave wives behind in their hometowns. For instance, from 1800 to the 1940s, only about 86 among 446 married migrants from the Chen family in Shishan, Nan'an, brought their wives to their host countries.¹⁵⁰

For these left-behind wives, the patrilineal society they were born and bred in offered them little hope of evading this practice. The interviewee Lin D recounted that when she was wedded off to a migrant in the Philippines, she was not allowed to ask to join her husband in the Philippines. Her reply to a query about her reasons for remaining at home showed the degree to which traditional roles and societal expectations constricted the left-behind wives. She commented, "We women should remain at home and take care of the parents-in-law and the young siblings-in-law. This is our custom. Many women followed the custom."¹⁵¹

Economic Rationale

Another important factor which deterred the wives from following their husbands in migration was their husbands' limited financial capabilities. Only when the migrants had achieved their objective of financial gain could they afford to bring their wives over to join them. Zhao Hua attributes the separation of migrant couples in

¹⁴⁹ Wu, ed., *Dongnanya huaqiao tongshi*, p. 204.

¹⁵⁰ Wang Lianmao 王连茂, "Mingqing shiqi minnan liangge jiazu de renkou yidong" 明清时期闽南两个家族的人口移动 (Emigration of Two Families in Southern Fujian during the Ming and Qing Dynasties), *Haijiaoshi yanjiu* 海交史研究 (Research on Maritime Communication) 1 (1991), p. 16.

¹⁵¹ Interview with Lin D.

the Dutch East Indies to the economic inability of migrant husbands to afford the arrival of their wives.¹⁵²

Most of the migrants, who managed to migrate with the help of the migration system, came from poor and needy classes.¹⁵³ They worked for wages and then sent remittances for the maintenance of the family (not all of them could do so). They had difficulties in affording the travelling and accommodation expenses for their wives and children even if they wanted to bring them over. According to the statistics provided by a provincial investigation in 1955, 65% of Fujianese migrants were labourers (*gongren* 工人), 20% were workers (*duli laodongzhe* 独立劳动者), 10% were small traders (*xiao shangfan* 小商贩), 2% were other self-employed (*ziyou zhiye zhe* 自由职业者) and 2.23% were in the industrial, commercial or business groups (*gongshangye jia* 工商业家).¹⁵⁴ These statistics show that a majority of the migrants worked in low-paying vocations that hardly enhanced their ability to afford the traveling and living expenses of the family.

For the majority of the Overseas Chinese from lower economic strata, especially the large numbers of Chinese coolie labourers, the nature of capitalism was a significant factor which caused spousal separation and thus the production of the “split family” with left-behind wives. The new school of Marxist historiography which focused its research on southern Africa, and scholars studying immigration in West Europe, have argued that the low wages acquired by the immigrant workers forced them to leave their dependants at home, while supporting them by sending

¹⁵² Zhao Hua 晁华, *Yindunixiya – huaqiao cangsang* 印度尼西亚 – 华侨沧桑 (Indonesia – A History of Overseas Chinese) (Hong Kong: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1990), pp. 46, 50.

¹⁵³ Kil Young Zo, “Credit Ticket System for the Chinese Emigration into the United States”, *Nanyang University Journal* 8 & 9 (1974-75), pp. 129-138.

¹⁵⁴ Lin Jinzhi 林金枝, “Jindai huaqiao zai shanghai de touzi” 近代华侨在上海的投资 (Overseas Chinese Investments in Shanghai in the Modern Era), in *Huaqiaoshi yanjiu lunji* 华侨史研究论集 (Research Essays on Overseas Chinese History), ed. Wu Ze 吴泽 (Shanghai: Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe, 1984), p. 275.

money back.¹⁵⁵ The owners of mines, plantation, factories in the host Nanyang countries, regardless of their nationality, did not provide funds for the Chinese workers to bring their family members over. Thus, it was the Chinese men who would suffer lives without wives, saving money from limited wages earned to remit home. Many of them died without any remittance being sent back, while some succeeded in doing that only with years of hard work.¹⁵⁶ However, it remained difficult for them to bring their wives over.

A case study from Tan Chee Beng's fieldwork in 2002 notes how wives were sent back to their hometown in China during times of financial difficulty for the migrant families in Singapore, indicating the immediate impact of the men's financial situation on their wives' migration. The father of Tan's interviewee YSS migrated to Singapore in 1918. He succeeded in earning sufficient money after five years and went back to Shishan to repay his debts and got married with a local girl. After the wedding, he returned to Singapore with his wife. In 1937, they had already had six children. Due to the low wages that the father earned, the mother had to take five children back to their hometown, leaving only the eldest boy with the father. The mother did not re-join the father until 1966, when she went to Singapore to deal with the inheritance of her husband's property after he had passed away.¹⁵⁷ The story further shows the possibility that even after the wife's arrival, the migrant might not be able to afford to support the whole family and occasionally had to send them back

¹⁵⁵ Brown, "The Impact of Male Labour Migration on Women in Botswana", pp. 368-369; Manuel Castells, "Immigrant Workers and Class Struggles in Advanced Capitalism: The Western European Experience", *Politics and Society* 5, 1 (1975), pp. 33-66. Reprinted in *The Politics of Migration*, eds. Robin Cohen and Zig Layton-Henry (Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, Mass: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd, c1997), pp. 28-61. Stephen Castles and Godula Kosack, "The Function of Labour Immigration in Western European Capitalism", *New Left Review* 73 (1972), pp. 3-21. Reprinted in *The Politics of Migration*, eds. Robin Cohen and Zig Layton-Henry, pp. 62-80.

¹⁵⁶ On the Coolie labourers, see Chen Hansheng 陈翰笙, ed., *Huagong chuguo shiliao huibian* 华工出国史料汇编 (Collection of the Historical Documents of Chinese Labourers Overseas) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980-1985).

¹⁵⁷ Tan, "Guojia jiangjie huaren wenhua yu rentong", pp. 7-8.

to the hometown. Thus financial considerations contributed to the limitations on women migration, which had been already affected by the nature of sojourning and societal norms.

Personal Circumstances

Personal motivations were often important factors for individual migrants' decision to migrate.¹⁵⁸ Conversely, it also helps to explain why people did not migrate. Psychologically, some *fankeshen* gave up the opportunity to rejoin their husbands because of the uncertainty of life in a foreign country. An interviewee Wu SM revealed that she did not want to rejoin her husband in Indonesia because she was not sure if she could have a happy life with her husband in a foreign, unfamiliar environment. Moreover, her husband had a second wife and a branch family and she feared that the second wife would do harm to her.¹⁵⁹ Hence, there are some wives who did not want to migrate to live with their husbands by their own choice.

To leave one's home and live aboard also required psychological re-adjustment. Although large numbers of wives were forced to remain at home, some wives might have preferred to stay at home to enjoy the support of remittances, the freedom gained from the absence of their husbands, the company of their relatives or friends, or the potential of a better life at home.¹⁶⁰ In Dongyuan town, Hui'an County, a *fankeshen* Huang Pancai did not get to see her husband again after he migrated to Penang, Malaysia, soon after their wedding. The husband did not return for about fourteen years and had children from his second marriage. He wrote several letters to ask her to join him in 1953. It was reported that, as one of the *qiaojuan* who actively

¹⁵⁸ Petersen, "A General Typology of Migration", pp. 258-259.

¹⁵⁹ Interview with Wu SM, Guanlan village, Quanzhou city, 26 November 2004.

¹⁶⁰ For an example of a wife of a American Chinese migrant who chose to remain at home for similar reasons, see Glenn, "Split Household, Small Producer, and Dual Wage Earner", p. 81.

participated in the social activities in the communist society, she refused to go because she believed that conditions in the hometown would improve under the communist leadership, and did not want to leave the homeland.¹⁶¹

Other personal circumstances also contributed to their being left-behind. It could be because the wife did not seize the opportunity to migrate, even when it came. The failure of her migration could be caused by her lack of money, her inability to acquire a visa, or any other unfortunate circumstances. For example, an interviewee Chen LD in Chenzhou village in the city of Quanzhou got a letter from her husband in Singapore in about 1954 asking her to join him. However, she did not have money for the trip and gave up the opportunity.¹⁶² Another interviewee Wu SM's case is also illuminating. Before she decided not to re-join her husband, she had a chance to migrate and she wanted to do so. However, she failed to rejoin her husband in the 1950s because she could not provide a photo for her application before the deadline.¹⁶³ The lack of administrative assistance in local society to handle migration matters further hampered the chances of many *fankeshen* to rejoin their husbands overseas.

Institutional Barriers to Migration

Although Adam McKeown and Sucheta Mazumdar do not see eye to eye on the role of institutional barriers to the women's migration to the United States, the exclusion laws in some Southeast Asia countries did sometimes played their roles in blocking the women's migration, even when the policies were not as restrictive as

¹⁶¹ "Dang de nüer Huang Pancai" 党的女儿黄盘菜 (Huang Pancai, A Daughter of the Party), *Fujian qiaoxiangbao*, 15 December 1958. The husband cut off remittances for 5 years to punish her.

¹⁶² Interview Chen LD, Chenzhou Village, Quanzhou City, 1 December 2004.

¹⁶³ Interview with Wu SM.

those in the United States by 1965.¹⁶⁴ For instance, being a small trader was one occupation among the Chinese migrants in Southeast Asia, especially in the Philippines, where 75% (82,890 people) of the Chinese who had migrated there came from Quanzhou.¹⁶⁵ Some of them became richer than the other working classes. But in the Philippines, only selected classes such as officials and merchants were allowed to bring their wives during the era of American colonial occupation from 1898 to 1940.¹⁶⁶ The small traders were not considered merchants and thus were prohibited from bringing their wives with them.¹⁶⁷

However, since the late nineteenth century, legislations on immigration had altered in the various Southeast Asian countries.¹⁶⁸ For instance, the British colonies in Malaya at times encouraged wives to come along with migrants from China. In the 1930s in Singapore, there was a spurt of female immigration when restrictions were applied only to male immigrants.¹⁶⁹ On the other hand, countries like the Philippines were less lenient with the entry of wives except during the years from 1937-1940 when China was involved in the Anti-Japanese War.¹⁷⁰ Since the end of the Second World War, the Chinese faced tremendous legal restrictions to their entry into the newly-independent Southeast Asia countries. As Edgar Wickberg indicates, in the 20 years (1945-65) following the Second World War, the countries of Southeast Asia

¹⁶⁴ Some scholars state in their works the negative impact of the institutional barriers including the Chinese government's restrictive policies towards women emigration before 1860 and restrictive immigration policies in some countries in Southeast Asia on the women's migration. See Lebra and Paulson, *Chinese Women in Southeast Asia*, p. 6; Kani, *Zhuhua*, p. 17; Fan, "Yunxu yu yanjin", p. 68; Lim, "Chinese Female Immigration into the Straits Settlements, 1860-1901", pp. 60-63; Si and Pei, "Huaqiao Funü Chuguo shilue", p. 63.

¹⁶⁵ Quanzhou huaqiao zhi bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Quanzhou huaqiao zhi*, pp. 11-12.

¹⁶⁶ Huang and He, *Feilubin huaqiaooshi*, p. 311.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 373.

¹⁶⁸ On legislations on the late nineteenth century, see Lim, "Chinese Female Immigration into the Straits Settlements, 1860-1901", pp. 71-72, 103-105.

¹⁶⁹ Maurice Freedman, *Chinese Family and Marriage in Singapore* (London: HMSO, 1957), p. 125.

¹⁷⁰ Theresa Chong Carino 张素玉, "Manila huaren funü zuoyong he guannian de bianhua" 马尼拉华人妇女: 作用和观念的变化 (Chinese Women in Manila: Their Changing Functions and Conceptions), *Nanyang yanjiu yicong* 南洋研究译丛 (Translation of Research Works on Nanyang) 3 (1990), p. 75.

generally cut off Chinese immigration or reduced it to a trickle.¹⁷¹ Consequently, although wives of Chinese migrants were allowed to join their husbands in some countries under certain conditions, their numbers were small.

The Philippines is used as a case in point to demonstrate the possible negative impact of institutional barriers on the wives' migration. This is because most of the *fankeshen* who were interviewed by this author had husbands in the Philippines. Moreover, the Philippines had received the most Chinese migrants from Quanzhou (mostly from present-day Jinjiang, Nan'an and Shishi). Historically, the islands of the Philippines were among the destinations of the Chinese *dongyang hanglu* 东洋航路 (Eastern Ocean trade route) within the Chinese junk trading networks and enjoyed regular commercial and cultural contacts with the Chinese.¹⁷² The arrival of the Spanish conquerors in the Philippines in the 1560s offered new opportunities and attracted a large number of Chinese sojourners and settlers.¹⁷³ Zhou Nanjing explains that, because the Overseas Chinese in the Philippines tended not to bring along their family members with them before the late nineteenth century, there were greater inter-marriages between Chinese migrants and local women, causing increasing numbers of Chinese mestizos.¹⁷⁴ After 1900, the Chinese migrants in the Philippines started to bring their family members over, and reduced inter-marriages between Chinese males and local women.¹⁷⁵ Under the years of American administration from 1898 to 1946, the Chinese faced greater restrictions of immigration into the Philippines, especially after United States Congress extended the Chinese exclusion laws to the island

¹⁷¹ Wickberg, "Chinese as Overseas Migrants", pp. 16-17.

¹⁷² Edgar Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850-1898* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), p. 1.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ Zhou Nanjing 周南京, "Guanyu Feilubin huaren tonghua wenti" 关于菲律宾华人同化问题 (Research on the Assimilation of the Philippine Chinese), in *Fengyu tongzhou – dongnanya yu huaren wenti* 风雨同舟—东南亚与华人问题 (Sharing Weal and Woe – Southeast Asia and the Problems of Chinese Overseas), ed. Zhou Nanjing 周南京 (Beijing: Zhongguo huaqiao chubanshe, 1995), p. 489.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 492.

territories under the jurisdiction of Congress, and directed the Philippines Commission to make necessary regulations under the law effective in 1902.¹⁷⁶ Wives of migrants thus had difficulties entering the Philippines. Lots of the *fankeshen* were left behind in Quanzhou. The gender ratios of the Philippines Chinese were low. In 1939 the proportion of Chinese females to males was about 1 to 3, similar to the situation of the American Chinese in 1940.¹⁷⁷

In summary, there were multi-faceted factors behind the *fankeshen*'s non-migration decisions. Apart from the nature of Chinese migration to Southeast Asia, the migration of wives had to overcome inter-woven socio-economic, cultural, political and psychological difficulties. On the other hand, compared with male migration, wives' migration faced more cultural, social and psychological barriers, which included her duty as a wife and a caregiver for the in-laws, young siblings-in-law and her children, her lower social status, or the social norms of having the wife left behind in the hometown when the man migrated overseas.¹⁷⁸

Although legal barriers in host countries could pose problems for the entry of migrants' wives, there were other greater obstacles such as gender bias and economic considerations. This shows the importance of the women in migrant families when their men migrated on the one hand. It demonstrates the profound influence of gender

¹⁷⁶ Khin Khin Myint Jensen, Wu Wenhuan trans., *Meitong shiqi de Feilubin huaren 1898-1946* 美统时期的菲律宾华人, 1898-1946 (The Philippines Chinese during the American era, 1898-1946) (Manila: Feilubin huayu lianhehui, 1991); Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, p. 535.

¹⁷⁷ For the gender ratios of the Chinese in the Philippines, see Jose L. Angliongto, *Intergration of Philippine Chinese Ethnic Elements into the National Socio-political Community* (NTR Publications, Philippines, 1975), p. 48, cited in Ren Na 任娜, *Feilubin shehui shenghuo zhong de huaren (1935-1965) – cong zuji guanxi de jiaodu suo zuo de tansuo* 菲律宾社会生活中的华人 (1935-1965) – 从族际关系的角度所作的探索 (The Chinese in Philippine Social Life, 1935-1965: A Study from the Perspective of the Ethnic Relationship between Chinese and Filipino) (Guiyang: Guizhou renmin chubanshe, 2004), p. 79; for the latter gender ratios, see Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold*, p. 101.

¹⁷⁸ Interestingly, gender and migration research find that, unlike the case for male migration, some non-economic factors are especially important causes for the emigration of women, See Eleonore Kofman, Annie Phizacklea, Parvati Raghuram, and Rosemary Sales, eds., *Gender and International Migration in Europe: Employment, Welfare, and Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 21.

bias on Chinese women's migration, where men and women did not equally participate in the migration, showing the gender differences between Chinese men and women in their options in migration matters on the other hand.

Chapter III

Binding Ties and Isolated Lives

This chapter examines the characteristics of *fankeshen*'s marriages. It explores how the *fankeshen* were married to the *fanke*, what sufferings they received from their marriages and how they maintained the marital relationship during the migration process.

The story of a *fankeshen* tells us about the sad marriage lives of the left-behind wives. The interviewee Lin D was married to her husband, Chen, in the 1940s. The latter was with her for only two months after tying the knot before he returned to the Philippines. She only found out in the 1960s to much anger and grief that her husband has had a second family in the Philippines since the 1950s. Chen passed away in the Philippines in 1982 at the age of 67. After the confirmation of Chen's death, the wife was traumatized by numerous nightmares of Chen pleading to return home to his first wife.¹⁷⁹ She became seriously sick due to sadness. With the help of her adopted son, they followed a Quanzhou custom for migrants who had died overseas by performing a ritual ceremony to "invite" the dead man's soul back home by sea.¹⁸⁰ Only then did she recover from her illness.

¹⁷⁹ According to the local customs, the *fankeshen* who got married with the *fanke* was considered as the only "legal" wife of the man, although he may have another wife overseas. Consequently, after the *fanke* died, it was the *fankeshen* who was buried together with him after she died, so that she continued to accompany him in the afterlife. If the *fanke* died overseas, the *fankeshen* was still required to be buried with his bone ashes or one of his possessions when she died, so that she accompanied him whose soul was "brought" back home. This might explain why Lin D had such nightmares after her husband died in the Philippines. The custom is revealed by Qiu Tingting, a native writer who has published several novels on the *fankeshen*, in her novel. For the novel, see Qiu Tingting 邱婷婷, "Meng" 梦 (Dream), in *Shishi shi wenyi zuopin ji* 石狮市文艺作品集 (Collection of Literary Works on Shishi City), eds. Shishishi keweientiju and Shishishi wenhuaguan (Hong Kong: Huaxing chubanshe, 1993), p. 107-08.

¹⁸⁰ The ritual, performed by a Taoist priest or a monk, is known as *yin shuihun* 引水魂 (bringing back the soul via the sea), for details, see Liu Haoran 刘浩然, "Luetan jizhong Jinjiang qiaoxiang minsu" 略谈几种晋江侨乡民俗 (A Discussion of Several Folk Customs in Jinjiang Emigrant Communities), in *Quannan wenshi luncong* 泉南文史论丛 (Historical and Literary Studies on Southern Quanzhou), Liu Haoran (Quanzhou: Quannan wenhua zazhishe, 1998), pp. 136-137.

After the rites, Lin D acquired a photograph of Chen from his second family in the Philippines. The big portrait of Chen was hung on the wall of the sitting room. She performed sacrificial offerings to him on every anniversary of his birthday and death. Much to her regret, her daughter-in-law did not care much about it.¹⁸¹

Lin's experience was not uncommon among the *fankeshen*. Many of them seldom saw their husbands again throughout their life time after their husbands returned to the Nanyang a few days, or several months, after their marriage. Many of their husbands had second families in the host country. The financial burden of supporting the second family overseas could have prevented them from sending remittances or led to the discontinuation of communication with their wives/families in China. On the other hand, Chinese customs dictated that the left-behind wives should remain faithful, keep marital fidelity and live in their in-law families for their whole lives.

Though not all the *fankeshen* suffered as much as Lin, a marriage with a *fanke* ushered in a new life for a girl. She had not only changed her identity as a daughter in her natal family, but also lived as a *fankeshen*. Most of them were married off by their parents without the need to acquire their consent. After marriage, many *fankeshen* experienced a separated connubial life, living under tight supervision of their fidelity even when they had to reckon with bigamous husbands.

Arranged Marriages

The Institute of Population Research in Xiamen University conducted a survey in the 1980s on the marriage status of 165 migrants from Longhai, Jinjiang and Fuqing, about 7% of them being married women. The findings reveal that, among the 165 migrants, 66.06% of them were un-married when they migrated. However,

¹⁸¹ Interview with Lin D.

27.88% of these un-married men went back home to find a wife. Together with the 33.94% of migrants who had married before they migrated, there were about 54.82% of male migrants who got married with women in their places of origins (see Table 3-1).¹⁸²

Table 3-1: Status of Marriage among 165 Migrants (including about 7% Married Women) from Longhai, Jinjiang and Fuqing

Marriage Status	Unmarried before migration			Married before migration		Total
	Returned to get married in hometowns and re-married in host countries	Married in host countries	Returned to get married in hometowns	Never re-married	Re-married in host countries	
No. of People	19	63	27	31	25	165
Percentage	11.52	38.18	16.36	18.79	15.15	100

Source: Pu Yonghao 浦永灏, “Lun Fujian qiaoxiang renkou guoji qianyi de shehui jingji wenhua yishi xiaoying” 论福建侨乡人口国际迁移的社会、经济、文化意识效应 (A Discussion on the Effects of the International Population Movement in Fujian on Society, Economy and Cultural Consciousness), *Renkou yanjiu* 人口研究 (Research on Population) 5 (1988), p. 25.

How did the male migrants and the *fankeshen* become husbands and wives?

The Chinese marriage institution evolved together with the socio-economic and cultural changes in the post-1911 era. With the founding of the ROC in 1912, new thinking about marriage spread among the local people who disliked or criticized what they perceived as the “feudal” tradition, especially in the wake of the May Fourth Movement in 1919. The so-called “modern” approach to marriage advised youths to get married only after they had gotten to know each other well enough to ensure true love between each other. This progressive idea about marriage was

¹⁸² Pu Yonghao 浦永灏, “Lun Fujian qiaoxiang renkou guoji qianyi de shehui jingji wenhua yishi xiaoying” 论福建侨乡人口国际迁移的社会、经济、文化意识效应 (A Discussion on the Effects of the International Population Movement in Fujian on Society, Economy and Cultural Consciousness), *Renkou yanjiu* 人口研究 (Research on Population) 5 (1988), p. 25. These counties/cities are all main migrant communities of Fujian.

received with enthusiasm by the educated youth in big cities and towns.¹⁸³ Moreover, the new civil code issued by the Nationalist government declared that women possessed the same rights and obligations as men, and they were expected to make their own choice of a marriage partner.¹⁸⁴ Having that said, however, arranged marriage remained entrenched as the main marriage pattern in many parts of the country, particularly in rural areas.

Despite its long contact with the outside world, Quanzhou observed this powerful social tradition.¹⁸⁵ Most marriages between migrant couples were arranged by “the order of parents and the work of a matchmaker” (*fumu zhi ming, meizhuo zhi yan* 父母之命, 媒灼之言). Most of them were kept apart before marriage.

Like their brothers in other parts of southern Fujian, Quanzhou men often migrated overseas at a young age. Most of them worked overseas and sent remittances back whenever they could afford to do so. Their parents would save as much as they could to help their children find a spouse later.¹⁸⁶

Some migrants would marry native girls in their host countries, but intermarriage with local women was a challenge to the arranged marriage institution in which parents played a crucial role. Parents would accept such de-facto marriages only reluctantly.¹⁸⁷ Moreover, the migrant may stop sending remittances or even settle

¹⁸³ See for example, Guan Wei 关威, “Xinwenhua yundong yu hunyin jiating guannian biange” 新文化运动与婚姻家庭观念变革 (The New Cultural Revolution and the Revolutionization of the Concept of Marriage and Family), *Guangdong shehui kexue* 广东社会科学 (Social Science of Guangdong) 4 (2004), pp. 113-118; Wang Yinhan 王印焕, “Jindai xuesheng qunti zhong wenhua jiaoyu yu chuantong hunyin de chongtu” 近代学生群体中文化教育与传统婚姻的冲突 (On the Conflict between Cultural Education and Traditional Marriage among the Modern-Day Student Groups), *Shixue yuekan* 史学月刊 (Journal of History) 4 (2004), pp. 18-25.

¹⁸⁴ Cited in Philip C. C. Huang, “Women’s Choices under the Law: Marriage, Divorce, and Illicit Sex in the Qing and the Republic”, *Modern China* 27, 1 (January 2001), p. 28.

¹⁸⁵ Ye, “Minnan qiaoxiang chuantong hunsu yu funü diwei”.

¹⁸⁶ This pattern was prevalent in South China. See Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, p. 124.

¹⁸⁷ Wang, “Mingqing yilai minnan haiwai yimin jiating jieguo qianshi”, pp. 11-12.

permanently abroad if he married overseas, tantamount to the loss of a son.¹⁸⁸ As Liu Haoran states in his study, in villages in southern Quanzhou city, a migrant's marriage with a native woman in the host country was considered an act which brought the "loss of face", and the person was ridiculed as "an unworthy son" by the local people.¹⁸⁹ Furthermore, a "pure-blood" offspring was preferred for the continuity of the family line. Therefore, the intermarriage was not considered a "real" marriage, especially since parents preferred a submissive local girl with traditional values. Nevertheless, those who could return to get married were mostly migrants who fared better in their overseas endeavours.

Many migrants would obey their parents' wishes for an arranged marriage, due to the social and cultural environment they lived in.¹⁹⁰ As filial sons, as well as the need for support in their old age after their return, a family in their hometown was often a welcome arrangement, even if they had another family in their host country.

Some migrants returned home to consummate a marriage with a girl who was brought up by the family. As Chen Ta's work reveals, in southern Fujian and eastern Guangdong, people liked to adopt children. Girls would be trained as maids in rich families or as future wives for the sons in poor families.¹⁹¹ Huang Yizhu is such an example. He was a native of Nan'an County and did well in his business in the Dutch East Indies and was a major investor in Xiamen in the 1920s. Before his sojourn in the Dutch East Indies, his future bride Wang Shi had already lived in his house for

¹⁸⁸ Su Ming 苏明, "Fanke" 番客 (Migrants to the Nanyang), *Quanzhou ribao*, 27 July 1947.

¹⁸⁹ Liu, "Luetan jizhong Jinjiang qiaoxiang minsu", p. 134.

¹⁹⁰ "Qiaozi lanzhi xuhao ji ke beitung" 侨资滥掷虚耗极可悲痛 (It Is Regrettable that Remittances Were Largely Wasted), *Minsheng bao*, 22 May 1948; Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, p. 137.

¹⁹¹ Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, p. 132. It was a common custom in pre-1949 China for poor families to sell away their girls to be brought up by other families. The girl was engaged to a male child in the family who could be several years younger than her. She was called *tongyangxi* 童养媳.

several years. Huang married a local Chinese girl in the Dutch East Indies, but returned to remarry Wang.¹⁹²

The “Overseas Chinese” (*huaqiao*), as termed by Chinese governments, had been considered a new and well-off class since the late-Qing dynasty. They had elevated their status in local society especially after the 1911 Revolution. They took part in socio-political movements and published their opinions in newspapers and magazines. Their remittances every year not only provided a livelihood for their family members, but also helped to develop local infrastructure and economy in places like Fujian, Guangdong and Shanghai. Lin Jinzhi and Zhuang Weiji’s study finds that the Overseas Chinese in the Philippines, who were mostly from Quanzhou, invested 35,473,588 yuan in China during the period 1890-1949. The amount constituted 25.52% of the total investment made by the Overseas Fujianese, which was also the largest sum compared to those Overseas Fujianese investment from other parts of Southeast Asia and Japan.¹⁹³ At the local level, increasing overseas investment in Quanzhou greatly enhanced the Overseas Chinese’s socio-economic status among the local people. Zhuang Guotu’s investigation also finds that the Overseas Chinese in Jinjiang County made great impact on society, “ranging from politics, economy, culture and education, to language, habits and even life style”, in the 1930s. That Jinjiang became “the richest county in China” in this period can be attributed to their financial contributions.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹² Zhao Dexin 赵德馨, *Huang yizhu zhuan* 黄奕住传 (Biography of Huang Yizhu) (Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1998), pp. 4-5, 20-26.

¹⁹³ Zhuang Weiji 庄为玠 and Lin Jinzhi 林金枝, “Fujian huaqiao qiye diaocha baogao” 福建华侨企业调查报告 (1890-1949) (Report on the Investigation of Overseas Chinese Enterprises in Fujian in 1890-1949), in *Xiamen daxue nanyang yanjiusuo jikan* 厦门大学南洋研究所集刊 (Compilation of Papers from the Nanyang Research Institute in Xiamen University) (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue nanyang yanjiusuo, 1959), p. 126.

¹⁹⁴ Zhuang, “The Social Impact on Their Home Town of Jinjiang Emigrant’s Activities during the 1930s”, pp. 175, 177.

This explains why local parents were keen on having a *fanke* son-in-law. As a journalist observed, in the eyes of these parents, “none could surpass the prestigious status of the *fanke*” (*wanban jie xiapin, wei you fanke gao* 万般皆下品, 唯有番客高).¹⁹⁵ To marry a *fanke* was to gain the ability to tap the resources of the migrant network and help other family members to enter it whenever necessary. Even better-off local families would seek to establish marital relations with *fanke* through marrying their daughters, as Chen Ta also observes in other places in South China.¹⁹⁶ Chen Zhongjin, the head of the Quanzhou Commerce Association in 1927-36 and a migrant himself, who had stayed in Singapore, Malaya, the East Dutch Indies and the Philippines, was of the same view that the well-to-do people in Quanzhou would prefer marrying the daughters of the Overseas Chinese, or having the latter as their daughters-in-law, or marrying their daughters to these Overseas Chinese men.¹⁹⁷

Furthermore, to have a *fanke*-in-law would not only provide a better life for their daughter, but also the parents themselves if the daughter was filial. In the interviewee Lin D’s family, her father was a *fanke*. However, he returned home empty-handed, probably due to the fact that he had become an opium addict while he was abroad. He died without leaving behind any money to his 13-year-old daughter Lin. Two uncles-in-law who had migrated overseas took care of Lin and her mother, by sending remittance every two months. The money was more than enough to cover their living expenses. As the only child, Lin’s marriage was arranged by her mother who believed that having a *fanke*-in-law would provide security for her old age. Lin, in reminiscence of her marriage, said that, “She [the mother] was impressed by the in-

¹⁹⁵ “Zai lun qiaofu zhencao wenti” 再论侨妇贞操问题 (A Second Discussion on the Chastity of Qiaojuan Women), *Fujian ribao*, 26 December 1946.

¹⁹⁶ Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, p. 135.

¹⁹⁷ Chen, “Quanzhou huaqiao shiliao shilling”, pp. 45-46.

law family's nice house. She also liked the idea of having a *fanke* son-in-law and the fact that I was able to take care of her if I married a *fanke*.”¹⁹⁸

Xiong Weixia's study of local women also reveals their preference for *fanke* in marriage because it would lead to material comfort. As a common saying goes, “For an older migrant in Luzon, if he does not have one thousand dollars, he will have eight hundred” (*lūsōng bō, wú yīqiān yě yǒu bābǎi* 吕宋伯, 无一千也有八百). Both the foreign products and the remittances that were sent back from abroad enabled them to show off in front of neighbours or to live a life less difficult than that of the non-migrant families.¹⁹⁹ As a result, marriage with a *fanke* became popular in emigrant communities of Fujian and Guangdong.²⁰⁰ Chen Liepu, an expert on Overseas Chinese affairs, observes that a girl who wanted to get married with a *fanke* would pray for her wish to be fulfilled in front of the idols of spirits.²⁰¹ Apart from the dream of becoming a rich *fankeshen*, a girl who chose to get married with a *fanke* in fact knew little about the prospective groom except that he was a *fanke*.

There were exceptions, however. One such example is a lady called Shi who wrote to *Minsheng bao* to describe her anguish when her parents arranged for her to get married to a 30-year-old rich *fanke*. Shi knew that she lived in a society where daughters did not have a say in choosing their own spouses. She felt helpless while her parents decided her marriage for her and was upset that her personal feelings were

¹⁹⁸ Interview with Lin D.

¹⁹⁹ Xiong, “Jindai minyue shehui ruogan wenti yanjiu”, pp. 23-24, 72; Xiong and Zheng, “Haiwai yimin yu jindai minyue qiaoxiang shehui guannian de bianqian”, p. 44. In Quanzhou, Luzon was used as a term of reference for the Philippines. Lai Baolin 赖宝林, “Jinjiang xian Feilubin qiaohui shi chutan” 晋江县菲律宾侨汇史初探 (A Preliminary Study on the Remittances from the Philippines in Jinjiang County), *Jinjiang wenshi ziliao* 晋江文史资料 (Literary and Historical Documents of Jinjiang) 3 (1983). Here it refers to the Nanyang.

²⁰⁰ Xiong and Zheng, “Haiwai yimin yu jindai minyue qiaoxiang shehui guannian de bianqian”, p. 44.

²⁰¹ Chen, *Fei you guangan ji*, p. 2.

superseded by their keen interest in financial gains.²⁰² Some young ladies also wrote to *Quanzhou ribao* to report their educated sisters or friends' predicament of being forced into marriages with *fanke* by their parents. They said that the parents coveted the *fanke*'s wealth and did not care about the *fanke*'s educational qualifications and age.²⁰³ Some future sons-in-law were illiterate or elderly men.²⁰⁴ The lack of affection that characterized such arranged marriages contributed to the strong possibility of fragile marital lives if the partners did not develop emotional ties with each other after marriage.

The attraction of the groom's status as a *fanke* and his wealth could also lead to a bogus marriage. While some parents were cheated by the locals who pretended to be *fanke* and married their daughters, there were also cases in which the *fanke* were cheated by wicked women who fled with their money after their marriages, thus losing both their wives and assets.²⁰⁵

In some cases, the brides may not even know the *fanke* identity of the grooms they were arranged to marry. For example, it was only after the wedding that the interviewee Chen LD found that her husband was a *fanke* who would leave for Singapore very soon.²⁰⁶

²⁰² “Manfu aiqing hechu su” 满腹哀情何处诉 (Where can I Recount the Unhappy Feelings?), *Mingsheng bao*, 2 June 1948.

²⁰³ “Yi feng xin” 一封信 (A Letter), *Quanzhou ribao*, 26 February 1948; Luo Qionxia 骆琼霞, “Jigei Youfen” 寄给幼芬 (Addressed to Youfen), *Quanzhou ribao*, 20 May 1947.

²⁰⁴ “Doukounü jia lao o, bei yu? xi yu?” 豆蔻女嫁老哦, 悲坎? 喜坎? (A Young Lady Getting Married with an Old Man, Is It Pathetic or Joyful?), *Quanzhou ribao*, 8 August 1947. Similarly, during his fieldwork in the community of X in mid-1930s, Chen Ta also finds a similar case where a fifteen-year-old girl who graduated from a primary school was forced into a marriage with a rich emigrant chosen by her father. Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, p. 127.

²⁰⁵ Xiong and Zheng, “Haiwai yimin yu jindai minyue qiaoxiang shehui guannian de bianqian, p. 44; “Xinmenwai Shiqicun fasheng hunbian” 新门外石崎村发生婚变 (Marriage Misfortune Happened in the Village of Shiqi), *Quanzhou ribao*, 29 June 1948.

²⁰⁶ Interview with Chen LD.

The era of 1941-1945 was an unusual period, when marriages to the *fanke* did not necessarily bring forth benefits.²⁰⁷ In these years, China and Southeast Asia suffered from Japanese occupation. Communication between two destinations was severed and thus little remittances or correspondences could be received from the Nanyang. During these years, the *fankeshen* were most desperate and helpless with the loss of their husbands' support. They suffered terribly without the remittances. Their hardship was aggravated by the Japanese attacks on Quanzhou.²⁰⁸ The new situation had cast doubt on the benefit of marrying a *fanke*. Many people believed that their daughters should never get married with a *fanke*.²⁰⁹

When the condition reverted to normality with the end of the war, marriage with a *fanke* regained its original value.²¹⁰ Remittances and the *fanke* were flowing back to China. To celebrate their “new” lives, much remittance income was spent on a variety of matters such as the worship of ancestors and gods, building ancestral graveyards, banquets for their parents' birthdays or extravagant funerals, expensive weddings and a more luxurious life-style with fashionable clothes and hairstyles. It suddenly seemed that everyone had forgotten the difficult life of the *fankeshen* during the war.

Similar to other parts of South China, a migrant's wedding ceremony was often extravagant.²¹¹ Marriage was considered a “big event in one's life” among the Chinese. Marriage at home was a sign of success of migration. It was an honour for

²⁰⁷ Xiong, “Jindai minyue shehui ruogan wenti yanjiu”, p. 72; Xiong and Zheng, “Haiwai yimin yu jindai minyue qiaoxiang shehui guannian de bianqian”, p. 44.

²⁰⁸ For the details, see Fujiansheng zhengfu 福建省政府 (Fujian Provincial Government), “Fujiansheng shunshi diaocha 福建省损失调查 (The Investigation of the Losses of Fujian Province), *Xin Fujian* 新福建 (New Fujian) 8, 3&4 (November 1945), pp.76-95.

²⁰⁹ “Shishi qiaoxiang mianmianguan” 石狮侨乡面面观 (Overview on Shishi), *Xiamen minbao* 厦门民报 (The Newspaper of Xiamen People), 10 November 1948.

²¹⁰ Xiong, “Jindai minyue shehui ruogan wenti yanjiu”, p. 72; Xiong and Zheng, “Haiwai yimin yu jindai minyue qiaoxiang shehui guannian de bianqian”, p. 44.

²¹¹ Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, pp. 134-136; Xiong, “Jindai minyue shehui ruogan wenti yanjiu”, pp. 25-26; Shen, “Jinjiang guiqiao qiaojuan zai qiaoxiang shehui he jingji bianqianzhong de diwei he zuoyong”, p. 16.

migrants and their families.²¹² As a Chinese saying goes, getting rich without showing off is like “a gorgeous costume worn by its proud owner through the streets on a dark night” (*jinyi yexing* 锦衣夜行).²¹³ For the ordinary migrants, they would try not to lose face by having a simple wedding even though it meant they would borrow money for the occasion and had to work hard in the next years for the re-payment. The extravagance that a migrant wedding could attain is attested to by the story of a rich *fanke* in Shishi town who was so elated at being able to survive the Japanese occupation and return home for his son’s wedding that he presented all the beggars who came to beg during the wedding with 30,000 Chinese yuan each.²¹⁴

For the rich migrant families, the wedding ceremony was usually accompanied by rituals of ancestral worship, traditional opera performances, as well as sumptuous feasts. Local newspapers often criticized these weddings as too extravagant and wasteful. The hiring of performances for a wedding was so popular that it could be given as a wedding gift.²¹⁵ In the wedding of the interviewee, Lin D, performances were picked by her wealthy in-laws from a list of available shows.²¹⁶

The migrant groom’s failure to return did not necessarily delay the conduct of the wedding. It would continue without the groom. Surprisingly, this was quite a common practice in Quanzhou. People used a rooster or an umbrella to represent the groom during the wedding.²¹⁷ In such marriages, a *fankeshen* was not even able to

²¹² Wang, “Mingqing yilai minnan haiwai yimin jiating jieguo qianshi”, p. 13.

²¹³ Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, p. 109.

²¹⁴ “Qiaoxiang de haohua” 侨乡的豪华 (The Extravagance of the Emigrant Communities), *Xiamen dabao* 厦门大报 (Xiamen Newspaper), 19 September 1947.

²¹⁵ In 18 May 1947, a returned migrant in the village of Xiapo, Shishi received a gift of a performance from his friend, but the actors clashed with the locals over issues of accommodation and were sent to the authorities. “Xiapozhen yanchang liyuan xifang zhengzhi qi douzheng” 霞城镇演唱梨园，戏房争执起斗争 (Conflict between Theatrical Company and Locals over Accommodation in Xiapo), *Quanzhou ribao*, 22 May 1947.

²¹⁶ Interview with Lin D.

²¹⁷ Ye, “Minnan qiaoxiang chuantong hunsu yu funü diwei”; Xiong, *Jindai minyue shehui rougan wenti yanjiu*, p. 73; Xiong and Zheng, “Haiwai yimin yu jindai minyue qiaoxiang shehui guannian de

consummate her marriage with her husband. She would be able to see him only whenever he returned home. Unfortunately, some of the couples did not even get to see each other in their entire lives.

It is often considered that the migrant and his family members at home, especially his wife, formed an economic unit where the husband made money overseas and the wife helped manage the family affairs.²¹⁸ This is an ideal family pattern which avoids challenging the traditional labour division between husband and wife. Indeed, arranged marriages aimed at continuing this traditional pattern. Both the in-law and natal families expected contributions from the couple to the maintenance of the family. However, such mutual-dependence was only one aspect of the complex connubial relationship between each migrant couple. Migration itself affected the couples' lives and shaped their different experiences.

The *fankeshen* were daughters of Quanzhou who grew up in a traditional social environment, though some of them had a chance to go through a modern education. The majority of them accepted arranged marriages as their fate and offered little resistance. Some *fankeshen* developed emotional ties with their husbands overseas after their wedding and enjoyed their lives in Quanzhou. Others had to tolerate unhappy conjugal lives and endure distresses due to their husbands' neglect or lack of contact, second marriage or abandonment. Cai Shijia, an expert on Overseas Chinese affairs in Shishi, had a father who sojourned in the Philippines for a long time before dying in 1955. His mother was left behind in the village of Dalun, Shishi. Cai

bianqian", p. 45; Pei, "Huaqiao hunyin jiating xingtai chutan", p. 41; Liu, "Luetan jizhong Jinjiang qiaoxiang minsu", pp. 130-132. Such weddings must be approved by the bride's family. A description of the process of such weddings can be found in Liu, "Luetan jizhong Jinjiang qiaoxiang minsu", pp. 130-32; The use of a rooster as a substitute for the groom also existed in eastern Guangdong, see Leng, *Dongnanya haiwai chaoren yanjiu*, p. 353. Clothes, ties, or shoes of grooms were also used if the migrants did not attend the wedding in Chaoshan and Siyi in Guangdong province, see Xiong, "Jindai minyue shehui ruogan wenti yanjiu", p. 73.

²¹⁸ For example, Glenn, "Split Household, Small Producer, and Dual Wage Earner"; McKeown, "Transnational Chinese Families and Chinese Exclusion, 1875-1943"; Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold*.

surveys his mother's life and concludes that she suffered great loneliness from the long-term separation. She never enjoyed her life as a *fankeshen*. However, she put up with everything she faced in life.²¹⁹

For those *fankeshen* who had lived an unhappy and even oppressed life under the traditional marriage arrangements, they envied the younger generation, who enjoyed freedom in forming emotionally-satisfying marriages today. They would say if they were given another chance to choose their husbands, they would rather marry a poor man with only one catty of rice, than marry a *fanke*.²²⁰ A *fankeshen* even offered a piece of advice to her interviewer, "You should be very serious and careful to find a husband in the future. Do not be careless. It is for your own good in life". In her opinion, a good husband is a man who is "credible, honesty, healthy, without the habit of drunkenness, luxury eating, gambling, and womanizing". And in order to test if he is good, one should "meet him often to see if he is kind, honest, considerate, able and hard-working".²²¹

Long-distance Relationship

Long-distance separation for durations from several months to tens of years was a common situation the *fankeshen* faced, although some *fankeshen* did accompany their husbands overseas. The term "*shou huo gua*" 守活寡 came to be used to refer to those who were officially married but did not cohabit with their

²¹⁹ Bei Qi 贝奇, *Shishi bainian* (2) 石狮百年 (2) (One Hundred Years of Shishi, volume 2) (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1999), p. 761.

²²⁰ "Jinjiang xian huaqiao hunyin qingkuang ji chuli yijian (1953 nian 9 yue 23 ri)" 晋江县华侨婚姻情况及处理意见 (1953年9月23日) (The Situation and Advice on the Migrant Marriage in Jinjiang County, 23 September 1953), in *Fujiansheng dang'anguan*: file 148-2-463. The interviewees including Cai XX, Chen LD, Hong Q, Lin D, Xu LD belonged to this group. Interview with Hong Q, Lin D, Xu LD, and Cai XX, Puzhai village, Jinjing town, Jinjiang city, 13 December 2004.

²²¹ Interview with Hong Q.

spouses.²²² For example, the interviewee Hong Q got married with a *fanke*. Her husband left her after three months' marriage and returned only three times in his lifetime. She lived with her in-law family most of her time and considered that she suffered a great loss in her life. As she put it, she was married in name, but without a husband in reality (*you jia fu ming, wu fu ming* 有嫁夫名，无夫命).

Separated conjugal life was prevalent among the left-behind wives of the Chinese migrants in Southeast Asia, America, Austria, Japan, and other countries. Indeed, it points to the marital situation of migrant couples after marriage. However, the subject of the separation between the spouses has never been studied seriously other than as largely taken-for-granted features of the background of broader discussions on migrant marriages and family units. The experiences and circumstances of separated conjugal life faced by the separated couples, and the consequent impact on both the migrant husbands and left-behind wives have yet to be thoroughly studied and the present work aims to provide some answers to these questions.

In Quanzhou, most of the migrant grooms would stay with their brides for at least 14 days after the marriage ceremony. The local people believed that the wife would get pregnant in 14 days.²²³ The interviewee Lin D's sister-in-law, a wife of the eldest son of the in-law family, had the experience of her husband's leaving on the fifteenth day after the wedding and never returning.²²⁴ A number of the interviewed *fankeshen* were "lucky" women who lived with their husbands for more than one month. However, four of the nineteen did not have the chance to see their husbands

²²² Chen, *Fei you guangan ji*, p. 6.

²²³ Interview with Zeng Kunluo 曾昆洛, Office of the Association of Returned Overseas Chinese in Chidian town, Jinjiang city, 21 December 2004.

²²⁴ Interview with Lin D.

again after they departed.²²⁵ In the first half of 1953, a few years after the founding of the Communist government, the Court of Jinjiang County conducted 56 cases of divorce proceedings that involved the *fankeshen* and the *fanke* in the county. Most of the cases were initiated by the *fankeshen*. Among 55 cases in 1953, 91% of the *fankeshen* lived with their husbands for less than one year (see Table 3-2). There were 81.9% of them whose husbands had been overseas for 5-8 years and 16.3% couples for more than 12 years (see Table 3-3). These figures indicate that most of them lived a long-term separation, especially when a return visit by the husband and the wife's reunion with the husband had become more difficult after 1949.²²⁶

Table 3-2: Period of Time Stayed together among 55 Migrant Couples in Jinjiang County, September 1953

Time the couples have stayed together in their lives (year)	Number	Percentage (%)
< 1/12	3	5.5
< 1/4	15	27.3
< 1/2	16	29.1
< 1	16	29.1
< 2	2	3.6
< 3	1	1.8
< 4	1	1.8
< 5	1	1.8
Total	55	100

Source: "Jinjiangxian huaqiao hunyin qingkuang ji chuli yijian (1953 nian 9 yue 23 ri)" 晋江县华侨婚姻情况及处理意见 (1953年9月23日) (A Survey of the Migrant Marriages in Jinjiang County, 23 September 1953), Fujiansheng dang'anguan: file 148-2-463.

²²⁵ Most of them had lived together for two or three months. Those *fankeshen* who did not see their husbands again after they left for overseas were Lin D, Wu Z, Wu ?, and Yang SH.

²²⁶ "Jinjiang xian huaqiao hunyin qingkuang ji chuli yijian".

Table 3-3: The Duration that Husbands Had Been Overseas among the 55 Migrant Couples in Jinjiang County, September 1953

Duration husbands had been overseas (year)	Number	Percentage (%)
≥19	1	1.8
< 19	4	7.3
< 17	1	1.8
< 15	1	1.8
< 14	1	1.8
< 12	1	1.8
< 8	3	5.5
< 7	23	41.8
< 6	12	21.8
< 5	7	12.8
< 4	1	1.8
Total	55	100

Source: “Jinjiangxian huaqiao hunyin qingkuang ji chulu yijian”, Fujiansheng dang’anguan: file 148-2-463.

Before the outbreak of the Pacific War, if the husband could afford his family’s living expenses and his traveling expenses, the couple could see each other every three or five years. Every time he returned, he could stay for several months before leaving again. The scholar of Overseas Chinese affairs, Chen Liepu, provides a picture of the typical couple:

In cases where the migrant got married in his thirties, he would have made about 6 or 7 visits from overseas by the age of sixty. He stayed several months every time. Altogether there would be several years that the couple lived together. In other words, the couple cohabited one tenth, but lived apart nine tenths of their life times.²²⁷

The outbreak of the Pacific War was a turning point for all migrant couples. Firstly, the war forced all the *fankeshen* to share a similar fate – to live without their husbands for at least four years from late 1941 to 1946.²²⁸ Secondly, there were many Quanzhou *fanke* who died under Japanese occupation of Southeast Asia and this had

²²⁷ Chen, *Fei you guangan ji*, p. 6.

²²⁸ The first migrant who returned from the Philippines to Quanzhou was recorded in 1946.

caused the *fankeshen* to lose their husbands.²²⁹ For instance, an interviewee called Wu lost her husband because the latter was killed by the Japanese in the Philippines during the occupation.²³⁰ Thirdly, after the war, changing political and economic conditions, which followed independence of the Southeast Asian nation states such as the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaya, had imposed more restrictions on travel between the host countries and China. While some *fankeshen* managed to reunite with their husbands, most of them were not so lucky in doing so. They would live on in hope and very likely in ignorance of their husbands' fates, until they receive the sudden news of the loss of their husbands either to a re-marriage in their host countries or death.²³¹ Their marital lives were like what the interviewee Lin D said: "All my life, I had persisted as if I were a widow (*shou huogua* 守活寡), who became a true widow after his death (*shou sigua* 守死寡)".²³²

Other than factors such as the financial incapacities, infidelity of the *fanke*, the outbreak of the war, or infavourable political environments, the separated conjugal life could also be caused by the in-law family acting out of self-interest. The needs of a big family often compelled the migrant to prolong his stay to earn more money. For instance, in 1941, Lin Juzhen in Wubao village, Jinjiang, and her husband Yang Bangzhen in the Philippines were both looking forward to their reunion after five years of separation. Yang was also thinking of taking his young brother back home to

²²⁹ There were a lot of Quanzhou migrants who died during the war, see for example, Wu Tongyong 吴同永, "Minji huaqiao yu Nanyang kangri zhanzheng" 闽籍华侨与南洋抗日战争 (Fujianese Overseas Chinese and the Anti-Japanese War in Nanyang), *Huaqiao huaren yu qiaowu*, (2) 1995, pp. 12-13.

²³⁰ Interview with Wu ?, Jinjing town, Jinjiang city, 13 December 2004.

²³¹ According to the clan records in Quanzhou, many migrants died in host countries, leaving their family members in China. For details, see Zheng Shanyu 郑山玉, "Qiaoxiang zupu yu huaqiao huaren lishi yanjiu" 侨乡族谱与华侨华人历史研究 (The Genealogies of the Emigrant Communities and the Research on Overseas Chinese History), in *Quanzhou pudie huaqiao shiliao yu yanjiu* 泉州谱牒华侨史料与研究 (Historical Documents and Research on the Genealogies of Overseas Chinese in Quanzhou), eds., Zhuang Weiji 庄为玠 and Zheng shanyu 郑山玉 (Beijing: Zhongguo huaqiao chubanshe, 1998), pp. 1-17.

²³² Interview with Lin D.

get married. However, his father did not allow him to go home together with his brother unless he could bring back more money for house building. Lin had to write a letter to Yang at her father-in-law's request to ask him for 20,000 yuan. Yang, however, did not have such a big amount of money and did not dare to go home. The couple was saddened by the abortion of the trip. What they could do was to comfort each other through letters and look forward to a reunion once Yang had made enough money for the purpose.²³³

A separated conjugal life hurt the hearts of the migrant couples. The *fankeshen* Lin Juzhen's words reveal the inner feelings of many *fankeshen* who missed their husbands overseas so much after long years of separation:

I led a normal life for only six months after I had got married. Six months later, my life was full of frustrations. I suffered so much. My four neighbours like Liu Deyun and Shi Maozhi all accompanied their husbands to the Philippines and lived together. That was not the case for me for the reason of taking care of the in-law-family. I separated from my husband shortly after our wedding. This was the first hurt in my heart. I hoped to meet him since he left. However, his promise of meeting me in three years did not fulfill. This was the second hurt. He planed to bring his brother home to get married five years later. But he did not have 20,000 yuan to give to his demanding father and did not dare to come home. This was the third hurt. Migrants were under danger of death during the Japanese occupation. My husband's remittances and letters were cut off. The hurts came one after the other. How could my heart remain as a whole?²³⁴

It is noticeable that separated marital life has been a long reality in Quanzhou's migration history. In a Ming writing by He Qiaoyuan, we are told that separated marital life was common in the coastal area of Quanzhou. He wrote that, in Anhai town, males chose to leave for overseas to seek a livelihood. Some of them did not return for more than ten years. When they returned, they did not know their grown-up sons.²³⁵ In modern times, this situation has not been changed. An interviewee Zheng Bingshan recounted the experience of his uncle who migrated

²³³ Lin, *Wushiyi nian zhi xinsheng*, pp. 11-12.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

²³⁵ He Qiaoyuan 何乔远, *Jingshan quan ji* 镜山全集 (Collected Texts of Jingshan), Vol.48, cited in Lai, "Jinjiangxian Feilubin qiaohui shi chutan", p. 6.

from Hui'an County to Muar, Malaya in the 1910s after he got married for half a year. The uncle had a second family and children in Muar and did not return home until 40 years later. In Hui'an, his son who was born after he left was now 40 years old. Since the father and the son had never met before, Zheng had to introduce the son to the father. His aunt was very angry because of his long absence from home. Other than scolding him, she refused to talk to him. At last, the uncle could not bear living at his home any longer and turned to Zheng in Quanzhou city for help. Zheng, who was a cadre working for the Quanzhou government, rented a room for him. Soon the uncle left and died in Malaysia about five years later.²³⁶

Even though they led separated lives, the limited time spent with their husbands constituted clear, colourful and significant memories for some *fankeshen*. Over time, the memories became more important in their old age. Some interviewees of this studies remembered the time they had spent with their husbands even when they were in their seventies or eighties. The interviewee Chen LD, for instance, stayed with her much older husband for 70 days before he left for Singapore. Later she remarried for survival after she left her in-law family as a result of her parents-in-law's oppression. She herself was very surprised with her memories of the first husband when she told of the details of the life with him.²³⁷ Compared with Chen LD, Lin D's memories of life with her husband were much more detailed.²³⁸ Their memories show that the marital life together was never forgotten.

²³⁶ Interview with Zheng Bingshan.

²³⁷ Interview with Chen LD.

²³⁸ Lin D recounted the details of her life with her husband, including her strategy of trying to persuade her husband to go to the studio in Quanzhou city together to take a photo of both of them. She wanted him to carry the photo when he was in the Philippines. However, her husband did not dare to go with her. At last, Lin went to take a photo herself and presented the photo to him. Another interviewee, Chen SM, a close neighbour of Lin, was told many detailed stories by Lin. Interview with Lin D and Chen SM.

As a by-product of the separation, large numbers of ballads were composed and circulated at the folk level, describing the feelings of the left-behind wives, including the *fankeshen* in Quanzhou who missed, worried about and pined for the return of their husbands. These ballads include poignant portrayals of the final farewell between husband and wife, capturing the couples' reluctance towards being separated; yet they were forced to do so for the sake of livelihood. Since the couples lived in separation for a long time in life, many ballads reveal the wives' internal feelings towards their husbands. Their loneliness, isolation and resentment form the bulk of the folk songs.²³⁹ For instance, a well-known ballad which is popular in southern Fujian, Chinese communities in Southeast Asia and Hong Kong describes a *fankeshen*'s feelings when she was going to write a letter to her husband overseas:

I want to tell you many things when I am holding a pen
My eyes are filled with tears
Due to poverty, you had to seek fortune overseas
If I know it is very difficult for you to return
I will not let you go even if we can eat only two meals per day²⁴⁰

Special Connectivity through Remittances and Letters

In order to maintain their marriages across the great geographical distance of the South China Sea, many *fanke* and *fankeshen* maintained communication with each

²³⁹ For example, Chen Zengrui 陈增瑞 ed., *Jinjiang Minyao baishou* 晋江民谣百首 (One Hundred Folksongs of Jinjiang), (Manila: Philippine An Hai Club, 1995); These folksongs have been largely collected and published as part of the cultural heritage of every county or city in China as “the Chinese Collection of Folk songs and Ballads” (*Zhongguo geyao jicheng* 中国歌谣集成) in the 1990s. For the preliminary discussion of the ballads in the emigrant communities, see Wang Renqiu 王人秋, *Xiangsi shu* 相思树 (The Tree of Mutual Longing) (Neimenggu: Neimenggu wenhua chubanshe, 1995), pp. 145-155. Similar expressions through folk songs were also seen among the left-behind wives in the eastern Guangdong province, from which the migrants mostly departed to Thailand, see Bao Jiemin, *Marital Acts: Gender, Sexuality, and Identity among the Chinese Thai Diaspora* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, c2005), pp. 36-37.

²⁴⁰ “Zhibi tiqi huatou chang” 纸笔提起话头长 (There were a Lot of Words in Her Heart When She Was Going to Write a Letter to Her Husband), in *Zhongguo geyao jicheng Fujian juan Shishi fenjuan* 中国歌谣集成福建卷 石狮分卷 (The Chinese Collection of Folk Songs and Ballads, Volume of Shishi, Fujian), ed. Shishi shi minjian wenxue jicheng bianweihui (Shicheng: 1992), p. 64.

other through their remittances and correspondences that included money, material items and letters. Oral messages were also sent through go-betweens.

In the local society of Quanzhou, remittances were referred to by various terms such as *fanyin* 番银 or *fanqian* 番钱 (foreign money), *lusongqian* 吕宋钱 (Luzon or the Philippines money) and *qiaohuiqian* 侨汇钱 (overseas remittance). It was also referred to by the *fankeshen* as *maizidianfuqian* 卖子典夫钱 (money from selling sons and pawning husband). A migrant's remittance back home was called *daqian* 搭钱 or *ji fanying* 寄番银.²⁴¹

At the same time, remittance letters were called *qiaopi* 侨批, *pi* referring to “a letter” in the southern Fujian dialect. Remitted money and remittance letters were often put together and sent back home. These remittance letters were emotionally significant for the *fankeshen* for they conveyed the regards and news of their husbands. Thus, remittances constituted the main channel by which the *fanke* transmitted economic contributions to, and maintained communication and emotional ties with, their home families and society. This section analyzes the roles of cultural remittance in the *fankeshen*'s lives only. Chapter V will provide a general survey of remittances received in Quanzhou in the 1930-90s and elaborate the impact on the *fankeshen*'s socio-economic lives.

According to research by Lin Jinzhi, by 1949, there was a yearly amount of 50,000,000 to 100,000,000 Chinese yuan worth of remittances arriving in Fujian, most of which (96.35%) was for the daily expenses of the *qiaojuan*.²⁴² Quanzhou was the main recipient of the overseas remittances sent to the Fujian province. In

²⁴¹ Lai, “Jinjiangxian Feilubin qiaohui shi chutan”, pp. 6-7.

²⁴² Zhuang and Lin, “Fujian huaqiao qiye diaocha baogao”, p. 119; Lin Jinzhi 林金枝, “Xi huaqiao huikuan jiqi zuoyong” 析华侨汇款及其作用 (An Analysis of Overseas Chinese Remittance and its Function), *Baogui qiaoshi* 3 (1996), p. 29.

particular, a significant amount of remittances arrived in Jinjiang and Nan'an counties annually during peacetime. Table 3-4 shows the receipt of remittances in the various counties in Quanzhou in 1938, which represents the general distribution over time.

Table 3-4: Remittances Received in Quanzhou Counties, 1938

Place	Amount of remittance (in 10,000 <i>fabi</i> ²⁴³ yuan)	As a percentage of the province (%)	Provincial ranking	As a percentage of Quanzhou (%)
Fujian Province	7485.7			
Jinjiang	2500	33.4	1	59
Nan'an	661	8.83	2	15.6
Yongchun	370	4.94	3	8.7
Anxi	364.8	4.87	4	8.6
Hui'an	322	4.3	5	7.6
Jinmen	14.5	0.19	14	0.34
Dehua	9.78	0.13	20	0.23
Total of remittance received in Quanzhou	4242.08	56.67		100

Source: Quanzhou huaqiaozi bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Quanzhou huaqiaozi* 泉州华侨志 (A History of Quanzhou Overseas Chinese) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui chubanshe, 1996), p. 174.

For a long period of time, two groups of scholars had presented similar views on remittances of Overseas Chinese from an economic perspective. One discussed the power of remittances from a macro-scope perspective – how the remittances contributed to the socio-economic development in the migrants' hometown as well as to the country's trade balance.²⁴⁴ The other group studied remittances' roles from a micro-scope perspective – the impact of migration on the individual migrant family.²⁴⁵

The subject of remittances as a cultural phenomenon has received fresh attention recently. For instance, Chen Dongyou observes that remittances reflected the

²⁴³ *Fabi*, in Chinese “法币” or in English “legal tender”.

²⁴⁴ For example, Zheng, *Fujian huaqiao huikuan*; Douw, “Overseas Chinese entrepreneurship and the Chinese state: the case of South China, 1900-49”; Lin, *Jindai huaqiao touzi guonei qiyeshi yanjiu*.

²⁴⁵ For example, Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*; Sun, *Qingdai huaqiao yu minyue shehui bianqian*; Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold*.

Overseas Chinese's support out of gratitude for the home families and homeland, as seen from their continued remittances for the upkeep of their families, donations and investments. It was a tradition which was established since the Ming dynasty.²⁴⁶ Studies by Du Guifang on letters from migrants of eastern Guangdong led him to see them as cultural objects which reflected a strong sense of familism.²⁴⁷ In 2004, the Inaugural Workshop on Remittance Culture was held in Shantou, eastern Guangdong province, which threw up a new perspective in remittance studies. The remitted letters were found to have cultural and emotional values for the family members, including the left-behind wives of the migrants in eastern Guangdong.²⁴⁸ This new perspective opens up a new field of discussion in remittance studies.

In such research on cultural remittance, left-behind wives were apparently given a role in the process of letter communication. They were the receivers of their husbands' advice with regards to being traditional good wives and mothers, and being educated and independent women. They also received husbands' expressions of longing.²⁴⁹ These studies offer a new perspective of the impact of remittances on

²⁴⁶ Chen Dongyou 陈东有, "Luelun zaoqi Quanzhou haiwai huashang shenhou de huibao" 略论早期泉州海外华商深厚的回报 (A Discussion on the Remittances of Quanzhou Overseas Merchants to China out of Gratitude in Early Periods), *Huaqiao huaren lishi yanjiu* 3 (1997), pp. 68-74.

²⁴⁷ Du Guifang 杜桂芳, "Chaoshan qiaopi: yiwu yu quanli – yi qiangle de xinli xuqiu wei tezheng de jiazou guannian" 潮汕侨批: 义务与权利 – 以强烈的心理需求为特征的家族观念 (Remittances in Qiaoshan: Obligation and Right – Familism Characterized by Strong Psychological Needs), *Huaqiao huaren lishi yanjiu* 4 (1995), pp. 42-49; Du Guifang 杜桂芳, "Chaoshan qiaopi de wenhua neihan" 潮汕侨批的文化内蕴 (The Local Cultural Contents of the Remittances in Chaoshan), *Qiaopi wenhua* 侨批文化 (Culture of Remittance) 1 (October 2003), pp. 33-41.

²⁴⁸ Wang Weizhong 王炜中, ed., *Shoujie qiaopi wenhua yantaohui lunwenji* 首届侨批文化研讨会论文集 (Papers from the Inaugural Workshop on Remittance Culture) (Shantou: Chaoshan wenhua lishi yanjiu zhongxin, 2004).

²⁴⁹ Wang Weizhong 王炜中, "Chuxi qiaopi qingjie" 初析侨批情结 (A Preliminary Study on the Emotional Tie of Remittances), in Wang, ed., *Shoujie qiaopi wenhua yantaohui lunwenji* Weizhong, p. 271; Du Shimin 杜式敏, "Chaoshan qiaopi de funü guan chutan" 潮汕侨批的妇女观初探 (A Preliminary Study on the Representation of Women Reflected in Remittances in Chaoshan), in Wang, ed., *Shoujie qiaopi wenhua yantaohui lunwenji*, pp. 286-293; Xu Xiuying 许秀莹, "Qiaopi, weixi qiaojuan hunyin shenghuo de niudai" 侨批, 维系侨眷婚姻生活的纽带 (Remittances: The Ties That Bind the Marital Lives of the *Qiaojuan*), in Wang, ed., *Shoujie qiaopi wenhua yantaohui lunwenji*, pp. 307-312.

migrant marriages, and on how remittances became one way of “binding ties” between husbands overseas and wives at home.²⁵⁰

Nevertheless, these more recent studies continued to perceive the women as dependants of remitted money and receivers of letters, which not only oversimplify the multi-layered relationships between husbands overseas and their wives in China, but also create a stereotype of the position of wives as dependants. The left-behind wives were an equal partner in their marriage life and an inseparable component in maintaining the marriage. Through locating the place of the *fankeshen* in the process of remittance communication, a more positive image of these women surfaces.

The earliest record of a remittance to Quanzhou was found in the clan record of the Cai lineage in Dalun village, Shishi. The record says that in the Ming dynasty, the villager Cai Jingsi migrated to Luzon in 1547 to make money, leaving his newly-wedded wife behind at home. He sent home remittances later. Another villager, Cai Zhoufu, migrated to Luzon and returned to get married and re-migrated. In his second return he helped arrange a marriage for his younger brother. He also repaired the ancestral graveyard and built a house which he shared with his brother. Later on, he and the younger brother migrated again and made more money in the Philippines.²⁵¹ The record does not mention letters which were likely to have accompanied the remitted money. However, it shows the separated marriage life of Quanzhou migrant couples. One should not ignore the fact that as early as Ming times, communication was maintained through remittances and return trips.

Remittances delivered a message of certainty to the *fankeshen* that their husbands were safe and doing well, and also meant that the latter still cared about their wives in China. The research by Xu Xiuying observes that, for the migrant

²⁵⁰ Xu, “Qiaopi, weixi qiaojuan hunyin shenghuo de niudai”.

²⁵¹ Lai, “Jinjiangxian Feilubin qiaohui shi chutan”, pp. 4-5.

couples in Chaoshan, Guangdong, their marital lives were deeply manifested through remittances.²⁵² Usually the remittance from their husbands went directly to the *fankeshen*'s parents in-laws. Letters from their husbands were also addressed to the parents. The *fankeshen* might know little about how much money her husband had sent and what he said in his letter. One such example was given by the interviewee Lin D. She lived with her parents-in-law and siblings-in-law after marriage when the husband was in the Philippines. She said that she had no knowledge about the amount of remittance and the content of letters from her husband. When she needed money, she would ask her mother-in-law for a small amount.²⁵³ Like Lin D, other interviewees like Xu LD, Chen LD and Wu Z were in the dark about the remittances and letters too.²⁵⁴ However, it was not the money but the accompanying message of their husbands' safety and well-being that mattered. Xu Xiuying explains that the receipt of remittances was equivalent to seeing their husbands. If remittances did not duly arrive, the women would regard it as signs that misfortune could have befallen their husbands.²⁵⁵

In times of urgent need for money, some of the wives would secretly write to their husbands. Lin D recalled that she once asked her husband for help by writing him directly in the 1960s and succeeded in getting a remittance of 20 yuan which was sent to her natal family through her.²⁵⁶

For a few couples who kept up direct communication, remittances and letters served as "binding ties", providing great support to each other as they endured the separation. The story about Lin Juzhen and Yang Bangzhen is a case in point. They

²⁵² Xu, "Qiaopi, weixi qiaojuan hunyin shenghuo de niudai", pp. 307-308.

²⁵³ In Zhangzhou, I interviewed Lu Y, the wife of a migrant in Singapore before the Pacific War, who had similar experiences. However, for her case the mother-in-law gave her a small sum of money every month. Interview with Lu Y, Zhangzhou city, 16 November 2004.

²⁵⁴ Interview with Lin D, Xu LD, Chen LD, and Wu Z.

²⁵⁵ Xu, "Qiaopi, weixi qiaojuan hunyin shenghuo de niudai", pp. 307-308.

²⁵⁶ Interview with Lin D.

showed their pining for each other through regular letter communication throughout their five-year separation. For Yang, his wife's letter motivated him to work hard to support the family. He asked her to write him regularly to guide him through the hard life especially when he was not allowed by his father to return home.²⁵⁷ Lin describes the importance of letter writing in their life as below:

We were tied emotionally through letters between China and the Nanyang. Writing a letter was to convey our feelings and wish for a bright future in life. The letters gave us comfort, encouraged us to go through the hardship of separation and offered hopes for his return.²⁵⁸

For those *fankeshen* who were illiterate, they would approach a letter-writer for help. Letter writing (*daishu* 代书) was a thriving business in the villages or towns in Quanzhou.²⁵⁹ Zheng Bingshan in his interview told the author that he was a teacher in a primary school during his youth in the Republican era. He used to help write letters for the *fankeshen* in the village. Every month he wrote two or three letters for them. The *fankeshen* also brought the letters from their husbands to Zheng to read out the contents. They would then ask Zheng to help pen a reply. Zheng would read the reply to the customer and modify it upon their request. The content of the letter, according to Zheng, was often about the trivial things of the family. For instance, the *fankeshen* might report that the adopted son was not docile, or the adopted children were ill, etc. In Zheng's memory, the *fankeshen* seldom asked for money or the return of their husbands except on such occasions when their sons were getting married, when their parents-in-law were seriously ill, or when the family planned to build a new house. At times, it was difficult for him to capture what a *fankeshen* had said, partly because she spoke the dialect of southern Fujian which was hard to translate into Mandarin and partly because the trivial things were hard to describe in writing.

²⁵⁷ Lin, *Wushiye nian zhi xinsheng*, pp. 9-12.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

²⁵⁹ Interview with Zheng Bingshan.

He had to listen to her carefully for a while and write down the main ideas. But Zheng was most happy to help and the *fankeshen* also expressed their appreciation of his effort. They sometimes presented him gifts such as pens which were sent by their husbands.²⁶⁰

After the founding of the PRC in 1949, the government called on the *fankeshen* to learn how to read and write. One of the main aims was to enable the *fankeshen* to write the letters by themselves. Some *fankeshen* succeeded in picking up the skill. In such a case, some of them would be highly praised by the state's propaganda machinery and their efforts and achievement were published in newspapers as a model for others to emulate.²⁶¹ By writing to their husbands themselves, some *fankeshen* were able to feel closer to their husbands. From the government's point of view, the intimate husband-and-wife relationship would probably invite more remittances that benefited the local community.

There were also instances when some *fankeshen* were not keen on sending letters to their husbands. An illiterate *fankeshen* had difficulties sending her letters if she did not have a literate person to help. Moreover, arranged marriages and long-term separation did harm to their conjugal relationships. Although they remained as couples because the customs expected them to do so, they had little affection for each other. While the wife played her roles at home, the husband stayed overseas, sending little money back.

Furthermore, a literate *fankeshen* was not necessarily fond of writing to her husband. An interviewee Xu XC was such a case. She often helped write letters for other *fankeshen*, but never wrote to her husband in the Philippines. The husband did

²⁶⁰ Ibid.

²⁶¹ See for example, "Meiyou weihua wangshou yichang xujing huixie huidu zai bu wuxing zhangfu 'shenjingbing'" 没有文化 枉受一场虚惊 会写会读 再不误信丈夫 '神经病' (As a Illiterate, She Was Scared by a False Alarm; Now She Is Able to Write and Read and Did not Believe Her Husband 'Suffered Mental Disorder' Again), *Fujian qiaoxiangbao*, 7 January 1957.

send back some money when the Spring Festival came and when his daughter was getting married. The interviewee Xu said that they learnt news of each other through informants rather than letters.²⁶²

When a migrant husband had not sent back a word or money for years, the *fankeshen* would resort to several possible channels for information. Obtaining the assistance of fellow migrants was one approach. She would visit a returned migrant and ask about her husband. The returnee often would not tell her the truth if her husband had died or remarried. Under such a circumstance, the *fankeshen* had to use her wits to discern the truth. For example, Lin Juzhen and the interviewees Yang LQ and Cai CL all used the similar tactic of pretending that they were already aware of the fact but only wanted to confirm it. Thus people unsuspectingly believed that the wife had heard about the news and would reveal the details to her.²⁶³

A *fankeshen* could seek the assistance of fellow villagers or relatives who stayed in the same place with her husband overseas to convey messages to him. Lin D's uncle-in-law, for example, lived near her husband. When she encountered financial hardship during the 1960s, she asked him to look for her husband Chen. Chen, who had formed a second family with children in the Philippines, managed to present money and jewelry to Lin D. The money and jewelry were used to buy a bicycle to make a living with.²⁶⁴ Another interviewee Chen LD remarried after she had failed to rejoin her husband in Singapore in the mid-1950s. In 1981, the second husband passed away and she was old and without any children to care for her. She managed to seek the help of a Singaporean returnee to pass her plea for help to her first husband. In 1991 she travelled to Singapore and then stayed there for about three

²⁶² Interview with Xu XC, Qingyang town, Jinjiang city, 18 November & 8 December 2004.

²⁶³ Interview with Yang LQ, Qingyang town, Jinjiang city, 9 & 22 December 2004; Interview with Cai CL; Lin, *Wushiyi nian zhi xinsheng*, p. 20.

²⁶⁴ Interview with Lin D.

months with the help of her first husband. After she returned, she began to receive remittances from her first husband until he died.²⁶⁵

Another example concerns Lin Juzhen whose husband remarried with a Filipino woman during the Second World War and did not send any word and money back home even after the war. Lin was very upset and angry with his remarriage. She did not write to him for years, although she missed him very much. Other *fankeshen* in the village came and comforted her. They recommended that she record her husband's words in his previous letters and send them together with the letters to their relatives in the Philippines. They believed that the husband Yang would get the letters from the fellow villagers and feel sorry for his wife. Lin did so and not long after, she received Yang's letter seeking forgiveness and promising to return to visit her.²⁶⁶

When a husband sojourned in a place which was not a common destination for other fellow villagers or relatives, the *fankeshen* would have no returnees to turn to for consultation and information conveyance. The interviewee Yang SH in Qingyang town, Jinjiang was in such a situation. She envied the fact that her fellow villager Yang LQ could enquire about her husband from a returned relative from the Philippines. She considered that migration to the Philippines was much better than migration to Surabaya in Indonesia where her husband lived. The reason is that in her place there were many people who went to the Philippines which made it convenient to ask about their relatives, while few went to Surabaya. Yang SH had written many letters to her husband herself, but they were thrown away by her husband's second wife. She stopped writing to her husband after a returnee from Surabaya advised her that her efforts were futile.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁵ Interview with Chen LD.

²⁶⁶ Lin, *Wushiyi nian zhi xinsheng*, p. 21.

²⁶⁷ Interview with Yang SH, Qingyang, Jinjiang City, 9 December, 2004.

The *fankeshen*'s efforts to re-establish communication with their husbands demonstrate their resourcefulness and ability to use the transnational networks of their fellow villagers and relatives on the one hand, and reveal the fact that national boundaries did pose insurmountable barriers for the women on the other hand. Thus, the connectivity between the *fankeshen* and the *fanke* through remittances was fragile, especially with the changing environments during and after the war in both China and the countries where their husbands lived. Lin D was very sad that, after her uncle-in-law died, there was nobody whom she could seek help from to pass her messages to her husband. She also felt disappointed that the brothers-in-law who had benefited from remittances from their brother could not understand her sorrow and never made efforts to help find a way to re-establish communication. What could she do without any assistance?²⁶⁸ For one reason or the other, many women lost contact with their spouses who were overseas and had difficulties in re-locating them. Thus, those who could help the families find out the whereabouts of the men were highly praised among the locals and the government in the 1950-60s.²⁶⁹

Despite the fact that remittances and letters were important in the maintenance of a marriage, they did not necessarily provide emotional communication for every *fankeshen* who received remittances or letters. Many *fankeshen* often had difficulties expressing themselves and created barriers to effective communication. Firstly, if the

²⁶⁸ Interview with Lin D.

²⁶⁹ Lin, *Wushiye nian zhi xinsheng*, pp. 45-55. This period also saw the Chinese government actively influencing the contents of the *qiaojuan*'s letters through choosing letter-writers for them and providing guidance on the contents of the letters. See for example, Stephen Fitzgerald, *China and the Overseas Chinese* (UK: Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 38-41; "Fujiansheng huaqiao shiwu weiyuanhui Fujiansheng jiayuting Zhongguo renmin yinhang Fujiansheng fenheng guanyu dali lingdao zuohao qiaoxin huiwen gongzuo, xiang guowai huaqiao jinxin guanyu nongye hezuohua yundong de zhengque xuanchuan lianhe zhishi" 福建省华侨事务委员会、福建省教育厅、中国人民银行福建省分行 关于大力领导做好侨信、回文工作, 向国外, 华侨进行关于农业合作化运动的正确宣传联合指示 (The United Guideline of the Committee of Overseas Chinese Affairs, Department of Education and the Fujian Branch of the People's Bank of China on the Active Leadership on the Correct Propaganda on the Agricultural Producers Cooperatives to the Overseas Chinese through Writing and Replying Letters to Overseas Chinese), *Fujian qiaowu gongzuo tongxun*, 2 (January 1956), pp. 16-18.

wives used special paper designed for the overseas letters, they would have limited space for the reply. Secondly, for those who were illiterate, they had to ask a letter writer for help. Obviously the women's emotions or inner feelings would be inadequately conveyed. Paul Siu points out that in these letters written by someone who was not the wife's trusted friend, her "feeling and thoughts are likely to be reserved and constrained".²⁷⁰ One could expect the letter to contain a few sentences announcing that the remittances had been received and the family members were all well.

On the other hand, many male migrants were illiterate, or otherwise could read a little but could not write. Moreover, if a man lacked money to remit, he would not send a letter, even if he could write.²⁷¹ As a result, the male migrants' letters were irregular and often brief.²⁷² In this sense, for their wives at home, although remittance communication did bring information to them, the information they got was often simple and meagre. Some of them could only learn information from returnees or other people. Thus, while remittance correspondence provided a bond between husband and wife in their separated life, this channel possessed its limitations.

Furthermore, there were a number of couples between whom there was no exchange of remittance or letter communication. In 1953, the Committee of Fujian Provincial Overseas Chinese Affairs (*Fujiansheng qiaowu weiyuanhui* 福建省侨务委员会) estimated that 25% of the migrant families in Fujian received little or no

²⁷⁰ Siu, *The Chinese Laundryman: A Study of Social Isolation*, p. 156.

²⁷¹ For a migrant who did not send a letter when he lacked money to remit, see "Guanyu zai qiaoku guanhe hunyinfu yundong de buchong zhishi (caogao)" 关于在侨区贯彻婚姻法运动的补充指示 (草稿) (The Supplementary Guideline on How to Conduct the Movement of Carrying out the Marriage Law in the Emigrant Communities (Draft) [before March 1953]), in *Fujiansheng dang'anguan*: file 148-2-463; Siu also finds similar trends among American Chinese. Siu, *The Chinese Laundryman*, pp. 156-157.

²⁷² Siumi Maria Tam also notices that "the typical overseas laborer was illiterate or semi-literate, and his letter, often written by professional letter-writers, were usually scarce, sporadic, and brief....". Tam, "Engendering Minnan Mobility: Women Sojourners in a Patriarchal World", p. 148.

remittances and lived with difficulties.²⁷³ This suggests that there was a substantial number of *fankeshen* who did not receive remittances or letters from their husbands overseas. In this sense, these *fankeshen* were unable to obtain information about their husbands and had to seek other channels to communicate with their men.

Strictness of Surveillance Culture

As shown, international migration had brought significant effects for the *fankeshen* and their marital lives. However, it did not change the gender norms concerning women in Chinese society. In the era from the late nineteenth century to the 1970s when the *fankeshen* were in large numbers, they suffered from sexual needs as most of them were young ladies who lived separately from husbands on the one hand, and they had to maintain their fidelity throughout their lives, as demanded by social expectations on the other hand.

The strongly patrilineal society of Quanzhou provided men chances to migrate overseas for a long time without the fear of losing their wives with its control on women through the patrilocal extended families. Even after generations of migration, the surveillance and expectations on female chastity had never been softened. Although all Han young daughters-in-law lived under the surveillance culture, the left-behind wives, including the *fankeshen*, seemingly faced much stricter surveillance.²⁷⁴

In Quanzhou, strict cultural prescriptions and supervision forced the women to live by high standards of fidelity to their husbands. Similar social control on female

²⁷³ “Qiaoxiang he qiaojuan de yiban qingkuang jieshao” 侨乡和侨眷的一般情况介绍 (A General Introduction of the *Qiaoxiang* and the *Qiaojuan*), in *Huaqiao qingkuang jieshao* 华侨情况介绍 (Introducing Overseas Chinese Affairs), ed. Fujiansheng huaqiao shiwu weiyuanhui bangongshi (Fuzhou 1963), p. 73.

²⁷⁴ Interestingly, Madeline Hsu’s study on Gold Mountain wives shows that the women in Taishan village also lived under a social system which endeavoured to keep them chaste. Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold*, pp. 104-108.

sexuality in migrant families and communities also developed with the migration of men and confined the *fankeshen* through the hands of in-law family members, clansmen and villagers. The suffering of the *fankeshen* through the absence of their husbands was considered by locals as inevitable, that “they were fated to suffer so”.²⁷⁵

The *fankeshen* were under the lineage/family control. After marriage, a *fankeshen*'s parents-in-law, especially the mother-in-law kept an eye on her movement.²⁷⁶ She was not free to go out of the house. She was not allowed to talk freely to other men in the village. Someone would accompany her whenever she went out. If she wanted to visit her natal family, she must seek her parents-in-law's permission. Otherwise, she would be scolded by the parents-in-law. During the interviews, Lin D, Wu Z, Chen LD, Yang LQ, Wu SH and Hong Q, who were asked about how their mothers-in-law treated them, shared similar experience of living under their mother-in-law's surveillance. Some *fankeshen* such as Lin D, Wu Z and Chen LD did not dare to go to bed if the mothers-in-law did not “persuade” them to do so for three times.²⁷⁷

Even after 1949 when the Communist society gave more rights to women, the *fankeshen* still lived under surveillance. In the 1950-60s, the *fankeshen* were often asked to attend some education movements such as attending night school or public meetings like the meeting for new marital law education. A report from the Judiciary Department of Jinjiang Special Administrative Area on marital status of Overseas Chinese in 1953 reported that *qiaofu* (women in migrant families) were under the

²⁷⁵ The interviewee Zheng Bingshan told the author of this attitude among local people. Interview with Zheng Bingshan.

²⁷⁶ Nevertheless, sometimes the parents-in-law's surveillance aroused some *fankeshen*'s hostility. *Qianzhou ribao* had a report on this issue. A 30-year-old *fankeshen* Liu Lai killed her mother-in-law when her affair was uncovered by the mother-in-law. “Yinfu Liu Lai xin hen yinye lebi laogu” 淫妇刘来心狠 夤夜勒毙老姑 (The Scarlet Woman Liu Lai Ruthlessly Killed Her Mother-in-law Late at Night), *Quanzhou ribao*, 9 February 1947.

²⁷⁷ Interview with Lin D, Wu Z, and Chen LD.

strict supervision of their families. Mothers-in-law did not allow them to attend public meetings. They feared that their attendance would cause trouble and the sons would not send remittances if they knew. In Dalun village, a woman who was in her fifties did not allow four daughters-in-law to take part in social activities, public meetings and night school. Every time when they attended, she would follow, walking on a crutch and carrying a lantern. Some mothers-in-law who did not accompany their daughters-in-law asked someone else to watch them even when the daughters-in-law were in the workplace.²⁷⁸ The interviewee Yang SH recalled her experience in the 1950s when she often went to Quanzhou city to attend some meetings organized by the new government. She said every time she went, her father-in-law followed her. When the meeting was going on, her father-in-law waited outside the room.²⁷⁹ The surveillance of women after 1949 was the continuation of the surveillance pattern before 1949, indicating that the traditional gender norms were maintained by the locals for the sake of the emigrants and migrant families, although the state had tried to improve the women's social status and give them more rights.

Siblings-in-law were another group who supervised the *fankeshen* when her husband was overseas. The interviewee Lin D lived under the surveillance of her husband's three brothers, and when she wanted to improve the family lives by migrating to Hong Kong in the 1970s, they stopped her. In 1947, a *fankeshen* Wang in Weitou village, Jinjing, was found by the elder brother-in-law to be committing adultery with another man from a nearby village, after her husband had left her for the Nanyang soon after their wedding. Even knowing she was under surveillance, she did not give up the relationship. One day the brother caught the adulterous pair red-

²⁷⁸ "Fujian Jinjiang qu guanyu Jinjiang xian huaqiao hunyin qingkuang baogao" 福建晋江区关于晋江县华侨婚姻情况报告 (Report on the Status of Migrant Marriages in Jinjiang County, [16 January 1953]), in *Fujiansheng dang'anguan*: file 148-2-463.

²⁷⁹ Interview with Yang SH.

handed but failed to catch the man who fled out of the window. The brother and the lineage members were so angry that they sent Wang to the man's house and reported the matter to the village official.²⁸⁰ Some siblings-in-law also published renunciation announcements in newspapers without the husbands' knowledge. A *fankeshen* Shi Boniang lived separated from her husband Wu Zhengyuan in the Philippines. The hardship she had to endure in her in-law family during the Pacific War forced her to return to her natal family. She committed adultery, and was discovered by Wu's younger brother. The brother announced the end of the family relationship with Shi in a newspaper. Wu Zhengyuan himself only learned of the incident when he returned home after the war.²⁸¹ These examples indicate the powerful surveillance of brothers-in-law on the *fankeshen*.²⁸² Similarly, the sisters-in-law also played a part in the surveillance. For instance, when Chen LD participated in outdoor labour, her sisters-in-law would accompany her. Lin D also had her sister-in-law to keep an eye on her when she was outside.²⁸³

Other than the in-law family, many villagers including the clan members played a part in watching the *fankeshen* when their husbands were overseas. Villagers generally disliked any adultery committed by the *fankeshen*. The 1953 report of the

²⁸⁰ "Jinjing weitoucun zhuajian quwen" 金井围头村捉奸趣闻 (News on the Arrest of Adulterers in Weitou Village, Jinjing), *Quanzhou ribao*, 3 August 1947.

²⁸¹ "Qing ji shi mingjie na guai lang wuqing" 卿既失名节那怪郎无情 (The Wife Lost Her Chastity, Thus the Husband could not be Blamed for Being Heartless), *Minsheng bao*, 23 June 1948.

²⁸² However, *fankeshen* and their brothers-in-law had more multi-layered relationships rather than this. Moreover, for some *fankeshen*, the wives of their brothers-in-law also played the role of watchers. On the other hand, some sisters-in-law and *fankeshen* had developed close relationships. For example, Lin D and her eldest sister-in-law, the other *fankeshen* in the family, formed a partnership throughout their lives. On the multifaceted relationships between *fankeshen* and their brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, more investigations are needed.

²⁸³ Interview with Lin D and Chen LD; Sandra M.J. Wong's study shows that when men migrated overseas, mothers and their daughters reinforced their bonds to each other. See Sandra M.J. Wong, "For the Sake of Kinship: the Overseas Chinese Family", (Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University, 1987). Such a relationship must have played a part in sisters-in-law's helping their mothers to watch the *fankeshen*, who were daughters-in-law. On the other hand, there must have been some *fankeshen* who had developed close relationship with their mothers-in-law and sisters-in-law. For instance, some newspapers reports reported that *fankeshen* and their mothers-in-law depended on each other when little remittance was received. More studies are needed to fulfill the gaps.

Judiciary Department of Jinjiang Special Administrative Area on the marital status of the Overseas Chinese outlined the villagers' tone of criticism:

The masses were very dissatisfied with adultery. Adultery was considered as having "committed a big crime", and adulterers were required to be criticized. They even requested that the adulterers be sentenced to capital punishment. The town cadres and possemen were very active in "arresting adulterers". Take those possemen of the Sixteenth Area for example, they were supposed to arrest bandits, but actually encircled suspected residents' houses to arrest adulterers.²⁸⁴

Villagers' expectations of *fankeshen*'s chastity increased tensions between the *fankeshen* and their in-law family members. A female's chastity was crucial for the family's reputation and the support for the family economic strategy of migration.²⁸⁵ For these purposes, the in-law family members had the responsibility to mandate the fidelity of the *fankeshen*. The *fankeshen* thus lived under the supervision of the locals, namely, the in-law family inside and the villagers outside.

Interestingly, during the fieldwork for this study in Quanzhou, it was found that at least before they got into a second marriage overseas, some male migrants were also under surveillance in some Chinese communities overseas before the outbreak of the Pacific War. Since migration was considered a financial strategy for the family, male migrants were required to be loyal to their families in China through economic contributions. Hence, cohabitation or remarriage with local women would threaten the interest of home families and against the whole interest of the Chinese lineage. Under the surveillance system, improper behaviour could be easily uncovered by fellow migrants through his personal network and communicated to his hometown. In the Philippines, a migrant who married a local woman was often looked down upon by the Chinese communities before the Second World War.²⁸⁶ Having said this, the

²⁸⁴ "Fujian Jinjiang qu guanyu Jinjiang xian huaqiao hunyin qingkuang baogao".

²⁸⁵ Szonyi, "Mothers, Sons and Lovers", pp. 58-59.

²⁸⁶ Interview with Lin Meiyu 林美玉, Association of Returned Overseas Chinese from the Philippines in Quanzhou city, Quanzhou city, 16 December 2004; Interview with Hong Zuniang 洪祖良, Shishi

surveillance on male migrants overseas remained much less stricter than that on the *fankeshen*. Xiong Weixia's study thus tends to stress the point that there was not much limitation on *huaqiao*'s marriage overseas.²⁸⁷

In summary, this chapter has shown that traditional arranged marriages served the interests of the family in China, where parents played critical roles in the decision-making process towards marriage and even in the marital lives of migrant couples. Most of the male migrants and local girls were married without an emotional foundation, which induced what was in reality a fragile marriage although it was socially expected to last for a life time even with the geographical separation between husband and wife. Most *fankeshen* suffered from the separated marriage across the South China Sea, although many of them maintained communication with their husbands overseas during times of peace. How the migrant marriages had further affected their lives and what their other responses to the circumstances they faced will be elaborated in next chapter.

city, 20 December 2004; Ren, *Feilübin shehui shenghuo zhong de huaren (1935-1965) – cong zuji guanxi de jiaodu suo zuo de tansuo*, pp. 80-81.

²⁸⁷ Xiong, “Jindai minyue shehui ruogan wenti yanjiu”, p. 15.

Chapter IV

Strategies to Cope with Separation

This chapter investigates adaptation strategies that the *fankeshen* employed to deal with the various problems which arose from their marriages. Together with the preceding chapter, the present discussion intends to shed light on the impact of the husbands' migration on the *fankeshen*'s marital lives, gender relationships between the *fankeshen* and their husbands overseas, and the *fankeshen*'s feelings and self-perceptions on their marriages.

Research on the impact of migration on left-behind wives has found that international migration caused geographical separation and thus the high likelihood of estrangement within the marriage.²⁸⁸ The absence of their spouses forced women to adapt to the separation, which has been one of the most profound yet least discussed factors affecting the individual lives of the women during the migration process.

For the Chinese left-behind wives, Madeline Hsu finds that the Gold Mountain wives in Taishan adapted to the absence of their husbands who had migrated to the United States in two ways: they either adopted sons or married a second time. Hsu's discussion sheds light on how the women tried to overcome their losses during the migration process.²⁸⁹ The process of adaptation for the *fankeshen*, however, is not as well-researched compared to the research on the response of Gold Mountain wives. Through studying the *fankeshen*, the present author has observed that apart from their strategies to maintain the remittance communication with their husbands, which has been discussed as one of the salient features of migrant marriages in the previous chapter, the *fankeshen* also had adopted sons or remarried like the Gold Mountain

²⁸⁸ Abadan-Unat, "International Labour Migration and Its Effect upon Women's Occupational and Family Roles", pp. 151-152.

²⁸⁹ Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold*, Chapter 4.

wives. Moreover, they had other strategies to cope with the absence of spouses, such as developing friendships with other *fankeshen* in their villages or towns, gambling, watching traditional operas performances, playing music, or going shopping to escape their daily loneliness. Furthermore, they had spiritual pursuits. They also sought solace and comfort with their natal families. Some of them even committed adultery to escape their lonely marital lives, or chose to divorce for a range of reasons.

Some of the above-mentioned ways, such as gambling, enjoying opera, music, shopping, practicing religion, and turning to the natal families for refuge or comfort and consolation, were already common practices in the society. It was highly possible that some *fankeshen* followed these common practices and participated in these activities. However the substantial numbers of them being involved in these practices suggest that these practices were an important component of their strategies. Firstly, it was the *fankeshen* who chose to use common practices as strategies to cope with the absence of spouses. Otherwise, they could choose not to become involved in these activities. Secondly, it was easier for the local people in a patrilineal society to accept the *fankeshen*'s participation in activities which the majority of the masses were already involved in. Participation in such common practices was a way to reduce or eliminate possible criticisms from the society where the *fankeshen*'s activities were under strict surveillance. Thus, the present author considers that common practices also formed part of the *fankeshen*'s strategies for adapting to separation. Their adoption of common practices indicates their resourcefulness.

Adoption of Sons

Migration had affected the fertility patterns of migrant couples. In Turkey, left-behind wives adapted to the long years of separation from their husbands by having children with great frequency, whenever their husbands returned home to visit.

M. B. Kiray finds that “to be pregnant or breastfeeding seems to keep these women emotionally satisfied”.²⁹⁰ In contrast, in China, very low reproduction rates were the effect of migration on fertility patterns of the *fankeshen* because of the male migrants’ long absence from home.²⁹¹ Thus, a migrant family often had to adopt children, especially sons.

Even though low reproduction contributed to the practice of adopting children, Fujian and Guangdong people chose to adopt more sons even when they already had sons of their own. Since the Ming and Qing dynasties, long-distance merchants adopted sons and sent them to conduct the maritime trade on their behalf after they became of age in order to safeguard the safety of native sons.²⁹² Chen Ta finds that adopted sons had a special role as “a device to prepare for the continuance of the business built up abroad” in Z zone near Shantou.²⁹³

Chen also finds that in southern Fujian and eastern Guangdong, adoption of children, especially of boys, was “quite common in emigrant families”.²⁹⁴ Though he does not regard adoption of sons as a deliberate strategy meant to resolve the low reproduction rates, he argues that “to perpetuate the family pedigree and the ethnic continuity of the clan” was the main reason for adoption.²⁹⁵ For Gold Mountain families, Madeline Hsu maintains that extended separations “greatly complicated the fundamental act of procreation”. Adoption became a primary way of acquiring heirs despite the lack of procreation among Gold Mountain Guests. However, some family

²⁹⁰ M. B. Kiray, “The Family of the Immigrant Worker”, in *Turkish Workers in Europe, 1960-1975*, ed. N. Abadan-Unat (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1976), p. 255, cited in Abadan-Unat, “International Labour Migration and Its Effect upon Women’s Occupational and Family Roles”, p. 151.

²⁹¹ See for example, *Tangdongcun zhi* 塘东村志 (The Gazetteer of Tangdong Village), ed. Cai Qing 蔡青 (Quanzhou, 1997), p. 22.

²⁹² Zeng Shaocong 曾少聰, *Dongyang hanglu yimin: mingqing haiyang yimin Taiwan yu Feilübin de bijiao* 东洋航路移民: 明清海洋移民台湾与菲律宾的比较 (Migration towards the Eastern Ocean: Comparative Study of Maritime Chinese Migration to Taiwan and the Philippines during the Ming and Qing Dynasties) (Nanchang: Jiangxi gaoxiao chubanshe, 1998), pp. 11-12.

²⁹³ Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, p. 131.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

lines of some families were ended when their adopted sons returned to their original home, or when they fled.²⁹⁶ In a recent work, Michael Szonyi concludes that adoption was a common strategy for dealing with the difficulties arising from the long absence of Overseas Chinese, such as impediments to procreation and the transmission of the family line, and to the continuing inter-generational exchange of support.²⁹⁷ Szonyi has also discovered cases of incest between left-behind wives and their adopted adult sons in Taishan County, indicating the possible deleterious effects of adoption on migrant marriages in term of family honour and status.²⁹⁸

In Quanzhou, previous studies suggest that the adopted sons played the roles that Szonyi has described. For the southern Quanzhou people, Liu Haoran stresses that adopting sons were for the sake of continuing the family line and accompanying the young wives of *huaqiao*. They adopted the children of their sisters, brothers or clansmen. They also bought very young boys from other villages.²⁹⁹ Interestingly, Ding Yiling's study of the emigrant village of Shuduo in Quanzhou finds that the adopted sons were left behind to bear the responsibility of performing the festival rites in China, while all the family members except the adopted son had migrated to Southeast Asia.³⁰⁰ Based on the existing literature, the present study probes the issue of the adopted sons from the *fankeshen*'s perspective and investigates how adoption contributed to the maintenance of migrant marriages and played an indispensable role in a *fankeshen*'s life.

²⁹⁶ Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold*, pp. 121-123.

²⁹⁷ Szonyi, "Mothers, Sons and Lovers", p. 53. For previous discussions see also Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, pp. 131-132; Wang, "Mingqing yilai minnan haiwai yimin jiating jieguo qianshi", p. 18; Liu, "Luetan ji zhong Jinjiang qiaoxiang minsu"; Zheng, *MingQing Fujian jiazu zuzhi yu shehui bianqian*.

²⁹⁸ Szonyi, "Mothers, Sons and Lovers".

²⁹⁹ Liu, "Luetan ji zhong Jinjiang qiaoxiang minsu", pp. 133-135.

³⁰⁰ Ding, "Kuaguo wangluo zhong de qiaoxiang: Haiwai huaren yu Fujian Shudou cun de shehui bianqian", p. 69.

As mentioned above, in Quanzhou, migrant husbands often left their young wives for the Nanyang within two weeks, or at the most six months, after their wedding. However, many women failed to become pregnant. Due to the absence of their husbands, the wives had fewer opportunities to conceive babies. Soon after the departure of their son, the parents-in-law, especially the mother-in-law, often arranged for the daughter-in-law to adopt children, especially a son, in order to keep the daughter-in-law from being upset about their husband's absence and from straying into an illicit affair and bearing another man's child, as well as to ensure that the son sent remittances from overseas since he now had a wife and children to support. Two interviewees Zheng Bingshan and Cai Shijia observe that many adopted sons continued to be recognized as the eldest children in the migrant families even if the migrant husbands later returned and succeeded in fathering their own children. This indicates that the migrant families often adopted children at an early stage if the *fankeshen* could not become pregnant in the short duration of cohabitation before their husbands' departure for the Nanyang.³⁰¹ Furthermore, unlike the Golden Mountain families who could adopt an adult son, children were often adopted when they were baby boys, in order to make them obedient from young and to keep them from their natal family. Often boys adopted from non-relatives were bought before they were six years old, and a contract was signed between the two families, preventing the son from returning to his native home.³⁰² Over time, the trade of children became a serious social problem in the *qiaoxiang* of Quanzhou.³⁰³

³⁰¹ Interview with Zheng Bingshan and Cai Shijia.

³⁰² Liu, "Luetan ji zhong Jinjiang qiaoxiang minus", p. 134.

³⁰³ "Dui Fujian sheng huaqiao diqu nannü hunyin jiating wenti de qingkuang yanjiu" 对福建省华侨地区男女婚姻家庭问题的情况研究 (Research on the Problems within Marriages and Families in Emigrant Communities in Fujian Province) [29 January 1953], in *Fujiansheng dang'anguan*: file 148-2-463.

From a *fankeshen*'s perspective, a woman without a son would have an easier time abandoning her husband's family and remarrying when she was young. In some families, their male migrants would never return home again from their sojourn. The adopted son thus played the role of continuing the family line of the migrant. In other words, adopting a son was a strategy resorted to during the absence of a husband, in order to keep his young wife from remarrying and to keep her in the parents-in-law's house, as well as to accompany her in a possibly long lonely marital life. Some *fankeshen* themselves adopted children to take care of them in their old age when their husbands departed for the Nanyang. In Shishan, a husband left his wife Lin Zhuniang in 1928 for the Nanyang after they were married for one year. He did not send any remittance money back since he left. In order to have a son as company in her lonely days and to support her in her old age, Lin spent all her dowry to adopt a one-year-old boy as her son in 1930.³⁰⁴

Apart from accompanying the *fankeshen*, for those whose husbands returned to China penniless and old, or did not even return, the adopted sons were whom the *fankeshen* depended on when they were old. An interviewee Lü SH, whose husband returned home very sickly and died not long after, had the consolation of having a filial adopted son. During the interview, she kept mentioning the good adopted son, who treated her as his natal mother and was very filial.³⁰⁵ Another interviewee Cai Shijia asserted that most adopted sons were filial towards their adopted parents, although there were exceptions. The foster parents often treated the adopted sons well because they wanted them as their heirs. Many adopted sons later on also migrated to inherit their foster fathers' businesses.³⁰⁶

³⁰⁴ "Nan'an Shishan Xidongxiang Lin Zhuniang ji zi Shirong yu Xiabanxiang Hong Youshui tuoli yiqie guanxi qishi".

³⁰⁵ Interview with Lü SH, Puzai village, Jinjing town, Jinjiang city, 13 December 2004.

³⁰⁶ Interview with Cai Shijia.

Like the Golden Mountain families, adopted sons could at times create problems. Some adopted sons were accused of stealing their family's property and they had to be banished from the families.³⁰⁷ Sometimes the fortunes that the migrants had earned overseas were squandered by their adopted sons, which often forced the families to end the relationship.³⁰⁸ Some adopted sons did not behave themselves well and were also abandoned. For example, a Nan'an migrant in the Nanyang said that he had to abandon his adopted son because the latter did not obey the family's code of conduct. He gambled and behaved badly outside.³⁰⁹ Sometimes adopted sons stole family property and fled away. Sometimes they returned to their natal families secretly when they were still young. As a result, the migrant families lost both the adopted son and the money spent on them.³¹⁰ Some adopted sons were declared to be un-filial, although they remained in their adopted families. For instance, some of them did not acknowledge the mothers who adopted them as their kin, and behaved like strangers to them. The interviewee Lin D managed to raise her adopted son amid much hardship. However, she was not allowed to take charge of the household after the adopted son married. Later the son found and re-established the relationship with his natal family instead. He told his son that the "grandmother" at home was not his natal grandmother. Moreover, he gave her little pocket money, although he provided her with a room and food. Lin was greatly saddened to have such an adopted son and

³⁰⁷ For example, "Shengming yu Xu Qingquan tuoli shuzhi ji jiating guanxi qishi" 声明与许清泉脱离叔侄及家庭关系启事 (Announcement of the End of Uncle-Nephew and Family Relationship with Xu Qingquan), *Quanzhou ribao*, 28 December 1946.

³⁰⁸ "Zhuang Tingnan yu Zhuang jinpao tuoli shuzhi ganxi qishi" 庄亭南与庄金抛脱离叔侄关系启事 (Announcement of the End of the Uncle-Nephew Relationship between Zhuang Tingnan and Zhuang Jinpao), *Quanzhou ribao*, 19 August 1948.

³⁰⁹ For example, "Tuoli fuzi guanxi" 脱离父子关系 (Severance of Father-Son Relationship), *Quanzhou ribao*, 7 April 1948.

³¹⁰ "Minglingzi xiang xie juantao, liang qiaoke dahu fufu" 螟蛉子相偕卷逃 两侨客大呼负负 (Two Adopted Sons Fled away with Property, Two Migrants Cried for the Loss), *Chenxi bao* 晨曦报 (Chenxi Newspaper), 3 July 1948.

often entertained the thought of committing suicide before she finally accepted the reality of his lack of filial piety.³¹¹

Nevertheless, for the group of *fankeshen* whose husbands did not care for them or only returned during their old age, it was important for them to receive their adopted sons' support. This is because their adopted sons supported them throughout their lives during the absence of their husbands and allowed them to live with heirs and normal family lives.

Escaping through Leisure and Religious Rituals

The *fankeshen* often received criticisms from the Nationalist and Communist governments, as well as scholars who studied the *qiaoxiang*, for spending too much remittance money in their daily lives. It is considered that whenever they received remittances, they would spend lavishly on ancestor or deity worship during traditional festivals. It was also asserted that they took part in unhealthy recreational activities such as opium smoking, gambling and attending plays to the point of addiction, contributing little to the economic and social development of China. Government investigations had also found that the female *qiaojuan*, mostly from Quanzhou, did not need to work for a living due to the substantial remittances from their husbands.³¹²

³¹¹ Interview with Lin D.

³¹² For such studies, see for example, Shen, “Jinjiang guiqiao qiaojuan zai qiaoxiang shehui he jingji bianqianzhong de diwei he zuoyong”; Xiong, “Jindai minyue shehui rougan wenti yanjiu”. For the investigation conducted by the government after 1949, see for example, “Jinjianxian Quanzhoushi qiaojuan mixun kaizhi deng qingkuang de yixie cailiao” 晋江县、泉州市侨眷迷信开支等情况的一些材料 (Some Documents on the Expenditure of *Qiaojuan* in Jinjiang County and Qianzhou City on Superstitious Activities and so on) [1957], in Fujiansheng dang'anguan: file 148-1-122; “Guanyu Nan'an Tuanjiexiang guiqiao qiaojuan nongye shengchan wenti diaocha” 关于南安团结乡归侨侨眷农业生产问题调查 (The Investigation on the Problems of Agricultural Production among Returned Overseas Chinese and *Qiaojuan* in Tuanjie Town, Nan'an) [May 1953], in in Fujiansheng dang'anguan: file 148-2-484. For the official report, see, Zhuang Yanlin 庄炎林, “Yige yifengyisu mianmao yixin de qiaoxiang – jinjiang xian hunhuang nongyeshe fadong qiaojuan gaizao qiaoxiang de jingguo” 一个移风易俗面貌一新的侨乡 – 晋江县辉煌农业社发动侨眷改造侨乡的经过 (A New *Qiaoxiang* with Transforming Social Traditions – the Experience of the County's Agricultural Cooperative Led its

In rich emigrant communities, such as Jinjiang, Nan'an, Shishi and the city of Quanzhou, the rich *fankeshen* hired labourers, and having maids was somewhat prevalent among rich migrant families.³¹³

For most families in other emigrant communities in Fujian, as a report of the Fujian Provincial Overseas Chinese Affairs Office reveals, the phenomenon of well-to-do migrant families who did not labour and had much leisure time on their hands was in fact not prevalent among the *qiaojuan*. It was especially not the case for the poorer families. For instance, the *qiaojuan* in emigrant area of Haicheng, Zhangzhou, did not receive substantial remittances from their relatives overseas and had to participate in agricultural labour and other jobs to eke out a living.³¹⁴ It appears that only the *fankeshen* in the region of Quanzhou had a unique mode of living which caused them to be singled out for criticism by the two successive governments, who called on them to fulfill their role as labourers and workers and make contributions to the society.³¹⁵ Still the accusation about the extravagant life style of the family members tended to over-generalize their mode of living and consumption habits and bore the biased comparison of the man being a diligent worker in the foreign land vis-à-vis his spendthrift and wasteful family members. A broader perspective may better explain the life style of and the use of the remittances by the *qiaojuan*, especially the

Qiaojuan to Make a New *Qiaoxiang* in Jinjiang County), *Qiaoxiang bao*, 17 March 1958. Zhuang was the chief of the Communist Party branch in Jinjiang County government at that time.

³¹³ Zhuang, “Yige yifengyisu mianmao yixin de qiaoxiang”. According to the interviewee Zheng Bingshan, the hired labour also played the role of protector for the family in the Republican era when the bandits kept eyes on the *qiaojuan*.

³¹⁴ “Yi jiu wu san nian Fuzhou Xiamen Zhangzhou shougongye diaocha zongjie baogao cailiao” 一九五三年福州厦门漳州手工业调查总结报告材料 (The Report on the Investigation of the Handicraft Industry in Fuzhou, Xiamen and Zhangzhou in 1953), in *Fujiansheng dang'anguan*: file 148-2-485.

³¹⁵ Governments in the ROC and PRC periods both called on *qiaojuan* to contribute to the society through their work. For the ROC period, see for example, Liu Jianxu 刘建绪, “Jizhong lilian jiuji qiaobao - shengfu zhuxi Liu Jianxu zai qiaowu zuotanhui de kaimuci (1941 nian 12 yue 29 ri)” 集中力量救济侨胞—省府主席刘建绪在侨务座谈会的开幕词 (1941年12月29日) (Collecting All the Forces to Relieve Overseas Chinese Compatriots – the Opening Speech of the Provincial Governor Liu Jianxu in the Forum on Overseas Chinese Affairs, 29 December 1941), *Fujiansheng dang'anguan*, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang'an shiliao*, pp.1724-27. For the PRC period, see for example, Zhuang, “Yige yifengyisu mianmao yixin de qiaoxiang”.

fankeshen. Questions such as how a left-behind wife spent her time when she did not need to make a living from labour every day, and how she overcame her loneliness, sense of isolation, anxiety and resentment that beset them during the long years of separated conjugal life would shed light on the issue.

Though the society kept a close watch on women, participation in outdoor recreational activities together with fellow female friends was acceptable. Restrictions on the *fankeshen* who was the head of her family were also more relaxed. For many *fankeshen*, they often spent their leisure time by getting together to share information and receive social comfort from one another.³¹⁶ Chatting was a way of releasing tension caused by the separation, becoming a favourite pastime. Lin Juzhen's autobiography recounts that she developed strong friendships with fellow sisters whose husbands had also migrated overseas. They comforted one another and provided help and advice whenever they encountered problems.³¹⁷ Obviously, the company of other sisters who were in the same boat was a fitting remedy for the *fankeshen* to escape the loneliness, sense of isolation, anxiety and resentment.

Gambling and watching the performance of traditional operas performances were two main ways of spending spare time, which were consonant with major leisure patterns in Quanzhou.³¹⁸ In Jinjiang County before 1949, a lone theater was shared by more than 100,000 people in the town. For the population in general, the popular forms of entertainment was gambling, drinking, visiting prostitutes and watching performances.³¹⁹ It was found that gambling stalls were widespread in the *qiaoxiang* and gambling was common among the *qiaojuan* who had the money from remittances

³¹⁶ Interview with Zheng Bingshan.

³¹⁷ Lin, *Wushiye nian zhi xinsheng*, pp. 14-16, 20-21, 31, 74-79.

³¹⁸ Hong Daxi 洪大希, "She feng chi yu longzha xia de qiaoxiang" 奢风侈雨笼罩下的侨乡 (*Qiaoxiang* under the Strong Impact of Extravagance), *Quanzhou ribao*, 19 July 1947.

³¹⁹ Xiaoshimin 小市民, "Women xuyao zhengdang de yule" 我们需要正当的娱乐 (We Need Healthy Entertainment), *Quanzhou ribao*, 28 January 1948.

to spend.³²⁰ Shen Yanqing writes that, during the Republican era, the communities of Jinjiang, especially Shishi, Dongshi, Anhai, Yongning, Neikeng, Yakou and Shenhu town were addicted to gambling. Since many *qiaojuan* had the financial support from remittances, some of them did not work and instead inclined towards spending their time gambling.³²¹

Even in the difficult time after the outbreak of the Pacific War, it was reported that many *qiaojuan* in a village of Xianian in Jinjiang County gambled with the money earned from the sale of furniture and property. Among them, a mother-in-law, Wu Ganliang, and her daughter-in-law were so addicted to gambling that they even played as opponents.³²² In 1954, the Office of Overseas Chinese Affairs of the Jinjiang District reported that gambling was popular in villages. The players were mostly middle-aged and old women from migrant families, who escaped loneliness through it.³²³

Attending theatre performances was another activity that the *fankeshen* often enjoyed very much. Theatre performances were popular in villages, especially during the traditional festivals, or during the wedding ceremonies. The dramatic performances often featured touching stories and nice music which comforted the *fankeshen*. Some *fankeshen* dressed up and waited for the opening of the performances eagerly. Handsome actors who starred in the performances often became the idols of some *fankeshen*.³²⁴ An interviewee Xu Tianzeng, who is an artist in

³²⁰ Xiong, “Jindai minyue shehui ruogan wenti yanjiu”, p. 26.

³²¹ Shen, “Jinjiang guiqiao qiaojuan zai qiaoxiang shehui he jingji bianqianzhong de diwei he zuoyong”, p. 17.

³²² “Xianian dongbao biandi duchang” 下埠东保遍地赌场 (Dongbao in Xianian Village Filled with Gambling Stalls), *Quanzhou ribao*, 8 April 1942.

³²³ “Zuijin qiaoxiang yixie sixiang qingkuang de baogao” 最近侨乡一些思想情况的报告 (Report on the Latest Paradigms of Thought among the People in Emigrant Communities) [1954], in *Fujiansheng dang’anguan*: file 148-2-527.

³²⁴ In 1948, in villages in southern Quanzhou city, an actor who had a lot of fans among *fankeshen* was found dead. His death raised the journalist’s interest whose investigation showed that the actor must

Quanzhou, told a story of a *fankeshen* in his hometown Longhu in the Republican era, a big emigrant town in Jinjiang, who loved to watch performances and became attracted to the lead actor of a particular play and sometimes she cooked chicken or duck soup for him.³²⁵

Having an actor as one's idol was called *daixi* 带戏 in Jinjiang, and the fan was called *xixiang* 戏箱. A popular tale was spread in Jinjiang County before 1949, which describes a story of a *fankeshen* Qiefeng aged 22 in Jinjing town, whose husband Chen was overseas. Her idolization of an actor was satirized as a “new modern tale” and “dissolute”, because people judged that the behaviour was a result of the husband's absence.³²⁶

Some *fankeshen* missed their husbands so much that they would play music as a way to escape the loneliness. Huang Mingding wrote that his mother always played the lute when the moon was full, in order to draw comfort from re-living the memories of her husband. Huang observes that other *fankeshen* whose husbands were in the Philippines also played the lute to express their yearning for husbands overseas.³²⁷

There were also other *fankeshen* who liked to go shopping in the department stores, cloth stalls and jewelry shops to pass the time. When remittance money arrived, the market would become bustling with more *qiaojuan* going shopping.³²⁸ Some rich *fankeshen* had very fashionable clothing designs and hair styles from Shanghai, which

have been killed because of his involvement with a *fankeshen*. See “Fujinchun jingjiao wang nali qu” 福金春净角往那里去? (Where is the Actor in Fujinchun Threat?), *Quanzhou ribao*, 29 January 1948.

³²⁵ Interview with Xu Tianzeng 许天增, Shishi city, 14 December 2004.

³²⁶ Interview with Hong Zuliang.

³²⁷ Huang Mingding 黄明定, *Shishi lian* 石狮恋 (Love of Shishi) (Fuzhou: Haixiawenyi chubanshe, 1994), pp. 11-15.

³²⁸ “Bingleng de yijiao” 冰冷的一角 (Cold Concern), *Minsheng bao*, 16 May 1948; “Shishi dou shi” 石狮掇拾 (Happenings in Shishi), *Quanzhou ribao*, 4 December 1946.

was the centre of new fashion trends for women, originating from the West.³²⁹ A journalist observed that the women's wavy hairstyles and the availability of remittances were closely connected. To have their hair permed was popular among the *fankeshen* after the war when remittances flowed into China again. One could find more and more women with wavy hair in the streets and such a "modern" style had created a good business for the beauty saloons.³³⁰ Shishi had only one reading room in the town, but there were four hair saloons that catered to requests for hair-perms.³³¹ In addition, jewelry became the main trading commodity in Quanzhou as a lot of *fankeshen* bought jewelry with the remittances they received, except during the period 1942-1945.³³²

For most *fankeshen*, religion was another source of emotional and spiritual comfort they sought even as they worried about their migrant husbands' fidelity and naturally, their good fortune and safety, especially after the outbreak of the Pacific War when communication with them was severed. Even though they became very poor, they still prayed for their relatives occasionally.³³³ The Gushao Pagoda (*Gushao ta* 姑嫂塔) in Shishi witnessed more frequent and more lavish practices of worship during these years.³³⁴ In 1958-66, despite much effort made by the state via

³²⁹ On Shanghai as the center of women's new fashion trends from the West, see Dai Yunyun 戴云云, *Shanghai xiaojie* 上海小姐 (Shanghai Ladies) (Shanghai: Shanghai huabao chubanshe, 1999), pp. 42-43.

³³⁰ Bei Fu 悲夫, "Qiaohui yu tangfa" 侨汇与烫发 (Remittances and Permed Hair), *Quanzhou ribao*, 9 September 1946.

³³¹ "Shishi duo shi"; "Xinwen jijin" 新闻集锦 (Collection of News), *Quanzhou ribao*, 2 December 1946.

³³² Chen Zhaoxiang 陈兆祥, "Quanzhou de jinyin shoushi ye" 泉州的金银首饰业 (The Jewelry Trade in Quanzhou), *Quanzhou Licheng wenshi ziliao* 泉州鲤城文史资料 (Literary and Historical Documents of Licheng District in Quanzhou) 10 (September 1992), pp. 196-209.

³³³ Chen Chang'an 陈长安, "changyi manmu shuo kangzhan" 疮痍满目说抗战 (An Account of the Devastation during the Anti-Japanese War), *Jinjiang wenshi ziliao xuanji* 晋江文史资料选辑 (Selected Literary and Historical Documents of Jinjiang) 17 (October 1995), p. 91.

³³⁴ Gan Mingqun 高铭群 and Lin Shaochuan 林少川, eds., *Xia si: Lin Guipan nüshi zhuanji* 霞思: 林贵攀女士传记 (Thoughts in the Sunset: the Biography of Ms Lin Guipan) (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue chubanshe, 1994), p. 24.

propaganda campaigns to change the *fankeshen*'s habit of "superstition" and educate them to manage their families thriftily and economically, their staunch beliefs were not shaken.³³⁵ Like gambling, folk beliefs formed one way of escaping the lengthy loneliness brought by the husbands' absence. A returnee Chan Xia remembered that his mother gambled and prayed in order to get by about 20 years of her lonely life in Quanzhou city.³³⁶

Adultery

Although the *fankeshen* lived under the strict surveillance of family members, clansmen and villagers, adultery with local men did occur at times. Xiong Weixia writes that after the outbreak of the Pacific War, some female *qiaojuan* committed adultery which caused the end of their marriages. There were also *fankeshen* who were punished by clansmen in almost every village for the act.³³⁷

The *fankeshen* were expected to be faithful to their migrant husbands by remaining chaste. This sacrifice in turn increased the feeling of emptiness. Consequently, adultery became a kind of adaptation strategy that some *fankeshen* made to deal with the physical and emotional anxieties caused by their marital separateness.

While male migrants' remarriages overseas often remained unexposed, the *fankeshen*'s sexual transgressions were easily reported overseas through letters from family members, clansmen and local people or oral messages from go-betweens.

³³⁵ Zhuang, "The Policies of the Chinese Government towards Overseas Chinese (1949-1966)", p. 26. *Fankeshen* continually turned to religion and faith for emotional support, although their lives faced dramatic changes after 1949. The investigation in 1957 shows that *fankeshen* who prayed in the Mazu Temple in Jinjiang County were bothered about the separation from their husbands and living conditions at home. See "Jinjian xian, Quanzhoushi qiaojuan mixin kaizhi deng qingkuang de yixie cailiao".

³³⁶ Chan Xia 单夏, "Youyu de qiaocun" 忧郁的侨村 (Dusky Emigrant Village), *Guiqiao de jiyi* 归侨的记忆 (Memories of Returned Overseas Chinese), ed. Zhonguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi Liaoningsheng wenshiziliao weiyuanhui (Shenyang: Liaoning renmin chubanshe, 1990), p. 24.

³³⁷ Xiong, "Jindai minyue shehui ruogan wenti yanjiu", p. 15.

Sometimes, even innocent women were accused of having committed adultery. A lot of *fankeshen* were censured for their adultery and forced to divorce, especially after many migrants returned to their hometowns not long after the end of the war.³³⁸ An interviewee Wu Z also had such a horrible experience, although she was not divorced in the end. In the 1950s, a female primary school teacher who worked in her village came to live with her, as her husband had left her soon after their wedding. For this reason and also possibly due to her involvement in the activities of the movement to build a new socialist society, her mother-in-law sent a letter to her husband in the Philippines, accusing that she slept with a “man”.³³⁹

Local newspapers, such as *Quanzhou ribao*, *Minsheng bao*, *Fujian ribao* and *Nanguang ribao*, etc., which were popular newspapers in Quanzhou, were keen on publishing reports on the adultery of the *fankeshen*. Among these newspapers, *Quanzhou ribao* and *Minsheng bao* had overseas branches in the Philippines. Some reports recounted the adultery committed by the *fankeshen* in narrative styles similar to traditional Chinese love stories – with sensual titles and erotic elaborations.³⁴⁰ Some reports were cited in the Chinese overseas newspapers in the areas where many Quanzhou men lived. When the researcher Chen Liepu visited Manila after the war, he found that the local Chinese newspapers frequently reported on local events in Quanzhou and Xiamen, many of which were stories of sexual transgressions of the *fankeshen* or disharmonious relationships between members in migrant families, written in a novelist’s style. Chen agrees that these reports both met the high demand by male migrants, who lived without their wives’ company, and served to fulfill

³³⁸ See for example, “Shishi dou shi”, *Quanzhou ribao*, 4 December 1946.; “Zai lun qiaofu zhencao wenti”.

³³⁹ Interview with Wu Z, Huazhou village, Chidian town, Jinjiang city, November 2004.

³⁴⁰ Szonyi’s study reveals similar literary styles in newspapers in the American Chinese Community in Siyi and the United States, see Szonyi, “Mothers, Sons and Lovers”, pp. 56-57.

circulation quotas.³⁴¹ Michael Szonyi, on the other hand, has observed it from a different perspective, saying that the newspaper accounts of incest stories of the women “are representations, not social facts”. They revealed “a heightened concern about sexual transgression” when the male migrants were away from home.³⁴² The present author agrees with Szonyi’s remark; however, the newspaper reports on the *fankeshen*’s external affairs in Quanzhou and Xiamen newspapers should not be seen merely as representations. It was understandable that the reports were written in an entertaining style in order to attract the readers who were interested in the private lives of the *fankeshen*, as Chen Liepu also remarks. On the other hand, these reports illuminated that the women’s activities were being closely watched, and even seen as a sort of entertainment by the readers, indicating the women’s lower social status. Nevertheless, while the reports of the *fankeshen*’s adultery could be inaccurate and distorted, these reports contained sufficient key information and details to serve as useful resources revealing the relatively unexplored experiences of the *fankeshen*, especially of those who had affairs or who were vilified for having committed adultery.

When the *fankeshen* were found to have committed adultery, they were often forced to end their marital relationship by their husbands’ annulments of the marriage in a newspaper. In order to alleviate the humiliation felt by themselves and their families, male migrants used transnational newspapers as a medium to publish their announcements. For example, in October 1942, Yang Zuyi published in *Quanzhou ribao* an announcement of the end of his marriage to his wife, whom he accused of “not abiding by a wife’s code of conduct” (*bushou fudao* 不守妇道) when he was in

³⁴¹ Chen, *Fei you guanganji*, p. 78.

³⁴² Szonyi, “Mothers, Sons and Lovers”, p. 57.

Manila.³⁴³ Another migrant in the Philippines, Liu Zhangpan, returned in the mid-1940s to Jinjiang to investigate his wife's adultery and finally announced an annulment of their marriage for the sake of the reputation of the family after he had confirmed his suspicion.³⁴⁴

After the end of the Pacific War, increasing numbers of marriage annulments appeared in local newspapers, published by returning migrants because of their wives' "non-abidance by a wife's code of conduct" during the war.³⁴⁵ Some of them had learnt about their wives' infidelity through rumours or letters from informants. These announcements were intended to salvage the "face" of the migrant and his family. Many male migrants returned home only to discover the adultery of their wives, which was intolerable to them.³⁴⁶ Only a very few could put up with the affairs and let the matters rest. Most of them divorced their wives without any concern for the wives' suffering in life. In his announcement published to end the marital relations with his wife Lin Yuan on 11 February 1947, the migrant Su explained that his wife "did not confine herself to the house", and had instead been "seducing other men", after he had left very soon after their wedding. In order to save his reputation, he announced his annulment of the relationship.³⁴⁷ There were, however, some divorces which were found to be unfair to the *fankeshen*, because they did not commit the act

³⁴³ "Yang Zuyi zhengzhong shengming" 杨祖彝郑重声明 (Serious Announcement by Yang Zuyi), *Quanzhou ribao*, 3 December 1946.

³⁴⁴ "Tuoli fuqi guanxi qishi" 脱离夫妻关系启事 (Announcement of the Severance of a Marital Relationship), *Fujian ribao*, 12 July 1940.

³⁴⁵ "Zai Lun qiaofu zhencao wenti"; Soon after the end of the Second World War, lots of migrants rushed to return home. Many of them even left the Philippines without completing the legal procedures which caused problems for their re-entry. "Feilubin huaqiao kangri yiyongjun tongzhihui jinyao qishi" 菲律宾华侨抗日义勇军同志会紧要启事 (Urgent Announcement for the Comrades in the Overseas Chinese Anti-Japanese Army in the Philippines), *Quanzhou ribao*, 6 February 1947.

³⁴⁶ For example, the Announcements of ending marital relationship or family relationship in *Quanzhou ribao*, 17 December 1946; 5 February 1947; 7 February 1947; 5 March 1947; 9 May 1947; 6 June 1947; 12 June 1947; 4 August 1948; 17 May 1948; 22 January 1948.

³⁴⁷ "Su Magu yu Lin Yu tuoli fuqi guanxi qishi" 苏马固与林毓 脱离夫妻关系 (Announcement of the Severance of Marital Relationship between Su Magu and Lin Yu), *Quanzhou ribao*, 11 February 1947.

at all. But not all were like Liu Zhangpan, mentioned earlier, who returned home to investigate the gossips personally before taking action against their wives.³⁴⁸

To punish the wife, she was often reported to the authorities. According to Philip Huang, “the 1928 code made adultery a crime only for a wife” and “the 1929-1930 civil code made adultery on the part of either party acceptable ground for divorce”.³⁴⁹ The 1935 criminal code stated that a married person who committed adultery with another person “shall be punished with imprisonment for not more than one year”.³⁵⁰ The migrant Cai from Dalun village returned home after the war and found his wife pregnant and angrily reported the matter to the authorities.³⁵¹ Having their adultery reported to the court not only meant the breakup of their marriages, but further stigmatized the social status of the women who were punished, while their husbands could evade the reach of the law for their remarriages or illicit affairs because of the difficulties in subjecting them to the judicial process.³⁵² There was a *fankeshen* Cai Yushou in Dapu village, Shishi, who lived separately from her husband Wang Haitu, who was in Manila. Wang did not return and did not send any remittance. Cai had to depend on her natal family for a living for about ten years. In 1947 the husband returned and Cai learnt that he had had a second marriage in Manila. After the husband went back to Manila again, Cai’s own affair was discovered. In order to defend herself, Cai accused Wang of bigamy in the local court. The court was unable to investigate the charge against Wang because it did not know where Wang resided. However, Cai was sentenced to eight months’ imprisonment because she was found to

³⁴⁸ “Shishi dou shi”.

³⁴⁹ Huang, “Women’s Choices under the Law”, p. 33.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ “Dalun guiqiao Cai mou baojing cheng qi bu zhen” 大仑归侨蔡某报警惩妻不贞 (Returned Migrant Cai Reported to the Police Office in Order to Punish His Unchaste Wife), *Minsheng bao*, 17 May 1948.

³⁵² “Qiaofu zhencao wenti” 侨妇贞操问题 (Problem of the Chastity of the Wives of Migrants Overseas), *Fujian ribao*, 23 December 1946.

have committed adultery and was judged to have brought a “false” charge against her husband.³⁵³

Occasionally, an affair could end in tragic violence.³⁵⁴ A man even used his wife to murder her lover. Lin Shu’er, wife of Huang Guozhi in the Philippines, committed adultery with a fellow villager in Putouxin village, Louxi town, Nan’an County, when the family had problems surviving after the outbreak of the Pacific War. Rumours or letters from local informants about the affair had infuriated Huang. In June 1946, Huang and the son of his brother returned together with guns. In Putouxin, Huang pretended that he did not mind the adultery of his wife, while training her to use the gun. One day, he forced the wife to shoot her lover when he was in the paddy field.³⁵⁵

In some cases, men became insane, killed their wives, or committed suicide after they returned home and discovered their wives’ adultery. For example, Zhang Shi’an migrated to the Philippines before the war, leaving his wife at home in Quanzhou city. The wife committed adultery after the outbreak of the war. The rumours or letters from local informants had induced Zhang to return home after the end of the war. In Quanzhou, Zhang learnt that the story was true and he went insane. He seemingly recovered and the couple moved to live in his uncle-in-law’s house, but one day he suffered a relapse and frightened others with a gun, which he also fired at the house. Later on, he was found drowned in a river.³⁵⁶ Another returned migrant Wu Zui intended to kill his wife after he heard the rumours on the way home that his wife

³⁵³ “Cai Yushou tongjian’an panxing bageyue” 蔡玉守通奸案判刑八个月 (Cai Yushou Was Sentenced to 8 Months’ Imprisonment for Adultery), *Quanzhou ribao*, 17 January 1948.

³⁵⁴ For example, “Cairu beikan fushang” 蔡乳被砍负伤 (Cairu Wounded by a Slash), *Quanzhou Ribao*, 29 June 1947; “Liushi jiansha’an jue tiqi gongsu” 溜石奸杀案决提起公诉 (The Murder Case in Liushi Will be Presented to the Court), *Quanzhou ribao*, 3 October 1946.

³⁵⁵ “Nan’an Putouxin fasheng jianfu qiangsha qingfu” 南安埔头心发生奸妇枪杀情夫 (An Adultery Woman Shot Her Lover in Putouxin, Nan’an), *Quanzhou ribao*, 29 August 1946.

³⁵⁶ “Fengren Zhang Shi’an tiaoshui zisha” 疯人张世安跳水自杀 (The Insane Zhang Shi’an Committed Suicide), *Quanzhou ribao*, 20 May 1947.

had committed adultery. Actually the wife Shi Qiuwei was innocent and had even done her best to maintain the family during the hard times. Wu did not go home when he arrived at his village. His wife asked villagers to persuade him to come home. Wu became angry when his wife scolded him. He used his handgun to try to kill Shi but failed.³⁵⁷ The migrant Zhang Kedu in Guanqiao, Nan'an, learned of his wife's adultery while in the Philippines and returned with a handgun. He killed the wife and committed suicide later on.³⁵⁸ This reaction is similar to that of some Turkey migrants' reaction to their wives, adultery, which has been discussed by Nermin Abadan-Unat. Rumours or letters from local informants also induced some international labour migrants, "to return home and save the 'honour of the family' by committing homicide".³⁵⁹ It is obvious that the adultery stimulated men's resentment at having unchaste wives when they were making money for their left-behind families.

Cases of adultery did not reduce much after 1949. In the 1950s, some of the *fankeshen* even had affairs with the cadres, members of the Young Pioneers and Communist members. Adultery was serious but the government found that it was hard to stop.³⁶⁰ The children produced by these affairs were often drowned or abandoned. Some *fankeshen* died of dystocia secretly.³⁶¹ In this period, the locals continued to

³⁵⁷ "Guiqiao Wu Zhui xinchuan jusha Qiuniang weisui" 归侨吴槌信讠 狙杀秋娘未遂 (Returned Migrant Wu Zhui Believed Rumours and Intended to Kill Qiu, but Failed), *Quanzhou ribao*, 24 April 1947.

³⁵⁸ "Fanke yinuzhixia, yidan bi fang qing" 番客一怒之下, 一弹毙芳卿 (A Migrant Killed His Wife by Gun Because of Anger), *Quanzhou ribao*, 23 May 1947.

³⁵⁹ Abadan-Unat, "International Labour Migration and Its Effect upon Women's Occupational and Family Roles", p. 152.

³⁶⁰ See for example, "Fujiansheng Jinjiang qu guanyu Jinjiang xian huaqiao hunyin qingkuang baogao"; "Guanyu chuli huaqiao hunyin anjian de jidian yijian".

³⁶¹ "Fujian Jinjiang qu guanyu Jinjiang xian huaqiao hunyin qingkuang baogao". According to the special study of the Political and Law Committee Office of the Fujian Provincial Government in 1953, the adultery of the left-behind wives in Fujian province including *fankeshen* was "serious" in the Republican era and became "less" so after 1949. But the Judiciary department of Jinjiang Special Administrative Area considered the situation of adultery "popular" in the Republican era and in the early years after 1949. "Fujian Jinjiang qu guanyu Jinjiang xian huaqiao hunyin qingkuang baogao" and "Dui Fujiansheng huaqiao diqu nan nū hun yin jiating wenti de qingkuang yanjiu".

report the adulterous *fankeshen* to their husbands, which caused a lot of divorce requests from the husbands in foreign countries.

The punishments that parents-in-law inflicted on their adulterous daughters-in-law varied across different eras. Before 1949, they would force the daughter-in-law to leave the family, to publish renunciation announcements in local newspapers, to report the affairs to the village or town officials, or ask the court to punish the “guilty” woman. Some adulterous *fankeshen* and their lovers would even be thrown into the sea or a deep river to drown.³⁶² However, the punishment after 1949 became much lighter because the lives and rights of women were protected by law. The Communist government forbade any personal punishment and would seek more acceptable ways of dealing with the adulterous *fankeshen*.

Returning to the Natal Family

Ties between the daughter who was wedded-off and her natal family has been one important subject of inquiry into questions relating to Chinese kinship, family and society. The classic structural-functionalist model, which had received criticisms recently, regards marriage as causing “a definitive rupture” between women and their natal families. Married daughters thus were viewed as “only temporary and marginal members of their natal family”.³⁶³ A specific ritual event on the wedding day indicated that “whatever her future circumstances or difficulties, she would never be able to return to her natal family except as a visitor”.³⁶⁴ This “familiar official model” has been revised by Ellen R. Judd’s research in a Shandong village in North China in

³⁶² Chen Ronglong 陈荣龙, chief of the Association of Returned Overseas Chinese in Jinjing town, Jinjiang city, recounted such a punishment. Interview with Chen Ronglong, the Association of Returned Overseas Chinese in Jinjing town, Jinjiang city, 13 December 2004.

³⁶³ Ellen R. Judd, “*Niangjia*: Chinese Women and Their Natal Families”, *Journal of Asian Studies* 48, 3 (August 1989), p. 525.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 525-526.

the mid-1980s where she found that the ties between married daughters and their natal families were close, and married women were inclined towards a habit of alternating-residence, in which “a newly married woman goes back and forth between her natal family and the marital family, often spending the majority of time in her natal family until her first child is born and continuing to visit frequently even beyond the death of both her parents”.³⁶⁵ Judd’s research suggests a new perspective on women’s autonomy in their relations with their natal families.³⁶⁶

However, there are still relatively few current studies on women and their natal families which can present meaningful discussions about the married daughters’ ties with their natal families, as well as the struggle of married daughters in keeping their ties with their mothers’ houses in a patriarchal environment. Even these studies mentioned above do not address exactly the question of how the relationship had been or had not been changed by the international migration of husbands or sons-in-law, as well as how the left-behind wives used the ties to deal with their problems, except for Sucheta Mazumdar’s work, which observes and mentions the importance of the women’s ties to natal families.³⁶⁷ The following discussion intends to shed light on these issues.

In Quanzhou’s long maritime and migration history, gender preference has further fuelled the Confucian culture of male chauvinism. Women stood at an inevitable disadvantage to able-bodied men when it came to participating in international trade and migration. Families preferred to have baby boys for the sake of family survival and to avoid the heavy burden of dowries that accompanied the

³⁶⁵ Hershatter, “State of the Field: Women in China’s Long Twentieth Century”, p. 998.

³⁶⁶ On the other hand, some researchers have studied the supportive network of matrilineal kin for wedded-off daughter, see Bernard Gallin, “Matrilateral and Affinal Relationship in a Taiwanese Village”, *American Ethnologist* 62, 4 (August 1960), pp. 632-642; Judith Strauch, “Community and Kinship in Southeastern China: The View of the Multi-Lineage Villages of Hong Kong”, *Journal of Asian Studies* 43, 1 (November 1983), pp. 21-50.

³⁶⁷ Mazumdar, “What Happened to the Women?”, p.71.

marriage of daughters. As a result, women were not favoured in the society and this caused serious repercussions, to the extent that baby girls were often abandoned when they were born.

Quanzhou is a patriarchal society in that married women lived with their in-law families. *Niangjia* 娘家, literally the mother's house where she was born and grew up is considered as the "outer home" (*waijia* 外家) for a married daughter. Their livelihood depended on their in-law families. International migration did not break these norms. The *fankeshen* lived with their in-laws. Their responsibilities and Chinese traditional customs discouraged close ties with natal families. Thus the *fankeshen* who were interviewed in the present study like Lin D, Wu Z and Yang LQ all had unhappy memories of the limitations on their visits to their natal families, mandated by their mothers-in-law.

The restrictions on visiting the natal home forced the natal families not to have their married daughters stay too long when they visited. Otherwise, it would inconvenience the daughters. If the *fankeshen* lived in the natal families longer than expected, they could be suspected of having abandoned the in-law families. In this case, sometimes the in-law families would take action to compel the return of the daughters-in-law. They would ask the daughters-in-law to return to the in-law families if they did not want to be disowned. They also would never ask daughters-in-law to return to the marital home if they did not want them anymore. In the latter case, the daughters-in-law were abandoned by the in-law families.

However, although the daughters were not as valuable as sons, the natal families still cared for their daughters. It was interesting to see that the Quanzhou parents often helped their daughters to pander to and win the favour of their in-

laws.³⁶⁸ Parents also presented a generous dowry for the sake of their daughter, because the daughter-in-law would be despised and mistreated if her dowry was deemed poor by the in-laws. Moreover, the dowry also benefited the daughter later since she could keep it as her own property after the marriage. For example, the interviewee Lin D was able to use the rich dowry that accompanied her marriage to afford the adoption of a son.³⁶⁹

Moreover, the natal family had special recourses to turn to if their daughter died or committed suicide under suspicious circumstances. In this case, the natal family would organize the kinsmen of the natal family and storm into the in-laws' house, destroying furniture or the house and asking for compensation for the loss of the life of the daughter, as well as money to pay the travel expenses of these relatives. This retaliatory action was popular in Quanzhou among migrant families and non-migrant families.³⁷⁰ It somewhat deterred the in-law family's maltreatment of their daughter-in-law, but may not protect them in reality if the in-law family was stronger than the natal family.

For some *fankeshen*, their natal families were important sources of support when their husbands were overseas, although they had their husbands' regular remittances and letters. The care and advice provided by the natal families was a source of solace for the *fankeshen*. Before the war, the *fankeshen* Lin Juzhen often had her mother's comfort and advices when she was upset with her separation from her husband who was in the Philippines. Lin confessed that her mother was a great

³⁶⁸ Huang Ying 黄莺, "Cong nüer chujia shi shuo qi" 从女儿出嫁时说起 (Discussion from the Point of the Wedding of the Daughter), *Fujian ribao*, 23 December 1946.

³⁶⁹ Interview with Lin D.

³⁷⁰ For example, "Xiaogu tiaobo fuxu ouda, xinfu toushui niangjia xingshi" 小姑挑拨夫婿殴打, 新妇投水娘家兴师 (New Daughter-in-Law Committed Suicide by Drowning because She Was Hit by Her Husband Who Was Provoked by Her Sister-in-law, Her Natal Family Dragged in Many People to Claim the Loss), *Quanzhou ribao*, 31 January 1947.

comfort to her.³⁷¹ Hua Guishan in his autobiography wrote that his grandparents-in-law asked his mother, a *fankeshen*, to live with them with her children when Hua's father was in Surabaya and kept sending his remittances every month.³⁷² Obviously, Hua's grandparents played a role in protecting or taking care of Hua's family when the father was overseas.

For some *fankeshen*, their natal families became a refuge from their unhappy lives in their in-law families.³⁷³ In her early years after marriage, the interviewee Yang LQ became weak because her stomach was not used to drinking water from a river. She asked to return to her natal family, where a well provided drinking water, for one year until the adopted son came to the in-law family and needed her care. The interviewee Hong Q lived with her natal family for three years because of the ill-treatment by her mother-in-law. Another interviewee Chen LD who suffered ill-treatment by her in-laws, escaped to her natal family.³⁷⁴

During the difficult years of 1942-1945 when the livelihood of the *fankeshen* became a major problem, their natal families played significant roles in providing aid, shelter, or money to them.³⁷⁵ For example, an interviewee Chen ZL was born in 1904 in a rich family which had land and several servants. Her husband left her for the Nanyang soon after the wedding and sent remittances of 20 silver dollars every year for her and her mother-in-law. Before the Anti-Japanese War, he returned with two

³⁷¹ Lin, *Wushiyanian zhi xinsheng*, p. 16.

³⁷² Hua Guishan 华桂山, *Hua Guishan bashi huiyi* 华桂山八十回忆 (The Autobiography of Hua Guishan When He Was Eighty) (Hong Kong: Xianggang huaqiao touzhi jianye youxian gongsi, 1975), p. 9.

³⁷³ For example, "Hanweng egu ru dai erxi" 悍翁恶姑辱待儿媳 (Evil-minded Parents-in-law Ill-treated Their Daughter-in-law), *Quanzhou ribao*, 11 September 1947; "Xifu bukan gu nie zisha huojiu" 媳妇不堪姑虐 自杀获救 (Daughter-in-law Could not Stand the Ill-treatment of Mother-in-law and Attempted Suicide, but Was Rescued), *Quanzhou ribao*, 21 February 1947.

³⁷⁴ Interview with Yang LQ, Hong Q, and Chen LD.

³⁷⁵ Interestingly, suggested by Nee Ning's autobiography, in the early 1880s, the natal family had served as a place of refuge for a wedded-off daughter, See Ning Lao T'ai-t'ai, *A Daughter of Han: the Autobiography of a Chinese Working Woman*, by Ida Pruitt, from the story told her by Ning Lao T'ai-t'ai. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945), pp. 42, 46.

boys from another woman to be raised and educated and also had two children with Chen. However, to ensure the family's survival after the remittances were cut off during the war, Chen frequently climbed the Zimao Mountain to collect firewood for sale to earn a living. The Zimao Mountain is one main mountain on the Quanzhou Plain and is about one hour's walking distance from her village. Considering her difficulties, her natal family who lived near the Mountain asked her to put the fresh firewood on the yard and asked the servants to help carry it to her house when it was dried. Her mother also visited her and passed some money to her. The assistance she received from her natal family when she was in need remained touching moments in Chen's memory even at the age of 100 years old.³⁷⁶

Siblings were another helpful group within the natal family. The in-law family of an interviewee Chen XL in Puzai village, Jingjin town, suffered horrible hardships during the Anti-Japanese War. Their village was near the sea and received Japanese bomb attacks during the war. Meanwhile, Chen and her parents-in-law suffered from the continual burden of taxes imposed by local officials on the migrant families who were considered rich at that time. The father-in-law passed away during this time and they did not have money to bury his body. It was Chen's elder sister who generously helped with the funeral expenses.³⁷⁷ In other cases, the interviewee Xu LD depended on her brothers when her husband was overseas and there was only one young brother-in-law in the in-law family.³⁷⁸ Another interviewee Yang SH depended on her nephew, the son of her brother, during her old age when her adopted son and daughter-in-law were not filial to her.³⁷⁹

³⁷⁶ Interview with Chen ZN, Jiangnan town, Quanzhou city, 26 November 2004.

³⁷⁷ Interview with Chen XL, Shizhen village, Jinjing town, Jinjiang city, 17 December 2004.

³⁷⁸ Interview with Xu LD.

³⁷⁹ Interview with Yang SH.

Naturally, not every *fankeshen* had a good relationship with the natal family. It is noted that a harmonious relationship between the *fankeshen* and her natal family could be destroyed by the possible harm to her natal family's reputation caused by the *fankeshen*'s affairs or other disgraceful behaviors. For instance, two fathers announced to end their father-daughter relationship with their daughters in *Quanzhou ribao* after the war. One did so when his daughter fled away from his family after she returned from her in-law family because of the ill-treatment of her parents-in-law and the death of her husband in Indochina. The other father ended his relationship with his daughter for the sake of the family reputation after he returned from the Philippines because his daughter "did not abide by a women's code of conduct" and had done something harm to his family's reputation after her communication with her husband was disrupted by the Pacific war.³⁸⁰

It is interesting to see that some daughters carried on the burden of caring for their own parents or managing the natal family's property. Usually, married daughters were considered as "outsiders" (*wairen* 外人) because they were unable to fulfill their responsibility to care for their elderly parents. If they wanted to pay their respects by caring for the parents, they could visit their natal home or materially support their parents. However, on 19 December 1942, *Quanzhou ribao* published an announcement by Cai Wupei in Hongku village, Shishi town, Jinjiang County. The notice said that all of Cai's natal family members had migrated to the Nanyang. Fearing that the property would be stolen, she registered all the property with the public house of Liantan town, probably under her natal family's instruction. The property would be kept untouched until her brother returned to manage it. In order to

³⁸⁰ "Tuoli funü guanxi qishi" 脱离父女关系启事 (Announcement of the Severance of Father-Daughter Relationship), *Quanzhou ribao*, 23 August 1946; "Tuoli funü jiating guanxi qishi" 脱离父女家庭关系启事 (Announcement of the Severance of Father-Daughter and Family Relationship), *Quanzhou ribao*, 25 May 1947.

make the management rights clear to everyone, she published an announcement in the *Quanzhou ribao*.³⁸¹ This case indicates that some married daughters played an indispensable role for their natal families who had migrated overseas.

The interviewee Lin D's partnership with her mother is another example of this kind of relationship between the wedded-off daughters and their natal families. According to Lin, her father was a *fanke* who died when she was 13, leaving behind her mother and her. Later the family adopted a son. However, the son was found to be unfilial towards her mother. Lin, who was also a *fankeshen* whose husband never returned after he left for the Philippines soon after their wedding, asked her mother to join her family soon after she divided the household from the extended family in the 1960s. Her mother helped her to do housework and raise rabbits as a secondary source of income for the family. Lin was a filial daughter to her mother, living with her until her mother died in the 1980s.³⁸²

The above discussion on the ties between the *fankeshen* and their natal families shows that, as a strategic response to the problem of distant migration, the relations between many *fankeshen* and their natal families in fact became closer. The natal family became an important source of comfort and care for the *fankeshen*, especially when she received little love or ill-treatment from the in-law-family. On maintaining close relationships with the natal family and caring for the old parents, a *fankeshen* reactivated her original family networks. The absence of her husband to some extent had forced her to cherish the ties with the natal family and to use it as an important space where the patrilineal law allows wedded-off daughters to play filial piety for their parents.

³⁸¹ "Cai Wupei wei liantang niangjia baocun yechan qishi" 蔡乌佩为莲塘娘家保存业产启事 (Announcement on the Property of the Natal Family of Cai Wupei in Liantang), *Quanzhou ribao*, 19 December 1942.

³⁸² Interview with Lin D.

Dealing with Dual Marriages

In order to cope with the absence of wives and with living overseas, dual-marriages became a strategy for many overseas migrants in Southeast Asia. Wu Fengbin, Zeng Shaocong and Wang Lianmao's studies demonstrate that dual-marriages had existed in ancient times when southern Chinese men traded or migrated to the Nanyang.³⁸³ Some Chinese traders in the Nanyang married native women even though they had wives in China. Chinese travelers' writings on the early Chinese in the Nanyang and the clan records in Fujian province describe the intermarriages between Chinese men and local women in Burma, Siam, the Malay Peninsula, the Dutch East Indies, the Philippines and Vietnam.³⁸⁴ Chen Ta has conducted in-depth studies on the dual-marriage system among the well-to-do Chinese migrants in the Dutch East Indies, West Borneo, Malaya and the Philippines. Chen argues that the dual-family practice was not simply for physical comfort. By marrying local women, they received their help and the use of their knowledge of the native language and customs to facilitate their business. However, when the twice-married migrant found the burden of supporting two families too heavy for him, it was often the wife in the Chinese home village who was deserted [abandoned].³⁸⁵ The intermarriages produced new generations of hybrid offspring like the Luk Chin or Lukjin in Siam, the Baba in the Malay Peninsula and Singapore, the Peranakan in the Dutch Indies and the Mestizo in the Philippines.³⁸⁶

Dual-marriages were a change in conventional Chinese marriages brought about by international migration. It had profound impact on the lives of the left-

³⁸³ Wu, ed., *Dongnanya huaqiao tongshi*; Zeng, "Qingdai Taiwan yu feilubin minyue yimin de jiating jiegou yanjiu"; Wang, "Mingqing shiqi minnan liangge jiazhu de renkou yidong"; Wang, "Mingqing yilai minnan haiwai yimin jiating jiegou qianshi: yi zupu ziliao weilì".

³⁸⁴ Wu, ed., *Dongnanya huaqiao tongshi*, pp.186-226.

³⁸⁵ Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, pp. 139-143.

³⁸⁶ Wu, ed., *Dongnanya huaqiao tongshi*, pp.186-226.

behind wives. Chen Ta finds that the mother and the wife in China “often expressed themselves as entirely satisfied with the son’s or husband’s second matrimonial venture in the Nan Yang”.³⁸⁷ An intelligent woman did not complain about her husband’s second marriage, and somehow appreciated the overseas woman for taking care of her husband.³⁸⁸ While Chen Ta identifies the features of dual-family and its impact on the left-behind wives, his comments on the reactions of a Chinese wife to her husband’s second marriage and her strategy to deal with the second marriage of her husband are somewhat oversimplified. Later scholars such as Pei Ying, Fan Roulan and Ling Dong who discuss the migrant marriages and families continue to share Chen Ta’s conclusion.³⁸⁹ Michael Szonyi’s recent study on the impact of the sexual transgressions of the left-behind wives on male migrants suggests that male profligacy and sexual transgression must have been as troubling to wives and sons at home as female profligacy and sexual transgression were to the husbands and fathers abroad. The following discussion will pursue further this interesting aspect of the *fankeshen*’s reactions to their husbands’ second marriages.³⁹⁰

To start with, one needs to understand the male migrants’ position in relation to their marriages. Graham E. Johnson and Woon Yuen-fong point out that the migrants, alone in foreign countries, suffered from “the lack of normal family relations and the isolation from family and the broader dimensions of kinship, village and market that were part of everyday behaviour in the Chinese homeland”.³⁹¹ Such conditions could explain the males’ motivation to have a second marriage overseas.

³⁸⁷ Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, p. 142.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁹ Pei, “Huaqiao hunyin jiating xingtai chutan”; Fan, “yunxu yu yanjin: minyue difang dui funu chuyang de fanyin (1860-1949)”; Leng, *Dongnanya haiwai chaoren yanjiu*.

³⁹⁰ Szonyi, “Mothers, Sons and Lovers”, p. 60.

³⁹¹ Graham E. Johnson and Woon Yuen-fong, “The Response to Rural Reform in an Overseas Chinese Area: Examples from Two Localities in the Western Pearl River Delta Region, South China”, *Modern Asian Studies* 31, 1 (1997), p. 50.

Apart from a second marriage, there were other common ways of adapting to the lack of a female partner such as through entertainment and visiting a brothel. In every destination of Chinese migrants like Singapore, Malaya and Siam, such distractions caused social problems in these countries.³⁹²

Although migrants had lived overseas for years, most of them did not change their customary values towards marriage especially with regards to men being permitted to acquire concubines. Gender inequality in marriage was deep-rooted in Chinese culture, where the possession of more than one wife was deemed as permissible. Chinese culture encouraged a woman to accept her husband's polygamy and even encourage her husband to have concubines. At the same time, unlike the Gold Mountain Guests, the Nanyang *fanke* did not face strict restrictions on intermarriage with a local woman, thus enabling many male migrants to have second marriages under less sexual surveillance from Chinese communities overseas.

Male migrants exhibited multi-marriage patterns, such as monogamy, bigamy, polygamy, or even remarriage without formal registration in the host country. Among the multi-marriage pattern of men, bigamy was popular among migrants. Some prominent personalities among Chinese migrants to the Nanyang were known for leaving their first wives in the Chinese village and having other wives overseas. According to the investigation of the Institute of Population of Xiamen University in the 1980s, at least 26.67% of Chinese migrants in Southeast Asia had a second marriage.³⁹³ This discussion will illustrate the impact of multi-marriages on the *fankeshen* through examining the impact of the dual families on them.

³⁹² For example, Kani, *Zhuhua*; Warren, *Ah Ku and Karayuki-san*; Bao, *Marital Acts*, p. 38; Wong Sin Kiong, "Women for Trade: Chinese Prostitution in Late Nineteenth-Century Penang", *Journal of the Southeast Seas Society* 53 (December 1998), pp. 171-184.

³⁹³ The percentage does not cover those migrants who had a second family in their host countries, but whose family members in China had no idea about the second marriage. Pu, "Lun Fujian qiaoxiang renkou guoji qianyi de shehui jingji wenhua yishi xiaoying", p. 25.

Dual marriages created “the outsider” in a migrant marriage – the *fanpo* 番婆 (barbarian woman), the native wife overseas and the “rival” of the *fankeshen*. The term *fanpo* was popularly used in Quanzhou. A migrant’s act of marrying a native woman in the host country was called “marrying a *fanpo* (*jiao fanpo* 交番婆 or *zhao fanpo* 找番婆)”. The *fankeshen* were instead called *tangshanmou* 唐山某, “wives in China”.³⁹⁴

Before the war, less *fanke* had the *fanpo*. However, the situation greatly changed with the fact that many *fanke* cohabited with local women in the years under Japanese occupation. With the end of the war, the number of twice-married Chinese migrants in the Nanyang became significantly large when independent or nearly independent nation states were formed in Southeast Asia and the Communist People’s Republic of China was founded. In the Philippines, the Naturalization Laws of 1954 and 1960 spurred many Chinese to buy Philippine citizenship or to set up a front to control their retail and other business interests. As the laws declared that only citizens could own retail businesses, many Chinese men decided to simply marry a Filipina and register the business under her name.³⁹⁵ The trend was noticed in the district of Jinjiang in 1953 when the Committee of Fujian Provincial Overseas Chinese Affairs investigated the reasons underlying the decline in remittances from the *huaqiao* in this district.³⁹⁶ In villages where the number of second marriages among the migrant villagers had increased, the *fankeshen* became worried that their husbands would not

³⁹⁴ Interestingly, some interviews of this study show that *fankeshen* preferred their husbands to have a Chinese woman as the second wife. It seems that they prefer a Chinese woman to be a “sister” rather than a non-Chinese native woman.

³⁹⁵ Gregory Elliott Guldin, “Overseas at Home: the Fujianese of Hong Kong”, (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1977), p. 53; Ren, *Feilübin shehui shenghuo zhong de huaren (1935-1965)*, pp. 82-83.

³⁹⁶ “Chubu diaocha liaojie Jinjiang zhuanqu qiaohui ruijian qingkuang baogao” 初步调查了解晋江专区侨汇锐减情况报告 (The Report on the Preliminary Investigation on the Sharp Decline of Remittances in the Jinjiang District) [July 1953], in *Fujiansheng dang’anguan*: file 148-1-26.

remit money back home like before.³⁹⁷ The increasing number of Chinese migrants who remarried overseas naturally corresponded to the increase in the number of the *fankeshen* who had husbands with a second family overseas.³⁹⁸ An interviewee Lin, who was the chairman of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office in Jiangnan town, Quanzhou City, recounted that in his village, all the migrants except his father had a second wife in their host countries. According to him, a second marriage among migrants was popular because of business requirements in the host country. The circumstances overseas precipitated among the locals in Quanzhou an attitude of acceptance towards the dual marriage of a migrant.³⁹⁹

Marriage with native women contributed to the increasing spread and development of the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia by contributing to the migrants' settlement in the host countries, and thus causing political impact on both China and the host countries. By a Chinese-Filipino Si Yuan's words in the 1980s, a Filipino wife was not only a life-long companion for her Chinese husband, but also somebody who facilitated the acquirement of licenses, the right of stay, networks in Philippine society, or even land, enterprises, and rights for their children.⁴⁰⁰

A *fankeshen* often did not find out about her husband's second marriage till much later, because the husband did not inform her. In contrast, the migrant's fellow

³⁹⁷ For example, "Huameixiang huaqiao hunyin qingkuang" 华美乡华侨婚姻情况 (The Situation of the Migrant Marriage in Huamei Town) [17 February 1953], in *Fujiangsheng dang'anguan*: file 148-2-463.

³⁹⁸ In Quanzhou, a ballad says that "While a *fanke* did business with a *fanpo* as partner, his wife in China was suffering until she died" (*yu fanpo zuo shengyi, jiefu qizi ku dao si* 与番婆做生意, 结发妻子苦到死). See Wang Yushu 王玉树, "Xunzhao xiandai nüxing de jingshen jiayuan—xiaoshuo Canmeng du hou" 寻找现代女性的精神家园—小说《残梦》读后 (In search of the Spiritual Homestead of Modern Women – Thoughts on Reading *Canmeng*), in Qiu Tingting 邱婷婷, *Meng Jiangnan* 梦江南 (Dreaming of Jiangnan) (Beijing: Zuoji chubanshe, 2003), p. 140.

³⁹⁹ Interview with Lin, Office of the Returned Overseas Chinese Association of Jiangnan town, Quanzhou, 26 November 2004.

⁴⁰⁰ Si Yuan 思源, "Feilübin wei women tigong le jihui" 菲律宾为我们提供了机会 (The Philippines Provides Us Opportunities), in *Ronghe: Feilübin huaren* 融合: 菲律宾华人 (Chinese Integration into the Filipino Society), ed. Feilübin huayi qingnian lianhehui (Manila: 1990), p. 98. For the Philippine Chinese in 1935-65, see Ren, *Feilübin shehui shenghuo zhong de huaren (1935-1965)*, pp. 78-88.

villagers and the other members of their family would obtain the information much earlier and in greater detail. Generally these people often kept the news from the wife. For a *fankeshen* who wanted to learn the truth, she had to seek answers from returned migrants, or use her wisdom and social networks to discover it, as mentioned in the previous chapter.

The remarriage of a male migrant could lead to the reduction in or even the severance of his remittances and in the worst-case scenarios, divorce with the first wife. When a man settled down overseas, the wife at home would possibly lose him as an economic supporter and husband. This had affected the *fankeshen* greatly, for not only were any dreams of living like a rich *fankeshen* broken, she also had to bear the sufferings wrought by the loss. Moreover, she had the responsibility to carry on the family burden left behind by the husband if she did not leave her in-law family.

Dual marriages often harmed the *fankeshen* emotionally. For example, an interviewee Chen XX in Puzai village, Jinjing town, said that she cried a lot during the lonely nights she spent at home. In fact, among the *fankeshen* interviewed for this study, she could be considered luckier. She received her husband's remittances every month since the end of the Pacific War and he visited her three times, once when he was in his seventies.⁴⁰¹ The interviewee Yang LQ on the other hand, was so saddened by the news of her husband's infidelity that she refused to eat and drink for days. In the early 1970s, when her husband joined her in Hong Kong from Manila, she berated him about his second marriage ferociously.⁴⁰² Another interviewee Wu F made money in Hong Kong and traveled to the Philippines, living in her relative's house. When the husband came, she called him "a man without a conscience" (*mei liangxin de ren* 没

⁴⁰¹ Interview with Chen XX, Puzhai village, Jinjing town, Jinjiang city, 13 December 2004.

⁴⁰² Interview with Yang LQ.

良心的人) and scolded him for not caring for her.⁴⁰³ Maria Tam's interviewee, Hong Aizhen who lived in Dalun village, however, did not forgive her husband at all after she learnt that her husband married a Filipino woman in his 40s. Hong was so aggrieved that she never talked to him when he returned a second time after his second marriage.⁴⁰⁴ Maria Tam observes that for most of her interviewees, "it was the sadness of being deserted that made life most intolerable". She further explains that "The husband's fidelity and sense of responsibility were essential to the wife's sense of being".⁴⁰⁵

Most *fankeshen* however had no choice but to accept their fate and remain in their in-law families, with much chagrin in their hearts. This is because, firstly, given the long distance and the legal barriers between the Nanyang and Quanzhou, the *fankeshen* could hardly do anything to reclaim their husbands. Secondly, remarriage remained a widely accepted custom among the migrants from Quanzhou. It would be difficult for the *fankeshen* to resist this male-dominated social arrangement. People would laugh at her for her jealousy.⁴⁰⁶ Some interviewees did not reveal their feelings about their husbands' second marriages. The typical answer to questions about whether she was angry when she learnt the truth remains: "Angry? Of what use does anger have? He was over there while I am over here. What's the use of anger?"⁴⁰⁷

Some *fankeshen* accepted the second marriages of the husbands with careful consideration. The interviewee Cai CL had the opportunity to visit her husband in the Philippines in her mid-age in the 1970s, and learnt of the necessity of a second wife for her husband in business. Her husband operated a bread shop, which was imperiled by heavy taxation and harassment by gangsters demanding protection money. A *fanpo*

⁴⁰³ Interview with Wu F, Huazhou village, Chidian town, Jinjiang city, 21 November 2004.

⁴⁰⁴ Tam, "Engendering Minnan Mobility", pp. 152-53.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 152.

⁴⁰⁶ Interview with Cai CL, Jinjiang town, Jinjiang city, 13 & 17 December 2004.

⁴⁰⁷ Interview with Chen XX, Chen ZN, Lin D and Wu SM.

helped him to deal with these problems and Cai learnt of the fact when she visited him and empathized with his choice then.⁴⁰⁸ Another interviewee Chen XL in Shijin village did not care much about her husband's second marriage, because she was too happy to see him alive after the end of the war. She personally experienced the cruel Anti-Japanese War in coastal Shijin village when her house was bombed by the enemy. She survived because she fled and hid outside the village. Similarly, her husband was suffering during the Japanese occupation in the Philippines. In 1947, after the war, her husband returned with two boys from his second marriage and asked her to take care of them. She accepted and did not complain about his second marriage because she felt lucky that he had returned safely and healthily after the cut-off by the war". She raised the two sons by the other woman like they were her own, even when she had her own son who was born after her husband came back. The husband later went to the Philippines again and died there.⁴⁰⁹ The interviewee Xu LD in Chenzhou village likewise did not hate her husband for his remarriage, because she considered it her own fault for having not joined her husband in Singapore due to her lack of travel funds.⁴¹⁰

Chen Ta asserts that the foreign wives rarely accompanied their husbands to China, which was "the reason why dual marriage produces less domestic discord than off-hand one might expect".⁴¹¹ However, in Quanzhou, some migrants did bring their second wives back to China and left them to live with the *fankeshen* at home. Chen Ta's investigation finds that a first wife in southern Fujian and the second wife who

⁴⁰⁸ Interview with Cai CL. Other reasons for her acceptance of husband's dual marriage were: firstly, they lived far away from each other. If she was angry all the time, she could have died; secondly, others would laugh at her if she shows her anger; thirdly, he was man with a conscience.

⁴⁰⁹ Interview with Chen XL.

⁴¹⁰ Interview with Xu LD.

⁴¹¹ Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, p. 143.

came with their husband often lived harmoniously.⁴¹² Ding Yuling in her study of the emigrant village of Shudou informs that in the 1940s, at least 20 *fanpo* were living in the village with their husbands' family members.⁴¹³

At the same time, the arrival of the *fanpo* would understandably complicate family lives. A lot of the *fankeshen* were put into a conundrum when the second wives arrived. Acute conflict occurred between the two wives frequently. When her husband returned with the *fanpo*, the principal wife faced the danger of being neglected in favour of his overseas bride. In Anshan village in Jinjiang County, there was a *fankeshen* Lin Weixia whose husband Li Zhaochuang was in Singapore. Lin steered the family through the hard times during the war. However, her husband married a Chinese woman overseas and returned together with her. The husband scolded and hit the first wife severely for every trivial error or accident. Moreover, he did not provide food for her. Lin's parents had died and she turned to the Women's Association for help.⁴¹⁴ In Longliao village in Shenhu town, Jinjiang, Hong took care of the family when her husband Shi Zhidang left her for the Philippines soon after the wedding. She remained loyal towards Shi in the difficult years of the war. However, in the Nanyang, Shi remarried and had two children. In 1946, he brought the family back to China. Hong was very happy upon their return. However, Shi abandoned her without any concern for her well-being. In the end, Hong had to report to the authorities for help.⁴¹⁵

It should be noted, however, that it could be some *fanpo* who were treated badly by the *fankeshen* out of the latter's hostility towards their husbands' dual

⁴¹² Ibid.

⁴¹³ Ding, "Kuaguo wangluo zhong de qiaoxiang", p. 47.

⁴¹⁴ "Lin Weixia zao fu nuedai tousu fuhui" 林蔚霞遭夫虐待 投诉妇会 (Lin Weixia Was Ill-treated by Her Husband and Turned to the Women's Association), *Quanzhou ribao*, 5 August 1946.

⁴¹⁵ "Fanke na xiaoxing, pinqi faqi" 番客纳小星, 摒弃发妻 (*Fanke* Remarried with Young Star and Abandoned His First Wife), *Quanzhou ribao*, 10 March 1947.

marriages.⁴¹⁶ Although Chen Ta mentions a case where the first wife in China and the second wife overseas had a harmonious relationship, many *fankeshen* hated the second wives of their husbands. The wife in China feared that her husband's second wife in the host country would keep the husband from visiting her, or control his finances which in turn reduced the remittances and even disrupt the relationship between the husband and her. Although some *fankeshen* accepted the situation haplessly, most others detested having to share the man with another woman. The daughter of Zhu, a *fankeshen* in Huoshan village, Quanzhou City, remembered her mother's persistent condemnation of the *fanpo* as a bad woman, irregardless of the praise that returning migrants in the same village lavished on her husband's *fanpo*.⁴¹⁷ In the eighties, the husband returned, bearing a serious illness. Zhu became angry because she considered that he did not return until he was ill and needed her care.⁴¹⁸

For those who had opportunities to visit their husbands in their host countries, they were very careful when they met the *fanpo*. A very popular tale spread among the *fankeshen* was that the *fanpo* also hated them and were able to cast spells or hexes on them, making them sick, mad or even causing them to die.⁴¹⁹ Thus when some *fankeshen* succeeded in meeting with husbands overseas, they were wary of the drink and food provided by the *fanpo*, suspecting the food might contain poison or something bad for them. The interviewee Cai CL, for instance, first met her husband and the *fanpo* in their house in the Philippines in the 1970s and she did not dare to

⁴¹⁶ For example, “Shuying yuanshi fujianü jiaren wei jie bu ru bi” 淑英原是富家女，嫁人为妾不如婢 (A Daughter of Rich Family Became a Concubine and Lived Worse Than a Maid), *Quanzhou ribao*, 9 September 1948.

⁴¹⁷ Interview with Chen SM.

⁴¹⁸ Nevertheless, she took care of him for 8 years until he died. Interview with Huang YaLi 黄雅莉, Qingyang town, Jinjiang city, 4 December 2004, Huang is Zhu's granddaughter.

⁴¹⁹ Interview with Hong Q and Cai CL. It was believed that *fanpo* sometimes also cast spells or hexes on the male migrants who married them, see Zhuang, “Fanbang wushu”, p. 71.

take the drink offered by the *fanpo* until she saw the *fanpo* drink it first.⁴²⁰ Another interviewee Hong Q experienced pain in her stomach after eating the food provided by her husband's *fanpo* when she visited him in the Philippines in the 1970s. She was so fearful that she went to the temple to pray for recovery.⁴²¹

The preferential policies on immigration to Hong Kong and Macao for the *fankeshen* and their family members, instituted by the Chinese Government after 1949, raised their hopes of finding their husbands in the Nanyang by themselves. A *fankeshen* believed that if she met her husband face to face, she would have the chance of salvaging the relationship. Thus the interviewee Lin D had plans to go to Hong Kong and then to the Philippines to look for her husband. But she failed because her husband's brothers at home did not allow her to go to Hong Kong for fear that she would become a "bad" woman outside their surveillance if she did.

Many *fankeshen* succeeded in meeting their husbands overseas even though they already knew of the second marriages. The interviewee Wu F who lived in the same village with Lin D succeeded in traveling to the Philippines and locating her husband using the money she earned after working in Hong Kong for several years in the 1980s. However, the husband only visited her occasionally in the house of her relative where she lived. Another interviewee Cai CL also managed to meet her husband in the Philippines in the 1970s, and was lucky to live with her husband for some days during her stay because the second wife of her husband was kind towards her. She returned to Hong Kong on her own and continued to earn money for other visits to her husband. Unfortunately, her husband died in the Philippines before she could make another trip.

⁴²⁰ Interview with Chen CL.

⁴²¹ Interview with Hong Q.

In short, dual marriages were a consequence of international migration and brought new factors into the traditional Chinese marriage. They increased the estrangement within marriage and brought hardship on to the *fankeshen*. They also demonstrate the sacrifices of the *fankeshen* during the international migration process, and that the *fankeshen* were disadvantaged in facing the external factors of the international migration.

Divorces & Remarriages

Little attention has been paid to how the Chinese left-behind wives dealt with broken marriages, except for Madeline Hsu's discussion of remarriage as an alternative for the Gold Mountain wives in Taishan before 1943. Hsu finds that abandoned Gold Mountain wives often faced the "decision of whether to live in destitute chastity or marry a second time".⁴²² She observes that for a wife even with no letters and remittances from her husband, remarrying was "a less socially acceptable solution than remaining a loyal Gold Mountain wife".⁴²³ Hsu puts the main agency for ending the marriage on the husbands who supposedly abandoned them by sending no remittances or letters. The factors which drove a left-behind wife to end her first marriage could be more complex when one takes into consideration the marital lives that the wife had led and her internal feelings on remarriage. It is especially so when one studies the time period beyond the outbreak of the Pacific War, which was not covered by Hsu's work. The impact of the war, the changing socio-political environments, the state's Overseas Chinese policies and the application of the 1950 Marriage Law in the PRC to migrant marriages were among the factors that had emerged since then.

⁴²² Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold*, p. 119.

⁴²³ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

Many *fankeshen* put a high value on their marriages, which disinclined them towards divorce. The value of a Confucian marriage for the *fankeshen* was encapsulated in the saying that “to marry with a rooster is to accompany the rooster in her life; and to marry with a dog is to live with the dog without change” (*jia ji sui ji, jia gou sui gou* 嫁鸡随鸡 嫁狗随狗). Thus fidelity was the core value for most women including the *fankeshen*. Large numbers of the *fankeshen* remained as wives of the *fanke* in their lives despite the absence of their husbands.

Many *fankeshen*'s parents also forbade their daughters to divorce or remarry as it was not honourable to marry a second time and it would tarnish the reputation of the family. The interviewee Hong Q, for example, remained in her in-law's family when her husband migrated to the Philippines soon after their wedding. Her mother-in-law treated her badly and even forced her to remarry. But Hong did not do so, partly because her parents did not allow her to leave the in-law-family. According to her, her parents believed that “one daughter should only get married once; we would not marry the daughter a second time”.⁴²⁴

Another impediment to divorce was the difficulty of eking out a livelihood in a male-dominated society. For instance, the interviewee Chen LD who lived with her mother while her husband in Singapore did not send remittances for many years, and thus had to marry a second time when she was 38 years old, in order to survive at old age.

There were indeed some *fankeshen* who left the in-law family and looked for better lives when the husbands sent little remittance back home. Similar to the Gold Mountain wives, the *fankeshen* also faced deliberate or un-intended abandonment by their migrant husbands, resulting from the severance of remittances and

⁴²⁴ Interview with Hong Q.

correspondence and the husbands' non-return. Apart from the lack of contact with the husband, various other reasons also motivated a *fankeshen* to decide to end her marriage. Surprisingly, according to incomplete statistics of the Announcements in the *Quanzhou ribao*, *Minsheng bao*, *Fujian ribao* and *Nanguang ribao*, there were more renunciation notices made by the *fankeshen* than by the male migrants. The number of announcements which originated from the husbands formed only a fraction of the hundreds of renunciation that were made by the wives. The announcements of ending a marriage in local newspapers show that these *fankeshen* chose to end a marriage because of various situations within their marriage and their relationship with their in-law families. These reasons included their husbands' remarriages or deaths, the maltreatment they received from their mother-in-laws and sibling-in-laws, false charges brought against them by others, and their desire for happiness.⁴²⁵ Often the notices provided more than one justification for ending their marriages.⁴²⁶

Among the various reasons for ending the marriage, survival problems caused by abandonment by husbands or in-law families were the most outstanding.⁴²⁷ The

⁴²⁵ Observed from *Quanzhou ribao* (9 September 1939 - 27 December 1948), *Minsheng bao* (27 July 1942 - 8 November 1948), *Fujian ribao* (16 April 1940 - 18 April 1948), *Nanguang ribao* (15 October 1941 - 11 July 1946). It is also observed that sometimes the *fankeshen*'s renunciation notice was repudiated by their in-laws through another announcement. At times, the *fankeshen* would re-announce her decision against their in-laws' refusal announcement. On the other hand, when some *fankeshen*'s in-laws published renunciation notices, the *fankeshen* would publish a repudiation announcement to present the other side of the story, and vice versa. The present author seldom cites these disputed announcements to discuss and recognizes that all the renunciation notices are biased and distorted. However, these announcements do provide usable information to uncover the factors under the *fankeshen*'s consideration for ending their marriages. They also reflect the general situation among the *fankeshen* who used newspapers to fulfill their aims.

⁴²⁶ Ibid. However, there were only a few instances when the *fankeshen*'s own happiness was cited as a reason. Among hundreds of announcements, only one *fankeshen* Zhang Xu mentioned her future happiness as a factor in her decision. Zhang's husband had died in Nanyang. She lived in hardship in Zhanglin village without children. Thus she decided to end the marital relationship. However, the brother-in-law prevented her move through an announcement in *Quanzhou ribao*. Zhang Xu had to announce her decision and declared that she aimed to end the marriage and family relations for her own future happiness. See "Zhang Xu zaidu shengming tuoli Yang jia guanxi qishi" 张须再度声明脱离杨家关系启事 (Zhang Xu Re-announced to End Her Family Relationship with Yang Family), *Quanzhou ribao*, 18 September 1947. In contrast, Fan Ruolan finds that few Chinese migrant women in Malaya requested to divorce. Fan, *Yimin, xingbie yu huaren shehui*, p. 347.

⁴²⁷ For example, "Wang Duan yu Hong Chang tuoli fuqi guanxi" 王端与洪常脱离夫妻关系 (Wang Duan Ended the Marital Relationship with Hong Chang), *Fujian ribao*, 11 December 1940.

years of 1942-1945 especially saw many wives choosing to end their marriages since there were no remittances and letters sent by their husbands for several years, (often more than 10 years including the years during the Pacific War), thus leaving them without an income.⁴²⁸ Among these *fankeshen*, there were some who ended their marriages during the same period despite the continuous receipt of remittances-letters before the war. In other words, the discontinuation of communication was a reason for the *fankeshen* to divorce. But at the same time, the communication breakdown was also a result of the *fankeshen*'s remarriages. The interviewee Cai CL recalled that in her village there were many *fankeshen* who divorced their husbands and remarried during the war, including her aunt-in-law who already had a son. As a result, many overseas letters could not find their addressees after the end of the war. These *fankeshen* often remarried the locals, but they did not live much better than before.⁴²⁹ The years of 1946-1949 also saw many *fankeshen* choosing to end their marriages because of their husbands' remarrying overseas or the fact that they lost their husbands who died during the Japanese occupation of Southeast Asia.⁴³⁰ Other *fankeshen* ended their marriages after the war because they could not get any

⁴²⁸ For example, Ke Yaozhi got married in 1929 with the arrangement of her mother. Her husband left for Nanyang after 4 months and did not send any remittance for 13 years. In order to survive, she published an annulment of the marriage in *Quanzhou ribao*. See "Ke Yaozhi yu Hugexiang Wu Zuzhu tuoli fuqi guanxi qishi" 柯要治与湖隔乡吴祖注脱离夫妻关系 (Announcement of Ending Marital Relationship between Ke Yaozhi and Wu Zuzhu), *Quanzhou ribao*, 21 April 1942.

⁴²⁹ Interview with Cai CL. However, there were few records on the divorce and remarriage in the Quanzhou government's statistics in the Republican era, although the newspapers and the interviewees reported a lot of divorces or remarriages. For example, in the investigation report on the population of Jinjiang County in 1947, only the town of Anhai had the record of 30 couples divorced. "Huji tongji biao" 户籍统计表 (Population Statistics Records [1947]), in Jinjiangshi dang'anguan 晋江市档案馆 (Jinjiang Municipal Archives): file 2-6-29 (Collection of the ROC).

⁴³⁰ For example, a wife had to end the relationship in order to seek survival when her husband's remarriage led to the severance of remittances, see "Tuoli fuqi ji jiating gaunxi qishi" 脱离夫妻及家庭关系启事 (Announcement of the Severance of Marital and Family Relations), *Quanzhou ribao*, 10 May 1947.

information about their husbands even after communication between China and the Nanyang had been restored.⁴³¹

The sizeable number of the *fankeshen* who chose to end their marriage during the period of 1942-1949 demonstrates the degree to which migrant marriages were underpinned by material concerns. The locals presumed that the *fankeshen* would avoid seeking divorce because they enjoyed the material comfort brought by the remittances from their overseas husbands. They were thus expected to maintain the marital relationship. It was thus harder for the *fankeshen* to break the marital relationship than women in non-migrant families. However, without the support of remittances, therefore, the marriage would go on the rocks. As revealed in the newspaper announcements, non-material factors, such as the lack of emotional support or the disharmony of the conjugal lives, were cited by very few *fankeshen* as reasons for their annulment of the marriage, although the *fankeshen* indeed suffered from emotional problems in their separated conjugal lives. For non-migrant wives, however, such reasons were often mentioned for ending their marriages. This indicates that many *fankeshen* would avoid using emotional factors as their reasons for their annulment of the marriage, although they were emotionally affected by their marriages.⁴³²

The reasons used for divorce had changed after 1949 when the PRC was founded because migrant marriages faced new issues with the introduction of the new Marriage Law on 1 May 1950.⁴³³ The fact that a small number of the *fankeshen* proactively took legal action was made possible by the new law. For instance, in

⁴³¹ For example, “Jiang Xiuzhen ji Wengzhi jinyao qishi” 姜秀珍即喻治紧要启事 (Urgent Announcement by Jiang Xiuzhen [Wengzhi]), *Quanzhou ribao*, 22 June 1947.

⁴³² See, for example, “Lihun qishi” 离婚启事 (Announcement of Divorce), *Quanzhou ribao*, 28 September 1946; “Tuoli fuqi guanxi qishi” 脱离夫妻关系启事 (Announcement of the Severance of a Marital Relationship), *Quanzhou ribao*, 2 July 1947.

⁴³³ For more details of the implementation of the Marriage Law and its impact on the migrant marriage, see Chapter VI.

Jinjiang County, there were about fifty-three *fankeshen* who presented their divorce requests to the Court of Jinjiang County in the first six months of 1953. The main reasons for divorce were, first, lack of affection due to long-term separation; second, the dual marriages of overseas husbands; third, the survival problems due to the cut-off of remittances and communication; and fourth, the *fankeshen*'s romance with another man, and pregnancy or children born out of wedlock.⁴³⁴ Among these reasons, it is noticeable that the reason of lack of affection was first raised and used as one key reason for divorce. However, investigations also found that most *fankeshen* who stayed with their marriages faced similar sufferings as those who divorced did. In the villages of Pengtian in Liantang and Dalun in Jinjing County, there were 140 *fankeshen* living as widows since their husbands died in the Nanyang, especially during the Japanese occupation. Only 15 of them remarried. The society accepted the remarriage of young widows but demeaned those who did it in old age. Some of them believed that they were fated to remain spouse-less and gave up the idea of remarriage.⁴³⁵

It was difficult for some *fankeshen* to face the decision of a re-marriage. The interviewee Lü SH confessed that she thought of marrying a second time and in fact considered it many times. However, her parents-in-law treated her well and she decided to stay on as their daughter-in-law.⁴³⁶ As mentioned, many *fankeshen* chose to stay within the marriage even when they were not happy. In their opinion, a divorced woman had little chance of having a happy marriage and they decided not to remarry. The interviewee Yang remarked concisely on this matter:

Firstly, I wanted to maintain my good reputation which was gained through my efforts at maintaining my loyalty to my husband even though he sent little remittances and words; secondly, I considered that I would still suffer if the

⁴³⁴ “Jinjiang xian huaqiao hunyin qingkuang ji chuli yijian (caogao)”.

⁴³⁵ “Fujian Jinjiang qu guanyu Jinjiang xian huaqiao hunyin qingkuang baogao”.

⁴³⁶ Interview with Lü SH.

second marriage did not work out well. Thus I did not take any action, waiting and waiting, to much regret.

Living under the surveillance of her parents-in-law and brothers-in-law, the interviewee Lin D chose not to remarry because of her acceptance of her fate, and in consideration of the achievement that her suffering in the past years had brought to her. She said:

I was stupid before. My late husband had brothers at home. It was not easy for me to remarry. It was said that we *fankeshen* could remarry if our husbands had never returned for 3-5 years. It was me who did not want to remarry. I believe that if the heaven decides that the person has good fate, she would have good fate; and if the heaven decides that she would not have good fate, then she would have bad fate. I had a good reputation due to my remaining in his family, although I suffered from my marriage. There had been someone who wanted to have me as her daughter-in-law. But I was not so stupid as to ruin my good reputation by remarriage to the man [who did not meet my standard].

When Lin D and Hong Q were interviewed about the remarriage issue together, they recalled the bad fortunes of other *fankeshen* who remarried. They felt they were right in their decision not to remarry, though they complained that they had suffered heavily from their marriages with men who migrated and returned only for a few times. They both held on to their belief that their lives were decided by fate, for better or worse.⁴³⁷ They were glad that they were respected by the locals for their ability to endure the suffering and to contribute to their families.⁴³⁸

However, some *fankeshen* who did not remarry did regret their lost opportunities. Similar to Lin D and Yang LD who remarked that they did experience regret, two *fankeshen* considered themselves to have been “stupid” when they revealed their reasons of not remarrying. Another interviewee Xu LD considered that she was “unfortunate” to be a wife of a *huaqiao* and she was “stupid” to remain as a migrant’s wife:

⁴³⁷ Maria Tam observes that many *fankeshen* whom she interviewed considered that “it was ‘fate’ that had caused their misfortune in life”. This indicates that many *fankeshen* could not escape their unhappy lives. Tam, “Engendering Minnan Mobility”, p. 156.

⁴³⁸ Interview with Hong Q.

I was too young to learn the meaning of his migration when I married him. Those who married at that time and suffered from similar losses as mine had married a second time. Who could be as stupid as me to not remarry? My aunt also remarried.... If I remarry, it is beyond his control.⁴³⁹

The interviewee Wu SM also remarked as follows when she was asked whether she had wanted to divorce:

No, how could I have the idea of divorce at that time? This is why I said that I was very stupid. I suffered badly planting the rice fields. I never had had the idea of divorce. That was why when I visited him in Indonesia, he kept telling his children that I was a very good woman.⁴⁴⁰

Today, remarriage is still considered an ungraceful thing in local society, especially among the older generation. However, there was another interviewee Chen LD, who led a happy life after she remarried in about 1960 with a returned migrant who worked in North China when she was 38 years old. They lived together for 21 years before he died. Chen considered her second husband as the one who saved her life when she was in dire straits. The story represents the other side of the story of remarried women who were once *fankeshen*.⁴⁴¹

In summary, this chapter, together with the proceeding one, have examined the general characteristics of migrant marriages, the abnormal marital lives of the *fankeshen* and their means of adapting to the absence of their husbands. All these aspects demonstrate the profound effects of international migration on marriage and individuals. Although the migration did not change the traditional arranged marriage practice in China, the separation and the other various factors in China, Southeast Asia and even the wider world had greatly affected the status of marriage and consequently, the lives of both the Chinese men and women.

⁴³⁹ Interview with Xu LD.

⁴⁴⁰ Interview with Wu SM.

⁴⁴¹ Interview with Chen LD.

Chen Ta concludes in his work that migrant marriage was of “no particular interest” for further research.⁴⁴² Contrary to his assumption that international migration had little impact on migrant marriage, these two chapters show that international migration adversely affected the *fankeshen* in their marital lives. Most *fankeshen* spent their lives awaiting and hoping for the transnational remittances, letters and return trips of their husbands, which were important aspects of their lives. The more remittances or letters they received, or the more times their husbands returned, the happier they were. Many *fankeshen* also sought to maintain their marriages through various agents including individual channels and social networks. The lack of remittances and letters was considered as important reasons for divorce and remarriage. Migration had influenced greatly the women’s marital statuses and lives. In this sense, the traditional Chinese marriage institution faced new challenges resulting from one party’s migration.

The overseas wife of a male migrant also asserted a transnational influence on the marriage institution. Due to geographical separation and national borders, the *fankeshen* had little say on this matter. This brought both pain and new difficulties to their marriages. Some *fankeshen* ended their marriages because of the second marriage of their husbands or the lack of communication that resulted from the second marriage. The second marriage of a husband also demonstrates the unequal responsibility and attitudes towards marriage between the *fanke* and the *fankeshen*, reflecting the unequal nature of gender relationships between them.

The existing literature tends to ignore the impact of international migration on migrant marriages. There had been couples living separately because of long-distance business relations between Southeast Asia and China since the Tang dynasty.

⁴⁴² Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, p. 134.

However, it was the appearance of large numbers of migrant marriages and the emergence of rapidly changing socio-political environments since the mid-nineteenth century that had caused new problems to the migrant marriages. In the twentieth century, however, separated marital lives was still well-accepted by the locals including the *fankeshen* themselves. In many cases, their mothers, aunts, sister-in-laws, or sisters were also the *fankeshen*. This had made it easier for them to be more aware of the situation. They rendered assistance and support to one another and endured the tough days together when their husbands were not at home.

The above findings indicate the great impact of international migration on the *fankeshen* and their marriages, as well as the complexity of migrant marriages. Compared to the left-behind women in Tonga who would “take matters into their own hands and find new husbands of greater stability” if migrant husbands did not return soon, the Quanzhou *fankeshen* reacted to their abnormal marital lives differently under more complicated socio-political conditions.⁴⁴³

The loss, suffering and contributions of the *fankeshen* in marriage suggest that women benefited little from the international migration emotionally and often materially. During the migration process, their well-being was sacrificed for the sake of their families or spouses.

⁴⁴³ Elizabeth Colson, *Marriage & the Family among the Plateau Tonga of Northern Rhodesia* (Manchester: published on behalf of the Institute for Social Research, by Manchester University Press, 1958, 1st printed, re-printed in 1967).

Chapter V

Striving for Socio-Economic Survival and a Better Future

This chapter examines how male migration had affected the left-behind wives' socio-economic lives and re-constructed their gender roles through focusing on the *fankeshen*'s efforts to survive and strive for a better future for their families and themselves during and after the Pacific War. It explores their survival strategies during the dramatically difficult years of 1941-1945 when communication between China and Southeast Asia was almost completely severed. It also discusses their persistence in adapting to the hostile environments in the first decade of the PRC. Furthermore, it investigates the *fankeshen*'s migration to Hong Kong and their adaptation to the urban and hostile environment of Hong Kong, as well as their contribution to Hong Kong's economic development and their home society in Fujian during the post-1949 years. The key observation is that during the migration process, gender roles had been greatly altered within the family unit. For the sake of their families, the *fankeshen* adopted various survival strategies, including participating in a variety of occupations and migration to Hong Kong to strive for new means of sustenance for their families. They were essential to the maintenance of the migrant families and they gained a certain amount of autonomy and power during the process.

Expansion of Socio-Economic Activities

Previous studies have shown that with male migration, the left-behind wives often bore the responsibility for cultivating the land, taking care of the elderly and children and maintaining their families.⁴⁴⁴ In order to deal with survival problems,

⁴⁴⁴ For example, Hugo, "Migration and Women's Empowerment", pp. 306-08; Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*; Sun, *Qingdai huaqiao yu minyue shehui bianqian*; Szonyi, "Mothers, sons and lovers".

many wives needed to expand their socio-economic activities to cope with the lack of financial support and loss of male manpower. A study by Linda S. Peavy and Ursula Smith on “women in waiting” during the American westward movement in the last half of the nineteenth century has shown that these women faced various economic challenges from the migration and managed to support their families through earning a living out of their homes.⁴⁴⁵ Barbara B. Brown’s research on Botswana left-behind wives provides an intrinsic picture of how the women managed to support their children and themselves under unfavourable conditions.⁴⁴⁶ These studies strongly argue that when men migrated, women, especially wives, played significant roles in the ensuring survival of their families when men often remitted insufficient funds.

For the Chinese left-behind women’s expanding scope of socio-economic activities during the migration process, Michael Szonyi succinctly remarks:

In the case of early twentieth-century Chinese migration, there is indeed evidence of expanding scope of female activity in emigrant communities, with women serving as effective heads of households, and participating in the economy and in local society in new ways as they managed family investments.⁴⁴⁷

These women that Szonyi mentions were made up by those who received adequate remittances.⁴⁴⁸ On the lives of the women without regular remittances, Woon Yuen-fong’s case study shows that about 82% of the *qiaojuan* women in Chikan town, Kaiping, were poor and they became tenant farmers or farm labourers because their husbands failed to remit money regularly during the pre-Pacific War period. They were left to fend for themselves after the war and were engaged full-time in collective farming by 1958.⁴⁴⁹ In reference to the livelihood of left-behind women

⁴⁴⁵ Peavy and Smith, *Women in Waiting in the Westward Movement*.

⁴⁴⁶ Brown, “The Impact of Male Labour Migration on Women in Botswana”.

⁴⁴⁷ Szonyi, “Mothers, Sons and Lovers”, pp. 60-61. For such evidence, see for example, Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*; Sun, *Qingdai huaqiao yu minyue shehui bianqian*; Szonyi, “Mothers, Sons and Lovers”; Woon, “From Mao to Deng”.

⁴⁴⁸ Szonyi also made this qualification, see Szonyi, “Mothers, Sons and Lovers”, p. 63, n. 15.

⁴⁴⁹ Woon, “From Mao to Deng”, pp. 156, 160.

during the war, Xiong Weixia and Zheng Fuhong's study finds that the *qiaojuan* women in Fujian and Guangdong made a living through farming, selling "old cloth" (*mai guyi* 卖故衣), and working as coolies.⁴⁵⁰ Such studies shed light on the efforts of left-behind women in supporting the family when remittances were insufficient or not received altogether. One can push the study further through taking into account the following questions: First, how did the left-behind wives who did not receive substantial remittances live without their husbands and remittances? Second, how did the wives who received regular remittances adapt to occasional severances of remittances? And third, how did rich or poor wives deal with a new environment when internal and external factors forbade them to have smooth communication with their husbands?

As we shift from women's marital lives to women's socio-economic activities, we need to step back a moment to look at the larger picture. Just as we have found it important to see how remittances contributed to the maintenance of distant marriages, we need to consider the role of remittances as a source of income for the family and the relationship between remittances and women's socio-economic activities.

There were different levels of remittance income among migrant families whose men were overseas. This was because different migrants had different earning power. The circumstances they faced in the host countries, including the legal system and the capabilities of the postal system, also determined the amount of remittance they could send. As a result, remittance income was not stable. In Quanzhou where rice was the staple food, it was metaphorically said that the *fankeshen*'s rice jars were placed overseas. The *fankeshen* lived with the fear of not receiving remittances from

⁴⁵⁰ Xiong and Zheng, "Kangri zhanzheng shiqi minyue qiaoxiang de qiaojuan shenghuo"; Xiong, "Jindai minyue shehui ruogan wenti yanjiu", pp. 13-14.

their husbands.⁴⁵¹ Sometimes when remittances were not received on time, the family would borrow money or buy on credit to tide themselves over until the remittances came.⁴⁵² According to the estimate of the Committee of Fujian Overseas Chinese Affairs in 1953, about 70-80% of migrant families in the province were partly or totally dependent on remittances for a living. For 12% of these, remittances came frequently enough to enable them to live a rich life, while 63% received infrequent remittances and had barely sufficient income. The remaining 25% received little or no remittances and survived with extreme difficulty.⁴⁵³ The statistics show that most migrant families (about 88%) could hardly depend on remittances as a source of livelihood.

Quanzhou shared Fujian's situation of different levels of remittance-income levels. Generally, Jinjiang, Nan'an and the city of Quanzhou were considered as "rich emigrant communities", where the migrants who had mostly relocated to the Philippines sent much more remittances than those in other emigrant counties.⁴⁵⁴ However, even in Jinjiang, Nan'an and the city of Quanzhou, the percentage of the families which had sufficient remittance income for a living was higher than other emigrant communities, but not exactly large. The migrant families who received sufficient remittance income to ensure their livelihood occupied only 12.6% in the city of Quanzhou, 15% in the 18th town of Jinjiang, and 19% in the towns of Huamei and Tuanjie in Nan'an. For the families who received remittances as a subsidiary source of income, there were 38.6% in Yongchun and 27.9% in Quanzhou city.⁴⁵⁵ In

⁴⁵¹ Interview with Zheng Bingshan.

⁴⁵² "Jiuj qiaojuan ji shiye guiqiao" 救济侨眷及失业归侨 (Relieve the Family Members of the Overseas Chinese and Unemployed Returned Overseas Chinese), *Quanzhou ribao*, 24 December 1941.

⁴⁵³ "Qiaoxiang he qiaojuan de yiban qingkuang jieshao", p. 73.

⁴⁵⁴ Zhang, Chen, Gan, and Chen, "Fujian zhuyao qiaoku nongcun jingji tanlu", p. 43; Zhuang, "The Social Impact on Their Home Town of Jinjiang Emigrant's Activities during the 1930s".

⁴⁵⁵ Lin Jinzhi 林金枝, *Jindai huaqiao touzhi guonei qiye shi ziliao huibian (chugao)* 近代华侨投资国内企业史资料汇编 (初稿) (The Collection of the Historical Documents on the Investment of Overseas

other words, many migrant families did not receive sufficient financial support from overseas relatives. In the city of Quanzhou for instance, 87.4% of its emigrant families did not have sufficient remittances to depend on. This is verified by the official investigation conducted in the 1950s. The investigation on typical emigrant villages such as Dalun, Shigui, Shixia in Jinjiang County in the mid-1950s concluded that 70-80% of the *qiaojuan* in Jinjiang district belonged to the middle or poorer classes of peasants, as well as other labouring classes.⁴⁵⁶ Thus, most of the *fankeshen* needed to work for their living in the absence of men.

On the other hand, the amount of remittance arrived in Quanzhou varied with time. The 1950 investigation documents of Overseas Chinese affairs provided by the Branch of the Jinjiang District on Overseas Chinese Affairs (*Jinjiang zhuanshu qiaowuke* 晋江专署侨务科) shows that Quanzhou received 72,000,000 *fabi* yuan in 1931, 40,000,000 *fabi* yuan in each year in 1932-35, a little more in 1936-37, and 53,000,000 *fabi* yuan in 1938.⁴⁵⁷ Before the outbreak of the Pacific War, the amount of remittance kept increasing when more Overseas Chinese remitted money home and the value of *fabi* reduced greatly. For instance, Quanzhou received 120,000,000 *fabi* yuan in 1939, 280,000,000 *fabi* yuan in 1940, and 365,000,000 *fabi* yuan in 1941.⁴⁵⁸ After the outbreak of the Pacific War, as mentioned in Chapter I, there was little remittance flowing between the Nanyang and China, except that Overseas Chinese in

Chinese in China), pp. 11-12, cited in Xiong, “Jindai minyue shehui ruogan wenti yanjiu”, pp. 21-22. The towns and counties were all considered typical *qiaoxiang*.

⁴⁵⁶ See Zhang, Chen, Gan, and Chen, “Fujian zhuyao qiaoqu nongcun jingji”, p. 32. Nevertheless, some villages had higher percentages of remittance sufficiency. See for example, “Jinjiang zhuanqu shengchan qingkuang he shenghou qingkuang de dianxing diaocha ziliao de zhonghe baogao” 晋江专区侨区生产情况和生活情况的典型调查资料的综合报告 (The General Report on the Standardized Investigation on the Participation in Production and the Situation of Lives in the District of Jinjiang) [1954], in Fujiansheng dang’anguan: file 148-2-484.

⁴⁵⁷ Quanzhou huaqiaozhi bianji weiyuanhui, ed. *Quanzhou huaqiaozhi*, pp. 173-74. In 1950, Quanzhou covered Jinjiang, Hui’an, Putian, Xianyou, Tong’an, Nan’an, Yongchun, Dehua, and Jinmen, thus, the amount of remittance was different with the one of 1938 in Table 3-4. For the administrative boundaries of Quanzhou, see Fu, *Quanzhoushi gaikuang*, p. 2.

⁴⁵⁸ Quanzhou huaqiaozhi bianji weiyuanhui, ed. *Quanzhou huaqiaozhi*, p. 174.

Thailand and Indo-China remitted a small amount of remittance.⁴⁵⁹ After the war, although it was difficult to estimate the amount of remittance which arrived in Quanzhou, *Jinrong ribao* (Finance Daily 金融日报) in Hong Kong estimated about 12,500,000 US dollars arrived in Quanzhou in 1945, 20,000,000 US dollars annually from 1946-48, and a similar figure of 20,000,000 in 1949.⁴⁶⁰ For the amount of remittance which arrived in Quanzhou after 1949, see Table 5-1.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 174-75.

⁴⁶⁰ Cited in Quanzhou huaqiaozi bianji weiyuanhui, ed. *Quanzhou huaqiaozi*, p. 175.

Table 5-1: Remittance Received in Quanzhou, 1950-90

Year	Amount of remittance (in 10,000 Renminbi yuan)	Year	Amount of remittance (in 10,000 Renminbi yuan)	Year	Amount of remittance (in 10,000 Renminbi yuan)
1950	4,677	1964	5,562	1978	8,740
1951	6,895	1965	6,166	1979	8,979
1952	7,208	1966	5,673	1980	7,430
1953	6,175	1967	4,733	1981	5,709
1954	6,289	1968	4,942	1982	7,408
1955	6,117	1969	4,362	1983	6,393
1956	5,950	1970	4,503	1984	3,927
1957	5,986	1971	5,152	1985	2,124
1958	4,561	1972	4,958	1986	2,468
1959	3,293	1973	5,428	1987	4,088
1960	4,170	1974	6,681	1988	3,033
1961	2,966	1975	7,171	1989	1,408
1962	2,073	1976	7,915	1990	2,069
1963	4,441	1977	8,707		

Source: Quanzhou huaqiao zhi bian ji wei yuan hui, ed., *Quanzhou huaqiao zhi* 泉州华侨志 (A History of Quanzhou Overseas Chinese) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui chubanshe, 1996), p. 176.

The remittances affected the left-behinds' lives greatly. For those who had infrequent remittances or no remittances, the family members went on living their poor lives, or even living in worse conditions than that before the male's migration, because of the loss of manpower. On 24 August 1947, *Quanzhou ribao* reported that eight women from "ordinary emigrant families" which received little remittance income in the Hucuo village, Jinjing town, Jinjiang County, drowned at sea when they

were dredging oysters for the worship of the Qixi Festival (*qixi* 七夕) in order to save the money they would otherwise have to pay for oysters, which was a customary offering in the festival.⁴⁶¹ In the village of Shudou, Ding Yuling finds that those migrants who were in the habit of smoking opium and gambling were often unable to take their wives to the Dutch East Indies (later on Indonesia) as others did. The lives of their wives in the village were miserable. They worked even harder than the non-emigrant families, because they had to care for their parents-in-law and children, who were mostly adopted.⁴⁶²

The processes of international migration had greatly affected migrant families, the trend of women being left behind while the males migrated to the Nanyang reshaping livelihood patterns and gender roles within the family unit. The women expanded their roles outside their houses and played important roles that the men usually took when they were at home. From local clan records and epitaphs, it could be seen that this phenomenon was not limited to the twentieth century alone but was occurring already during dynastic China. In Quanzhou for example, with the development of international trade during the Song and Yuan dynasties, commerce became the main form of livelihood for coastal Quanzhou people. In merchants' families, women took charge of family affairs when men engaged in trading overseas. In the Ming dynasty, Anping (later Anhai) town near Quanzhou city witnessed a flourishing foreign trade between China and the Nanyang. Men who traded in nearby areas returned only once a year. For those who traded overseas, they resided in the trading ports where they were based, often returning only once in several years.⁴⁶³

⁴⁶¹ “Bacunfu xiahai qiaohao, tongshi zuo bochen” 八村妇下海敲蚝，同时作波臣 (Eight Women Drowned While Dredging Oyster in the Sea), *Quanzhou ribao*, 24 August 1947.

⁴⁶² Ding, “Kuaguo wangluo zhong de qiaoxiang”, pp. 65-66.

⁴⁶³ Li Guangjin 李光缙, *Jingbi ji* 景璧集 (Essays Collection on Jingbi), vol. 4, “Shi mu Shen Ruren shou xu 史母沈孺人寿序 (Preface of the Writing of Congratulation on Nee Shen's Birthday)”, cited in

Correspondingly, the women of the affected families had to bear the responsibilities of maintaining the family and settling daily affairs while the men were away for a long time.

When men moved to the Nanyang, their womenfolk had to carry the burden of their households and expand their scope of activities. During the late Qing dynasty and early Republican period, more and more Quanzhou men participated in the flow of migration to the Nanyang. The experiences of their wives at home were recorded in epitaphs. Chen Shenming's study shows that several *fankeshen* managed their families well when their husbands were overseas. For example, Huang, the wife of Jiang Ganfeng who migrated to the Dutch East Indies when the family in Quanzhou was poor, persisted with the family for several decades by working in the fields, weaving cloth, renting money to villagers and managing their investments.⁴⁶⁴ Zeng Tianjuan traded in Manila for a livelihood and returned to get married with Liang in Jinjiang. Liang encouraged him to go overseas after marriage. During Zeng's 40 years of absence, Liang managed a family with a lot of members living together. In Manila, Zeng became a leader of the overseas Chinese community and had two concubines and children. As Liang educated her son strictly and effectively, Zeng sent his Manila-born sons back home and asked her to care for them. She treated the sons as if

Chen Sidong 陈泗东, "Quanzhou huaqiao shiliao shilling" 泉州华侨史料拾零 (Collection of Historical Materials of Overseas Chinese from Quanzhou), in *Huaqiao shi* 华侨史 (2) (History of Overseas Chinese, vol. 2), ed., Jinjiang di qu huaqiao lishi xuehui choubeyu (Quanzhou: 1983), pp. 42-43. In the late Ming Dynasty, there was a woman nee Zheng who accompanied her husband to Guangdong for business. It was recorded that her husband died in Guangdong and left two children and nee Zheng. She thus took charge of the business and raised the children. They did not return to Anping until the children grew up. Anhai Zhi xiubian xiaozu, ed., *Anhai zhi* 安海志 (The Anhai Gazetteer), (Jinjiang: 1983), p. 133. This record reflected that in the Ming dynasty, some Quanzhou women helped their husbands with their businesses far from home and played significant roles in managing the business and maintaining their families. Their experiences reflect the lives of Quanzhou women in ancient times.

⁴⁶⁴ Chen Shengming 陈盛明, "Jinjiang diqu huaqiao muzhi suo fanyin de shishi" 晋江地区华侨墓志所反映的史实 (Historical Facts Reflected from the Epitaphs of Overseas Chinese in Jinjiang District), in *Qiao shi* 侨史 (1) (A History of Overseas Chinese, Vol.1), ed., Jinjiang diqu huaqiao lishi xuehui choubeyu (Jinjiang: 1983), p. 102.

they were her own.⁴⁶⁵ Obviously, these women had expanded their activities out of the house for the sake of their families.

In other words, with the migration of the men, traditional gender divisions of labour were altered. The *fankeshen*, similar to the American women in waiting, carried out tasks that “moved them into an uncomfortable corridor where gender roles were blurred”.⁴⁶⁶ Both groups of women dealt with their economic dilemmas in a number of ways.

Surviving the Pacific War

The Pacific War was damaging for the *fankeshen* because almost all of them, rich or poor, were suddenly forced to face a loss of communication with their husbands and the severance of remittances. The war and the experiences of the *fankeshen* also ushered in a difficult stage in their life history. The survival experiences of the *fankeshen* in this period made them self-reliant, changing the mode of living of the *fankeshen* who depended heavily on the support of their husbands’ remittances. The negative effects of migration on the left-behinds, such as the lack of manpower, the increased burden on the shoulders of those who were left behind, especially the wives, and the harmful impact of the rich *qiaojuan*’s dependence on the remittances were exposed.⁴⁶⁷ Apart from those who had sufficient savings, numerous migrant families who depended on remittances or who spent remittances once they were available were seriously affected. For those who did not possess adequate

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid., pp. 95, 101-02.

⁴⁶⁶ Peavy and Smith, *Women in Waiting in the Westward Movement*, p. 18.

⁴⁶⁷ On this aspect, Xiong Weixia and Zheng Fuhong’s study shows that the dependence of *qiaojuan*, the shortage of manpower due to the absence of the menfolk, the Anti-Japanese War, and the Pacific War had largely caused the miserable lives of *qiaojuan* women in Fujian and Guangdong province in this period. Xiong and Zheng, “Kangri zhanzheng shiqi minyue qiaoxiang de qiaojuan shenghuo”.

savings or a steady flow of income from remittances, surviving the war with the ever-present dangers of Japanese incursions, plague and cholera was not easy.⁴⁶⁸

To live with the sharp decline in available resources, many unskilled landless *fankeshen* were forced to turn to begging or prostitution, which is consistent with the experiences of other left-behind women who had no assets or skills and whose husbands had migrated in search of work in countries such as India, Peru, and several African countries in order to support their families at home.⁴⁶⁹ Some *fankeshen* in Quanzhou and Hui'an were sold to Yongchun and Dehua for only several hundred yuan.⁴⁷⁰ Another solution which has been discussed in Chapter IV was for some *fankeshen* to choose to leave their families and remarry.

However, the great majority of the *fankeshen* who wished to remain with their families sought ways to survive the hardship. According to Giovanni Andrea Cornia, the survival strategies included the variety of ways low-income households or poor people adapted to conditions of extreme deprivation, aiming to create and use

⁴⁶⁸ The Japanese attacked Fujian province including Quanzhou; on the situation in wartime Quanzhou, see Dong Feibiao 董飞彪, "Kangzhan shiqi Quanzhou de jingji shenghuo" 抗战时期泉州的经济生活 (The Economic Life of Quanzhou during the Anti-Japanese War), in *Zhenhai shi yi wan* 镇海石艺苑 (The Literary Works of Zhenhai) 11 (January 1996), ed. Zhenhai shi yi wan bianweihui, pp. 4-6; Wang Xianzeng 王显增, "Kangri zhanzheng shiqi de Shishi qiaoxiang" 抗日战争时期的石狮侨乡 (The Emigrant Community of Shishi during the Anti-Japanese War), *Shishi wenyi* 石狮文艺 (The Literary Works of Shishi) 4 (December 1995), pp. 64-65; Plague and the spread of cholera were serious problems during this period, see Chen, "Chuangyi manmu shuo kangzhan", pp. 91-92.

⁴⁶⁹ Xiong and Zheng, "Kangri zhanzheng shiqi minyue qiaoxiang de qiaojuan shenghuo"; Xiong, "Jindai minyue shehui rougan wenti yanjiu", pp. 13-14. For the situation, see "Shengfu zhuanfa zhongtongju guanyu Fuzhou deng jiuxianshi qiaojuan shenghuo zhuangkuang diaocha baogao" 省府转发中统局关于福州等九县市侨眷生活状况调查报告(1943年6月17日) (Transmitter of the Central Investigation and Statistic Bureau's Report on the Living Situation of the *Qiaojuan* in Nine Counties/Cities including Fuzhou from the Provincial Government, 17 June 1943), *Fujiansheng dang'angaun*, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang'an ziliao*, pp. 1744-1746. For some women who had no assets or skills and depended on their husbands' remittances, studies have show that they often turned to begging and prostitution. For the details, see Giovanni Andrea Cornia, "Adjustment at the Household Level: Potentials and Limitations of Survival Strategies". In *Adjustment with a Human Face*, eds. Giovanni Andrea Cornia, Richard Jolly and Frances Stewart (Oxford [Oxfordshire]: Clarendon Press; Oxford [Oxfordshire]; New York: Oxford University Press, c1987-1988), pp. 94-95.

⁴⁷⁰ "Xue Dingshan lai Quan fanmai funü" 薛丁山来泉贩卖妇女 (Xue Dingshan Came to Quanzhou and Sold Women), *Quanzhou ribao*, 18 October 1942. In Taishan, some Gold Mountain wives were also sold during this period. Madeline Hsu, "Migration and Native Place: *Qiaokan* and the Imagined Community of Taishan Country, Guangdong, 1893-1993", *The Journal of Asian Studies* 59, 2 (May 2000), p. 326. Szonyi, "Mothers, Sons and Lovers", p. 59.

resources. The strategies can be grouped into three categories: strategies for the creation of resources, strategies for improving the use of existing resources and extended family and migration strategies. Women played central roles in these strategies. Cornia observes that the strategies were popular among low-income households reacting to the sharp decline in available resources in the 1980s in many developing countries.⁴⁷¹ In Quanzhou, the *fankeshen* used various survival strategies to tide through the Pacific War crisis. They either sold their assets, such as clothes, furniture, lands or houses, or took up work like selling “old clothes”, crop farming, salt production and trade, providing goods transportation services, or working in the handicraft industry, etc.

The sale of assets is considered as “a strategy to which recourse is made only under extreme circumstances”.⁴⁷² It was well recognized that migrant families in Fujian and Guangdong sold fixed and liquid assets for subsistence immediately after the discontinuation of remittances.⁴⁷³ In Jinjiang, the *qiaojuan* sold their fixed assets including houses, cropland, shops and even their children and siblings (see Table 5-2). The liquid assets included a variety of “foreign commodities” that migrants sent back and items which the families bought when they had remittances, such as clothes, watches, pocket watches, leather shoes, combs, ties, perfume, leather suitcases, jewellery, etc. These items were often sold in the “old clothes” stalls (*guyi tan* 故衣摊).⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁷¹ Cornia, “Adjustment at the Household Level”, pp. 90-94.

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 96.

⁴⁷³ Xiong and Zheng, “Kangri zhanzheng shiqi minyue qiaoxiang de qiaojuan shenghuo”; Xiong, “Jindai minyue shehui ruogan wenti yanjiu”, p. 14; Shen, “Jinjiang guiqiao, qiaojuan zai qiaoxiang shehui he jingji bianqianzhong de diwei he zuoyong”, p. 13; Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold*, pp. 178-180; Shen Huifen, “Remittances and Fujian Qiaoxiang Family Life, 1937-1945”, paper presented at the ARI Inaugural Graduate Student Symposium – Social and Cultural Change in Asia: Past and Present. Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, Singapore, 16-17, October 2003.

⁴⁷⁴ Later on, a stall which sold “old clothes” was called “*guyitan*”, a term referring to the small stalls that sell the various foreign commodities. See Guo Biliang 郭碧良, *Shishi: zhongguo minbang tequ* 石

Table 5-2: Statistics of the *Qiaojuan* in Jinjiang Who Sold Their Children and Property during the Anti-Japanese War and Appealed to Re-claim or Redeem Them in 1946

Category	Son	Daughter	Sibling	House	Cropland	Shop	Fruit tree	Total
Wenling town	1			4	1		2	8
Xiapo town	2			1				3
Shishi town	4	1			1			6
Datong town	3		1	2				6
Dongbei town					3			
Jinjing town	1		1					2
Qinyang town	1					1		2
Yinglin town	2							2
Yongning town	1			2		1		4
Siwei town				2	1			3
Fashi town	1				2			3
Kangle town	1			1	1			3
Shenhu town	3			1				3 ⁴⁷⁵
Zhishan town	1							1
Qinmin town						1		1
Fuxing town					1			1
Total	21	1	2	13	10	3	2	52

Source: “Kangzhan nei qiaojuan dianmai tianwu qu shu” 抗战内侨眷典卖田屋取赎 (The *Qiaojuan*’s Reclamation and Redemption of Cropland and Houses Which Were Sold during the Anti-Japanese War) [1946], Jinjiangshi dang’anguan: file 8-1-100, Collection of ROC.

Later on, the sale of “old clothes” became a new occupation for many *fankeshen*. The *fankeshen* bought clothes from others and re-sold them in the market for profit. For instance, in the emigrant communities in the towns of Jintao and Shishan, the *fankeshen* sold clothes, including Chinese cheongsams and western suits.⁴⁷⁶ In Yongchun County, many *fankeshen* achieved independence by selling old

狮: 中国民办特区 (Shishi: The Local Special Economic Zone) (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1993), pp. 23-24. Interestingly, the stalls continued to exist after the war. In Shishi, they were sustained by the return of remittances after the war, selling clothes, cloth, soaps, pieces of thread, medicine pills and American military materials, such as overcoats, blankets that the migrants remitted from the Philippines. After 1949, there were more than 20 stalls in Shishi. In the early 1960s, the trade became prosperous through the sale of rice, cooking oil and cotton cloth that migrant households sold from the surpluses they had from the remittances by their relatives in Southeast Asia, Macao and Hong Kong. During the Cultural Revolution, the number of stalls increased to 120-200 or more, selling cloth, clothes, sheets, and hats which had been remitted by migrant relatives, as well as some cloth and industrial commodities from Shanghai. It became prosperous in the late 1970s and early 1980 with the remitted materials from migrant relatives again, which will be discussed later. Guo, *Shishi: zhongguo minbang tequ*, pp. 21-24; Shishi shi difangzhi biancuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Shishi shizhi*, pp. 902-903.

⁴⁷⁵ One *qiaojuan* sold both a son and a house.

⁴⁷⁶ Chen Yueying 陈月英, “Nan’an qiaojuan funü de zhuanbian” 南安侨眷妇女的转变 (The Transition of Women in Migrant Families in Nan’an), *Fujian funü* 福建妇女 (Fujian Women) 4, 5&6 (October 1945), p. 32.

clothes. They were not shy any more like those traditional household women and dared to bargain with customers.⁴⁷⁷ In Shishi, there were about one hundred stalls selling old clothes. As a result, the streets were bustling with the trade of old clothes.⁴⁷⁸ It was said that there were about 500 stalls in Quanzhou in 1944 when the old clothes trade reached its apogee.⁴⁷⁹

Some *fankeshen* formed partnerships with their family members or friends to run the business of selling old clothes. In Yongchun, the *fankeshen* often cooperated in the business to acquire commercial benefits and to safeguard their security.⁴⁸⁰ The interviewee Cai CL was one of the *fankeshen* who made a living through selling clothes. She and her friend Heitie who was also a *fankeshen* had run the business for three years in the town of Jinjing. They bought the clothes directly from migrant households in villages. Heitie's mother who lived in the town helped reserve a stall for them, which was a straw mat. Thus they could sell the stock immediately after they returned.⁴⁸¹

People from non-migrant families also became involved in the business, further developing the market and increasing the competition in the trade of selling old clothes as well. Newspaper reports revealed that the local merchants and those from Zhangzhou, Yong'an, in other parts of the province and Chongqing, the temporary capital of China, brought capital to Jinjiang County and participated in the old-clothes trade as well.⁴⁸² According to Cai, in Jinjing, the customers came from Nan'an who would set off early from their homes to the market with big bags, and

⁴⁷⁷ Su Su 苏苏, "Yongchun funü" 永春妇女 (Women in Yongchun), *Fujian funü* 3, 1 (November 1943), p. 40.

⁴⁷⁸ Zheng Bingshan 郑炳山, "Shishi shihua" 石狮史话 (A History of Shishi), *Jinjiang wenshi ziliao* 4 (December 1983), pp.13-14.

⁴⁷⁹ Dong, "Kangzhan shiqi Quanzhou de jingji shenghuo", p. 5.

⁴⁸⁰ For example, Su, "Yongchun funü".

⁴⁸¹ Interview with Cai CL.

⁴⁸² "Benxian guyiye jin yiluo qianzhang" 本县故衣业近一落千丈 (Sale of "Old Clothes" in the County Suffered a Disastrous Decline), *Quanzhou ribao*, 15 February 1943.

wearing old clothes. Cai and Heitie managed their business to make a small profit. Usually, their customers would bargain with them for cheaper prices. Sometimes, they would lower their charges out of sympathy for their customers whom they knew did not lead easy lives too, or because of the competition among the many traders selling old clothes in the market. They recorded their earnings every day and shared the earning equally after a few days.⁴⁸³

Agriculture was an important subsistence strategy when households faced sharply declining income and increasingly limited employment prospects.⁴⁸⁴ In Nan'an, when land was available for farming, many *fankeshen* obtained food through successful cultivation.⁴⁸⁵ A journalist reported in September 1944 that the lawn in villages and suburbs near the city of Quanzhou in Jinjiang County had been cultivated for about three years. The cultivation efforts were largely successful.⁴⁸⁶ Many *fankeshen* in villages and suburbs farmed all available plots for food in Jinjiang, Nan'an and Hui'an, where arable land was lacking. Lawn fields, plots by the ponds, the sea, as well as hill slopes were cultivated to grow potatoes, wheat, vegetables, fruits and beans.⁴⁸⁷ Since sweet potatoes could be easily grown in infertile land, many families relied on dried sweet potatoes for sustenance.⁴⁸⁸

⁴⁸³ Interview with Cai CL. Cai spent her earnings on food. Sometimes she bought snacks for her daughter who was only two or three years old at that time.

⁴⁸⁴ Cornia, "Adjustment at the Household Level", pp. 95-96; Victoria Daines and David Seddon, "Confronting Austerity: Women's Response to Economic Reform", in *Women's Lives and Public Policy: the International Experience*, eds. by Meredith Turshen and Briavel Holcomb (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993), p. 12.

⁴⁸⁵ Chen, "Nan'an qiaojuan funü de zhuanbian", p. 32.

⁴⁸⁶ Zeng Moxiu 曾莫休, "Huaqiao de jiaxiang" 华侨的家乡 (The Hometowns of Overseas Chinese), *Dongnan ribao* 东南日报 (Dongnan daily), 29 September 1944.

⁴⁸⁷ Su Qiutao 苏秋涛, "Jin bashinian Quanzhou nongye de gaijin gongzuo" 近八十年泉州农业的改进工作 (The Development of the Farming Industry in Quanzhou over the Last Eighty Years), *Quanzhou wenshi ziliao* 11 (June 1982), p. 43.

⁴⁸⁸ Some ballads say that migrant families did not have rice to eat because of poverty, and the taxes demanded by village headmen exacerbated the situation. The *qiaojuan* were full of tears when they were eating the dried sweet potatoes, which was very hard to swallow. Ye Haishan 叶海山, "Kangri geyao xuan lu" 抗日歌谣选录 (Anthology of Anti-Japanese Folk Songs), *Jinjiang wenshi ziliao xuanji* 17 (October 1995), pp. 108-109; Chen Tianrui 陈天瑞, "Kangri zhanzheng shiqi qiaoshu shenghuo

Many migrant families also participated in the production and sale of salt. Hong Zuliang, a returnee from the Philippines and an expert on local *huaqiao* history, wrote that the industry began in southeastern Jinjiang, and spread to many villages by the sea in the summer of 1942. Many villages like Dongshi, Panjing, Tatou, Wubao, Tangbian, Bingzhou, Xiabing, Jinjing, Nancheng, Kengkou, Tangdong, Weitou, Nanshagang, Yongning, Cendou, Yakou, Daitou, Qiangang, etc., were places for private salt production.⁴⁸⁹

At the same time, some *fankeshen* engaged in the sale of smuggled salt following the development of salt production under government permission. The sale of smuggled salt became popular in July 1942. However, since it affected legitimate sales, the government banned the sale of privately-produced salt and made it difficult for the *fankeshen* to rely on it as a source of livelihood.⁴⁹⁰ According to Hong Zuliang and Li Tan, local policemen who took charge of the salt production and sale often stood in the way of salt transportation. They became big barriers for all sellers especially for the *guiqiao* and *fankeshen*, who were arrested sometimes when they fell into police ambushes.⁴⁹¹

Interestingly, the production and trade of salt led the *fankeshen* to seek the assistance from, and cooperate with, their relatives in the villages to conduct the activities. Many *fankeshen* who were not from the village came to make a living

qingkuang” 抗日战争时期侨属生活情况 (The Lives of the Relatives of the Overseas Chinese during the Anti-Japanese War), *Jinjiang wenshi ziliao* 3 (March 1983), p. 55; and Chen, “Chuangyimanmu shuo kangzhan”, p. 90.

⁴⁸⁹ Hong Zuliang 洪祖良, “Kangri shiqi qiaoxiang jingyin siyan shikuang” 抗日时期侨乡经营私盐实况 (The Situation of Private Salt Production in Emigrant Communities during the Anti-Japanese War), *Jinjiang wenshi ziliao* 1 (November 1981), p.43.

⁴⁹⁰ For the negative impact of illegal salt trade on legitimate sales, see “Anhaiqu yidai siyan dao chu chongchi” 安海区一带私盐到处充斥 (Private Salt Production Rampant in Anhai), *Quanzhou ribao*, 1 July 1942.

⁴⁹¹ Hong, “Kangri shiqi qiaoxiang jingyin siyan shikuang”, pp. 45-46; Li Tan 力谈, “Kangzhan shiqi de Jinjing shaiyanshi” 抗战时期的金井晒盐史 (A History of Salt Production in Jinjing during the Anti-Japanese War), *Jinjiang wenshi ziliao xuanji* 9 (December 1987), p. 87.

through joining in the production work or selling the salt, taking advantage of their ties with their relatives in the villages where the salt production was based.⁴⁹² It was painful for some of them who were too weak to carry the heavy packages of salt. Hong, who was an eyewitness, wrote that he saw some *fankeshen* and children of migrant families walking back home weakly and slowly with the support of walking sticks after a whole day's travel and toil.⁴⁹³ However, few *fankeshen* gave up the occupation because of the hardship. A *fankeshen* from Hong's village, Lin, whose husband was in the Philippines, had to support her old mother-in-law, her two sons who were less than ten-year old and herself. Moreover, movement was difficult for her for she was a bound-foot woman. However, in order to survive, she followed the villagers to carry the salt for sale. Every day she had to walk a painful distance of tens of *li*, carrying a heavy burden of salt.⁴⁹⁴

In Bingzhou village, about 2,000 villagers participated in salt production in 1942, most of whom were women from migrant families, including the *fankeshen*. The increase in the proportion of women involved changed the nature of the traditionally male-dominated salt production and trade. Many migrant families pulled through the tough years with the income from the salt production. This phenomenon did not end until communication reopened between Southeast Asia and China in September 1945. In October 1945, upon the resumption of remittances, many of the women withdrew from the salt production industry in the village.⁴⁹⁵

⁴⁹² See for example, Li, "Kangzhan shiqi de Jinjing shaiyanshi", p. 84; Hong, "Kangri shiqi qiaoxiang jingyin siyan shikuang", p. 43.

⁴⁹³ Hong Zuliang 洪祖良, "Feidao Lunxian shiqi Jinjiang huaqiao juanshu de shenghuo jinkuang" 菲岛沦陷时期晋江华侨眷属的生活境况 (The Lives of the Relatives of Overseas Chinese in Jinjiang during the Japanese Occupation in the Philippines), *Quanzhou wenshi ziliao* 13 (August 1995), pp. 120-21.

⁴⁹⁴ Hong, "Kangri shiqi qiaoxiang jingyin siyan shikuang", pp. 43-44.

⁴⁹⁵ Wang Zhuchun 王朱唇, "Binzhou yanshi" 炳洲盐史 (A History of Salt in Binzhou), *Jinjiang wenshi ziliao xuanji* 15 (January 1994), pp. 132-133. For more details, see Li, "Kangzhan shiqi de Jinjing shaiyanshi", pp. 80-88.

Apart from salt production and distribution, many *fankeshen* in at least two counties, Jinjiang and Nan'an, served as goods carriers for merchants.⁴⁹⁶ In Nan'an, the *fankeshen* who worked as carriers formed partnerships with one another by traveling together in order to enhance safety, offer support for one another and facilitate effective bargaining with the merchants.⁴⁹⁷ In Jinjiang, transporting goods for merchants to Anhai was called “*anhai dan*” 安海担. In the town of Chidian, the *fankeshen* was paid 18 yuan (which could purchase one *jin* of rice at that time) for carrying one hundred *jin*, traveling more than one hundred *huali* 华里 to and fro in all. Some *fankeshen* fell ill because their bodies were not strong enough, partly due to the lack of nutrition.⁴⁹⁸

Some *fankeshen* took part in the handicraft industry and survived the war crisis. During the Pacific War, Quanzhou's handicraft industry enjoyed prosperous development because of the healthy market for these products while the supply of these products through trade between Quanzhou and other coastal cities or countries declined as a result of the Japanese invasion.⁴⁹⁹ Take Jinjiang for instance, new industrial productivity societies for cigarette manufacturing emerged (six in the city of Quanzhou, such as Wanhui 挽回, Jianhua 建华, Guanghua 光华, Jinjiang 晋江, Huaqiao 华侨, Qiaojuan 侨眷) and four in Dongshi, Anhai) and recruited the female *qiaojuan* including the *fankeshen* to work in the industrial productivity societies.⁵⁰⁰ A

⁴⁹⁶ Chen, “Nan'an qiaojuan de zhuanbian”, p. 33.

⁴⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁸ Zhou Haiyu 周海宇, “Guanbi minfan, qiaojuan qingyuan” 官逼民反, 侨眷请愿 (Government Oppression Drove *Qiaojuan* Protests), *Jinjiang wenshi ziliao*, 1 (November 1981), p. 33.

⁴⁹⁹ “Fazhan shougongye” 发展手工业 (Developing the Handicraft Industry), *Quanzhou ribao*, 9 April 1942.

⁵⁰⁰ For the development of industrial productivity societies for cigarette manufacturing in Jinjiang, see “Benshi ge juanyanchang liao fa tinggong” 本市各卷烟厂料乏停工 (Every Cigarette Production Society Stopped to Product Because of Lack of Materials), *Quanzhou ribao*, 11 March 1943. Among these industrial productivity societies, Wanhui Industrial Productivity Society published its announcement, stating that it tended to recruit poor *qiaojuan* in response to government's call for relieve poor women and poor *qiaojuan*. “Wanhui juanyan gongyeshe qishi zhi er” 挽回卷烟工业社启

journalist reported that many wives and daughters of *huaqiao* were attracted into new industries such as cigarette and pencil manufacturing near the city of Quanzhou.⁵⁰¹ In addition, some *fankeshen* in Nan'an, Yongchun, and Anxi also made their living through working in textile factories, and cigarette, and pencil, paper manufacturing, etc. There handicraft factories or industrial productivity societies were mostly formed by returned Overseas Chinese, as part of Fujian provincial government's protection and relief movement.⁵⁰²

In the end, many *fankeshen* often had to take on many jobs because the income from a single job was insufficient to support their needs. From 1942 to 1945, 22-year-old Cai CL in Tangdong village supported a family of six. She and several *fankeshen* friends got together and consulted with one another concerning work. During the following three years, they sold old-clothes, carried rice from Shijing, Nan'an, to sell, produced salt privately and collected sea grass as firewood as daily survival strategies. According to her recollections, it was tiring and heavy for her. Almost every night she and other *fankeshen* set off to Shijing town at about 5 pm and stayed overnight in Shijing, woke up early to carry the rice and then carried it back to Jinjing the next late morning. After selling the rice, it would be about noon. She

事之二 (The Second Announcement of Wanhui Industrial Productivity Society), *Qanzhou ribao*, 2 October 1942.

⁵⁰¹ Wang Wuyi 王无逸, "Quanzhou qiaojuan de zhengzha" 泉州侨眷的挣扎 (The Struggles of the Relatives of the Overseas Chinese in Quanzhou), *Nanfang ribao*, 16 December 1942.

⁵⁰² See for example, Ye Can 叶骞, "Jie yuefen fujian shengzheng dongtai" 九月份福建省政动态 (The Report on the Work of the Fujian Provincial Government in September), *Xin Fujian* 6, 3 (October 1944); Liu Shendong 柳升东, "Jiunian lai gongzuo de huiyi (16)" 九年来工作的回忆 (16) (The 16th Recollection of the 9-Year's Work), *Fujian shibao* 福建时报 (Fujian Times), 22 September 1947; Wu Qingtan 吴清潭, "Jinjiangxian jianguo qian hezuo yundong shilue" 晋江县建国前合作运动史略 (A History of the Movement for Co-operation in Jinjiang County before the Foundation of the People's Republic of China)", *Jinjiang wenshi ziliao xuanji* 13 (January 1991), p. 46; Lin Jinzhi 林金枝 and Zhuang Weiji 庄为玑, *Jindai huaqiao touzi guonei qiye shi ziliao xuanji (Fujian juan)* 近代华侨投资国内企业史资料选辑 (福建卷) (Selected Documents on the History of Overseas Chinese Investments in Domestic Enterprises in the Modern Era: Volume of Fujian) (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1985), p. 216; Wang Wuyi 王无逸, "Quanzhou qiaojuan de zhengzha" 泉州侨眷的挣扎 (The Struggles of the Relatives of the Overseas Chinese in Quanzhou)", *Nanfang ribao*, 16 December 1942; "Dong nan xi bei" 东南西北 (The East, South, West and North), *Xinhua ribao* 新华日报, 14 May 1944; Ye, "Jie yuefen fujian shengzheng dongtai".

hurried to carry sea water for salt production. In about two or three days, the salt was ready to be sold. If she was free at noon, she and Heitie would go out to buy old clothes in villages and sell them in the town of Jinjing. If she came back from Shijing earlier, she went to cut the sea grass as firewood. Thus every day she was busy all the time. As a result of her hard work, Cai's family could eat dried sweet potato mixed with sea vegetable and sometimes with rice.⁵⁰³ Cai's experience demonstrates the great effort that the *fankeshen* made in their struggle to survive, often through cooperating with others during difficult times.

The increasing numbers of the *fankeshen* participating in the labour force illustrates that these left-behind wives effectively reacted to the overall decline of income with their resourcefulness, wisdom, braveness, and strong will. It was an experience etched in their memories.⁵⁰⁴ With the resumption of remittance flow after the end of the war, it was found that many *fankeshen* returned to their previous mode of living with the support of their husbands' remittances.⁵⁰⁵ Such a lifestyle became a barrier to the new Communist government's efforts in building a socialist country after 1949. The *fankeshen* had to face a new environment and think of strategies to cope with new challenges.

Living through the Early Years of Communist China

Since the founding of the PRC, the government had conducted a series of political and social movements in emigrant communities, aiming at cultivating the left-behinds of the Overseas Chinese as socialist labourers. The economic status of

⁵⁰³ Interview with Cai CL.

⁵⁰⁴ The memories of the difficulties caused by the severance of the flow of remittances remained in the people's minds and somehow changed their habits on the use of remittances. After the war, more *qiaojuan* started to purchase lands to ensure their livelihood. Zhang, Chen, Gan, and Chen, "Fujian zhuyao qiaoqu nongcun jingji tanlu", p. 38.

⁵⁰⁵ For the details, see Shen, "Jinjiang guiqiao qiaojuan zai qiaoxiang shehui he jingji bianqianzhong de diwei he zuoyong", p. 15.

migrant families was also changed. Wealth was redistributed through the land reform. Participating in labour gradually became necessary for survival. The *fankeshen* were asked to participate in the social, economic and political movements. At the same time, their husbands overseas were also encountering great political and economic changes. The degree of estrangement between the migrants and their left-behind families in China was exacerbated, especially when the Overseas Chinese were encouraged to adopt the nationality of their host countries after the Bandung Conference in 1955, more and more of them became foreign nationals vis-à-vis their Chinese wives.

How did the left-behind wives cope with the transition to socialism under the changing internal and external environments? The studies of Woon Yuen-fong and Shen Yanqing on the *qiaojuan* women in Kaiping and Jinjiang suggest that most *qiaojuan* women in the Maoist era did manual labour. Woon argues that most *qiaojuan* women in Chikan town “bore a heavy burden in the domestic sphere and yet were in an inferior position in the public sphere. They were not liberated through economic or political participation”.⁵⁰⁶ Shen finds that the Jinjiang *qiaojuan* women also participated in labour in the years of 1949-1978, through which they fed themselves, rather than depended on the Overseas Chinese like before.⁵⁰⁷ However, research on the experiences of the left-behind wives after 1949 was scant for the most part. This section focuses on the post-1949 profound socio-economic challenges and the resultant changes in the *fankeshen*'s daily life and discusses their strategies to deal with the challenges.

Due to the reason that the *qiaojuan* relied on remittances to different extents, the financial situation they faced during the early years of the PRC varied. In

⁵⁰⁶ Woon, “From Mao to Deng”, p. 156.

⁵⁰⁷ Shen, “Jinjiang guiqiao qiaojuan zai qiaoxiang shehui he jingji bianqianzhong de diwei he zuoyong”.

Quanzhou, the flow of remittances continued after 1949, even during the Cultural Revolution. In the 1950s, the amount of remittances was considerable.⁵⁰⁸ Thus a certain percentage of the *qiaojuan* had sufficient remittances income for living in the 1950s, although the flow of remittances became less stable with the changing political, economic and social conditions in China and abroad.⁵⁰⁹ An official investigation on the use of remittances in the district of Jinjiang suggests that in the years of 1958-63, more than 70% of remittances were used for family life, while a small percentage was saved or invested.⁵¹⁰ Ishida Hiroshi argues that there was little difference between the nature of dependence on remittances before and after 1949.⁵¹¹

As the following details indicate, after 1949, migrant families in Quanzhou relied on remittances at different levels when agricultural productivity was low. According to the 1954 investigation conducted by the Committee of Fujian Overseas Chinese Affairs in four different types of *qiaoxiang* in Jinjiang, Yongchun and Nan'an, agricultural activity and rice production in the *qiaoxiang* increased after 1949 with the Land Reform and the increase in manpower. However, Jinjiang people could not make a living due to the land deficit, bad harvests and the limited income from sidelines such as handicraft. In 1953, the village of Maoxia, Yongchun County, where most *qiaojuan* participated in agriculture and other activities and received a substantial income from remittances before 1949, the villagers only harvested six-

⁵⁰⁸ For the status of remittance income in Quanzhou during this period, see Quanzhou huaqiaozi bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Quanzhou huaqiaozi*, p. 176.

⁵⁰⁹ For instance, in 1953, the flow of the remittances from the Philippines was disrupted again and many *fankeshen* in Shishi suffered, similar to the situation during 1941-1945. Gan and Lin, eds., *Xia si*, pp. 56-57.

⁵¹⁰ Quanzhou huaqiaozi bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Quanzhou huaqiaozi*, p. 178.

⁵¹¹ Ishida Hiroshi 石田浩, "Huanan nongcun de zongzu zuzhi yu xiangcun jianshe – yi shishi yizu weili" 华南农村的宗族组织与乡村建设—以施氏一族为例 (The Clan Association and Village Building in the Countryside of South China through the Case Study of the *Shi* Family), in *Zhongguo qiaoxiang yanjiu* 中国侨乡研究 (New Studies on Emigrant Communities), eds. Zhuang Guotu 庄国土, Tanaka Kyoko 田中恭子, Zhao Wenliu 赵文骝, Huang Cen 黄岑 (Xiamen: Xiamen University Press, 2000), pp. 383-396; Zhang, Chen, Gan, and Chen. "Fujian zhuyao qiaoqu nongcun jingji tanlu", pp. 43-45.

months' worth of food even though they laboured for one year. Liankeng town in Nan'an County where less *qiaojuan* participated in agriculture and other activities before 1949 could harvest only three months' food from one-year's labour. Huamei town in Nan'an where only poor *qiaojuan* participated in agricultural labour, and the rest relied on remittances, harvested only four months' worth of food with one year's work. Remittances thus remained the main source of income for migrant families in Quanzhou after 1949, and the percentage of dependants was rather high (see Table 5-3). The investigation also shows that these *qiaojuan* who relied on remittances would face severe economic hardships if the remittances were cut off. For those who did not have remittances, they lived in poor conditions.⁵¹²

Table 5-3: Statistics on the *Guiqiao* and *Qiaojuan*'s Dependence on Remittances in the Towns of Maoxia and Liankeng, 1954

Place	Number of <i>huaqiao</i> households	Totally dependent on remittances		Partly dependent on remittances		Not dependent on remittances	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Maoxia, Yongchun	127	33	25.8	52	41.1	42	33
Houkeng village, Liankeng town, Nan'an	144	78	54.1	41	28.47	25	17.3
Binzhou town, Jinjiang	199	124	62.3	65	38.8	10	5

Source: "Jinjiang zhuanqu shengchan qingkuang he shenghou qingkuang de dianxing diaocha ziliao de zhonghe baogao" 晋江专区侨区生产情况和生活情况的典型调查资料的综合报告 (The General Report on the Standardized Investigation on the Participation in Production and the Situation of Lives in the District of Jinjiang) [1954], in Fujiansheng dang'anguan: file 148-2-484.

The lack of change in the use of remittances and the dependence on remittances among some migrant families seemingly suggest that the *fankeshen* who received sufficient remittance hardly changed their economic relationship with their

⁵¹² "Jinjiang zhuanqu shengchan qingkuang he shenghou qingkuang de dianxing diaocha ziliao de zhonghe baogao". For the agricultural development in post-1949 Quanzhou, see Yan Hao 阎浩, "Jinjiang Nongye laodongli zhuanqi wushinian lishi kaocha (1936-1986)" 晋江农业劳动力转移五十年历史考察 (1936-1986) (A Survey of the Fifty Years' History of Agricultural Manpower Allocation in Jinjiang, 1936-1986), *Zhongguo shehui jingji yanjiushi*, 1 (February 1992), pp. 86-95.

husbands and that their lives at home remained the same after 1949. Nevertheless, the *fankeshen* who continued to depend on their husbands' remittances actually lived under considerable political and economic stress. Their lives faced unpredictable challenges with the changes in socio-political environment. The financially poor *fankeshen* also faced a new environment and needed to adapt to it.

Soon after the founding of the PRC and the launch of the Land Reform in 1950, the lives of the *fankeshen* began to change according to their family financial situations. The statistics reveal that the majority of migrant families which occupied a small portion of land before 1949 gained land through the Land Reform. In Fujian, 60-70% of the 1,500,000-2,000,000 *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* were allotted land.⁵¹³ Similarly, in Quanzhou, a large number of *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* gained land under the new policy. According to the 1953 investigation of the implementation of land reform policies conducted by the Office of the Committee of Fujian Provincial Overseas Chinese Affairs in two emigrant communities, namely Jiaji town in Yongchun which was termed as a Malayan *qiaoxiang* and Huamei town in Nan'an, a Philippine *qiaoxiang*, about 70% of the migrant families benefited from the policy. 20-25% (20.3% in Jiaji and 25% in Huamei) of them faced expropriation, and only about 4.9-10.2% (10.2% in Jiaji and 4.9% in Huamei) of them remained unchanged.

The better-off migrant families lost their property in the Land Reform.⁵¹⁴ Even the income from the continued flow of remittances could not make up for the migrant families' great losses of wealth and social status. The migrant families which possessed land, houses and resources suffered from the policies and movements, centering on the idea of class struggle, which sought to remould their ideology and behaviour under Communism. These families were classified as *huaqiao* landlords

⁵¹³ Zhuang, "The Policies of the Chinese Government towards Overseas Chinese (1949-1966)", p.18.

⁵¹⁴ Interestingly, the percentage is consistent with the percentage of migrant households who depended on remittances in Quanzhou.

(*huaqiao dizhu* 华侨地主) and *huaqiao* households of industrialists and businessmen (*huaqiao gongshang hu* 华侨工商业户).⁵¹⁵ They were subjected to the expropriation of their land and property by the Land Reform which was aimed at abolishing feudal exploitation. The situation became worse when many families were categorized incorrectly. As Glen D. Peterson said of the report of *Qiaowu bao*, those *qiaojuan* households who rented out land because their family's main source of manpower was overseas were branded as landlords by local cadres who failed to distinguish properly between the bona fide landlords and these households.⁵¹⁶ In Fujian, the situation was serious, For instance, apart from households that rented out land, some households were branded as *huaqiao* landlords wrongly because the adopted son were considered employed labourer, or female family members who participated in labour were regarded as non-labourers. At the same time, those households which had family members who had remitted money to buy public land for their lineage were branded as landlords and their property expropriated. The houses of *huaqiao* households of industrialists and businessmen which were rented by peasants were also subjected to expropriation. Some indirect relatives of *huaqiao* who received remittances as supplementary income in China as well as well-off small business owners, independent managers (*duli jingying zhe* 独立经营者) and senior staff members (*gaoji zhiyuan* 高级职员) overseas were wrongly branded as *huaqiao* households of industrialists and businessmen.⁵¹⁷ These mistakes that the government had made in the Land Reform indicate that apart from the wives in better-off emigrant households,

⁵¹⁵ *Huaqiao* landlords were different from general landlords in China. They exploited less rent when remittance flowed, and sometimes did not charge rent at all. However, they charged as high rent as the general landlord when the remittance they received was insufficient. Studies find that Fujian *huaqiao* landlords did not occupy as much land as other landlords did in the rest of Fujian. Zhang, Chen, Gan, and Chen, "Fujian zhuyao qiaoqu nongcun jingji tanlu", p. 36, n.1, 37.

⁵¹⁶ "Sange wenti" 三个问题 (Three Problems), *Qiaowu bao* 侨务报 (Newspaper of Overseas Chinese Affairs), 17 November 1956. Cited in Peterson, "Socialist China and the Huaqiao", pp. 314-315.

⁵¹⁷ "Fujiansheng qiaoqu huaqiao tugai yiliu wenti he muqian chuli qingkuang".

actually there were poor *fankeshen* who had been affected due to their overseas connection.

Since the 1950 Land Reform, the wives from the better-off migrant families faced political and social reforms which aimed at making a “new” group of *qiaojuan funü*. Furthermore, they faced the great pressure from a lot of political, economic and social uncertainty, caused by the administration which often changed its policies.⁵¹⁸ At the same time, some of them received personal attacks by some locals when they were accused of leading a lavish lifestyle and were branded backward, lazy and dependent, though they occupied a privileged status endowed by the preferential treatment of the state.

The experiences of *fankeshen* in the better-off migrant families that were affected by the Land Reform could be reflected by the example of a migrant family in Daxiamei village, Nan’an County, which was left-behind by two successful migrants, the Chen brothers. Their business in the Philippines centred on selling eggs. They became so successful that the elder brother was known as “the king of eggs” in the country. The elder Chen supported the Chinese Newspapers controlled by the underground Chinese Communist movement in the Philippines. He was targeted to be included in the Patriotic United Front (*Aiguo tongyi zhanxian* 爱国统一战线) of the PRC. He was generous to the fellow villagers who turned to him for borrowing money and helped the clansmen to build houses, or assisted them in migrating and settling down in the Philippines. As a result, more than 80% of the households in the village owed Chen money. The fourteen labourers employed by the family were

⁵¹⁸ The reasons of changes in policies were probably that the PRC faced unstable environments and had to implement flexible policies to deal with the matters of *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* for its ends. For the changing policies in the 1950-60s, see Fitzgerald, *China and the Overseas Chinese*; Peterson, “Socialist China and the Huaqiao”; Zhuang, “The Policies of the Chinese Government towards Overseas Chinese (1949-1966)”.

treated so well that they could each support a family of three. The Chen brothers often returned home to visit their wives, Wu and Hong.

However, with the implementation of the Land Reform, the family was branded as landlords because they owned a lot of land. Under the arrangement of the work team of the Land Reform, Wu and Hong were under arrest for some time. Later Hong was criticized in public by villagers from other villages since the native villagers would not want to do it. Hong was fined 100 *dan* 担 of rice, and her family's financial statement book was burnt in public. After the public criticism, Hong remained under official surveillance for six months. As punishment, she had to perform hard labour. The family was forced to loan houses to the town government, including one western-style house (*yanglou* 洋楼) which was built in 1949, a two-storey building, and an electricity production house. Later two daughters-in-law who lived in the *yanglou* were forced to move out and they left for Hong Kong. These houses were found damaged seriously when they were returned a few years later. Their other assets such as a generator, radios, a megaphone, lights, cotton-wedded quilts, canvas, woods, chairs, tables, gramophone and records were on "loan" to the local authorities, often without receipts or even taken without any warning. Until mid-1956 the situation was not changed at all.⁵¹⁹

The experiences of the family reflected the sufferings of the rich migrant families in this period. As the wives of rich *huaqiao*, the *fankeshen* in these families lost what they had owned in the past. Moreover, their social position suddenly fell to the lowest level. They were criticized and forced to provide free labour by local

⁵¹⁹ "Guanyu xiang Feilübin fuqiao Chen Jiongliao jiashu jie yanglou fangwu dongxi ji qita wenti de chubu baogao" 关于向菲律宾富侨陈炯遼家属借洋楼房屋、东西及其他问题的初步调查报告 (The Preliminary Report on the Investigation of the Issues of Borrowing Their Western-Style House and Other Property from the Rich Overseas Chinese Chen Jiongliao and Other Problems) [10 April 1956], in Fujiansheng dang'anguan: file 148-2-682.

cadres who only realized their mistakes and aimed to correct the wrong treatment of the *fankeshen* in 1956.⁵²⁰ Under the pressure of continual powerful propaganda and mobilization, these *fankeshen* did not live a happy life.

Besides the drastic effects of the Land Reform on the *fankeshen*, they were directly forced to change their lifestyles due to the deprivation of resources and materials caused by the Unified Purchase and Marketing Quotas scheme. As Glen D. Peterson has shown, migrant families were particularly affected by the Unified Purchase and Marketing Quotas introduced in November 1953, in which the state monopolized the grain trade. This scheme was “critically related to the political consolidation of communist rule in the countryside and the assertion of state control over the rural economy”.⁵²¹ In March 1955, the Three Fixes (*sanding* 三定) system was introduced, “whereby grain purchase, sale, and yield quotas all were fixed for a three-year period, as an incentive for peasants to raise production”.⁵²² Peterson discusses the migrant families’ experiences in the system as follows:

Most *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* households were grain deficient because they were unskilled or unwilling to engage in agricultural production themselves, and because they depended on overseas remittances. *Qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* households were thus particularly affected by the newly created pressure for households to meet their own grain needs, at a time when the private market for grain – which overseas Chinese households had in the past depended heavily upon – had shrunk to virtually nothing, almost overnight.⁵²³

In Quanzhou, the implementation of Unified Purchase and Marketing Quotas failed to satisfy the needs of the migrant families in the countryside.⁵²⁴ Moreover, the

⁵²⁰ By the first half of 1956, the inaccurate classification of about 96% of *huaqiao* landlords and *huaqiao* rich peasants had been rectified. Zhang, Chen, Gan, Chen, “Fujian zhuyao qiaoku nongcun jingji tanlu”, p. 49.

⁵²¹ Peterson, “Socialist China and the Huaqiao”, p. 317.

⁵²² *Ibid.*, pp. 317-318.

⁵²³ *Ibid.*, p. 318.

⁵²⁴ “Zhonggong Fujianshengwei xuanchuanbu pizhuan shengqiaowei dangzu ‘guanyu dui qiaojuan guiqiao xuanchuan liangshi sanding zhengce de jidian yijian’” 中共福建省委宣传部批转省侨委党组‘关于对侨眷、归侨宣传粮食三定政策的几点意见’ (Transmitter of “Some Suggestions on the Promotion of the Foodstuff Three Fixes (*sanding*) Policies to the *Qiaojuan* and *Guiqiao*” from the

Unified Purchase and Marketing Quotas changed the daily consumption habit of *fankeshen* to buy what they wanted, including more food and clothes. In the year 1954 in Jinjiang, the *qiaojuan* who lived more than ten *li* away from the Supply and Marketing Cooperatives in town woke up early in the morning and queued in front of the cooperatives at 5am. Each of them was allowed to purchase only up to a limited amount of 5,000 yuan. Many *qiaojuan* including the *fankeshen* who belonged to “the middle or upper classes” in Jinjiang County complained about the shortages in the supply of grain, meat and cooking oil. Some *fankeshen* in Jinjiang and Yongchun counties managed to ask overseas relatives to provide documents for their migration, as they were planning to live overseas to escape the hardship.⁵²⁵ In 1956, a governmental investigation showed that the main difficulties of *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* with the implementation of the policy on the supply of rice, cooking oil, sugar and cotton cloth in Fujian, Guangdong and Guangxi provinces were as following: a) the *qiaojuan* were burdened with the higher Unified Purchase Quotas in the Three Fixes system and had little rice to eat; b) deficient households had difficulty buying what they needed because of the shortages of food supply in the private market; c) they were not used to the consumption of grain other than wheat and rice during the deficiency; d) they were in need of materials for weddings and funerals, festivals, etc.⁵²⁶

Communist Team of the Committee of the Fujian Provincial Overseas Chinese Affairs by the Propaganda Department of the Committee of the Fujian Government), *Fujian qiaowu gongzuo tongxun*, 1 (1955), pp. 29-30.

⁵²⁵ “Guiqiao qiaojuan dui shiyou gongyin he chuzhong gaoxiao biyesheng shengxue yiji Rileiwa huiyi deng de sixiang fanyin (di 6 hao)” 归侨侨眷对食油供应和初中、高小毕业生升学，以及日内瓦会议等的思想反映 (第六号) (The Thoughts of *Guiqiao* and *Qiaojuan* on the Issues of Provision of Cooking Oil to Them, Access to Higher Education, and the Convention of Geneva, No. 6) [1954], in *Fujiansheng dang’anguan*: file 148-2-538.

⁵²⁶ “Guanyu jiaqiang dui qiaojuan guiqiao liangshi shiyou tang mianbu roulei deng wuzi gongying de zhishi” 关于加强对侨眷、归侨粮食、食油、糖、棉布、肉类等物资供应的指示 (Directions towards Increasing the Provision of Grain, Cooking Oil, Sugar, Cotton Cloth, Meat, etc. to the *Qiaojuan* and *Guiqiao*), *Fujian qiaowu gongzuo tongxun* 5 (March 1956), pp. 4-6.

Similar to the loss of migrant families' social status under the Land Reform, some *fankeshen* were also humiliated for their social positions as “landlords” under the scheme. The Chen family in Daxiamei village experienced such ill-treatment that followed the implementation of the Land Reform and the Unified Purchase and Marketing Quotas. According to the investigation of the Communist work team in Jinjiang district, the family experienced the shortage of rice although every family member was allotted 24 *jin* rice per month. They had to mix dried sweet potato with rice for food. The *fankeshen* Wu complained that the dried potato tasted bad and the small children did not want to eat. Neither could the family supplement their meager diet with any meat or fish. In 1956, Wu asked her granddaughter-in-law to buy 5 *jin* of eels from the Supply and Marketing Cooperatives in town. However, it was refused by the staff member who did not want to sell the fish to the family. Wu then sought the help of a peasant woman to buy the fish. The staff learnt that the woman came on Wu's behalf and refused to sell it to her.⁵²⁷

The *fankeshen*'s daily political and economic lives were further changed by the reorientation towards agriculture under the new socialist government. Especially in the rich emigrant communities in southern Quanzhou, the years after 1949 saw revolutionary changes in their lives. They were educated and called upon to labour for their daily sustenance, even though some of them received a lot of remittance. This is to resolve the earlier trend of non-participation in labour. Before the founding of the PRC, the lack of arable land, the flow of remittances and the limited labour power of women contributed to the situation of a considerable percentage of women not participating in agricultural production. Investigations into emigrant villages in Jinjiang in the mid-1950s unveil that the upper-class migrant households with lots of

⁵²⁷ “Guanyu xiang Feilubin fuqiao Chen Jiongliao jiashu jie yanglou fangwu dongxi ji qita wenti de chubu baogao”.

remittances did not labour in the field. Migrant households with fewer remittances did agricultural work for a supplementary source of livelihood. At the same time, the remittances stimulated many peasants to make a living through doing business. As a result, even peasants did not value agricultural work.⁵²⁸ The migrant households' lack of participation in labour was in contradiction with the government's promotion of the *qiaojuan* participation in agricultural labour. In Jinjiang County, the situation was serious. In a rich emigrant community of the Philippine *qiaoxiang* village, Longhu town, Jinjiang County, more than 50% of the *qiaojuan* including the *fankeshen* had shunned labour.⁵²⁹ To develop the habit of labour and to create a new *qiaojuan* was the main aim of the state. The *qiaojuan*, especially the *fankeshen*, were called upon to abandon their dependence on remittances and become self-reliant labourers in a socialist society where the ideal of "labour is glorious" was promoted.

Since the early 1950s, many *fankeshen* participated in agricultural production on the lands gained via the Land Reform. They acquired the necessary farming skills of irrigation, hoeing, weeding and cutting paddy.⁵³⁰ Some of them were so successful that they gained respect for their contribution to society. A *fankeshen* Guo Yin in Qingfeng, Shishan, Nan'an County, was allotted 3 more *mu* 亩 of land under the Land Reform. She not only succeeded in increasing her harvest, but also led the villagers to build an aqueduct to irrigate more than 100 *mu* of land. In 1956, she led the women in the village, including some *fankeshen*, to alleviate the impact of a drought in the

⁵²⁸ Zhang, Chen, Gan, and Chen, "Fujian zhuyao qiaoqu nongcun jingji tanlu", pp. 41, 44-46.

⁵²⁹ "Longhu Qiangang cun huaqiao zichanjieji qingkuang diaocha baogao" 龙湖前港村华侨资产阶级情况调查报告 (The Report of the Investigation of the Bourgeois among the Overseas Chinese in Qiangang Village, Longhu Town) [9 July 1959], in Fujiansheng dang'anguan: file 148-2-972.

⁵³⁰ "Jijiang xian Hanban xiang qiaojuan sannianlai jinbu de qingkuang" 晋江县涵坂乡侨眷三年来进步的情况 (The State of the Progress in the *Qiaojuan*'s Labour in Hanban Town, Jinjiang County in the Last Three Years), *Qiaoxun* 102 (10 November 1952), pp. 896-97.

village. As a result, she was selected as “model labourer” (*laodong mofan* 劳动模范).⁵³¹

Like the *fankeshen* in the poor emigrant households, those *fankeshen* who relied on remittances showed their abilities to adapt to the social revolution. However, it was not easy for the dependent *fankeshen* to labour, although some of them had such experiences during the Pacific War. For those who seldom did manual labour, labour was a painful thing. Jiang Shuduan, a *fankeshen* in Xunjiang town, Quanzhou city, told the journalist of *Qiaoxiang bao* that her back and legs ached terribly after the first weeks of her participation in labour. She did not want to get up in the morning. However, she insisted on labouring for the cooperative and got used to it slowly. She could once only carry 30 *jin* but now, even an additional burden of 100 *jin* was not a problem for her. At the same time, she learnt the art of transplanting rice seedlings, building irrigation works and roads. Her labour enabled her to support both her son and herself.⁵³² Jiang’s experience illustrates the complicated process of adapting to their new roles as labourers for the better-off *fankeshen* during and after the transition to socialism.

Unlike the *fankeshen* who were classified as landlords, which brought them lower social standing among the masses, a few dependent *fankeshen* experienced an improvement in political and social status through labour. A *fankeshen* Zhang Xiantou in Hongzhuan Cooperative, Nan’an County, once rented lands or employed labourers to cultivate lands and had never done manual labour before 1949. After 1949, she learnt that labour was “glorious” and decided to participate. After more than a year of effort, it was reported that she could carry more than 120 *jin* and walk 6 to 7 *li*. She

⁵³¹ “Qiaojuan Guo Yin de guangrong” 侨眷郭银的光荣 (The Glory of *Qiaojuan Guo Yin*), *Xinyangguang bao* 新仰光报 (Newspaper of New Rangoon), 21 May 1957.

⁵³² Chen Hanyun 陈汉云, “Xianzai jiaowo bu laodong ye buxingle” 现在叫我不劳动也不行了! (It Is Impossible for Me not to Labour Now), *Qiaoxiang bao*, 12 June 1958.

had increased her income since she participated in labour. In the Mutual Aid Cooperative in 1951, she produced a surplus of 400 *jin* of grain in addition to the quantity that her family needed for subsistence. This helped the family survive the severance of remittances which lasted for some time. In 1952, Zhang was selected as the representative of the women in the town and the representative of the towns' people concurrently. She led the villagers to fight against the drought and flood which occurred during the years of 1954-56. During the peak of collectivization in 1955, she organized the Advanced Agricultural Producers Cooperatives and was selected as their leader. At that time, there were ten migrant households that did not want to participate in the cooperatives because they had less labour power and better lands.⁵³³ Zhang succeeded in persuading them to join in by educating them. She was also nominated as one of the representatives from Fujian province to attend the Expanded Convention of Committee Members of All China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese (*Zhonghua quanguo guiguo huaqiao lianhehui* 中华全国归国华侨联合会) in Guangzhou in 1958.⁵³⁴

The participation in labour changed some *fankeshen*'s outlook on marriage and remittance, such as the previous idea that “to marry with a migrant is to depend on his remittances” (*jia qiao chi qiao* 嫁侨吃侨). Before she laboured, Jiang Shuduan considered that it was her right to depend on her husband's remittances overseas and stay at home, enjoying a lifestyle filled with restaurant food, performances and sleeping as long as she liked, although she often cried when she could not fall asleep

⁵³³ Under the Advanced Agricultural Producers Cooperatives, land became the property of the collective, and remuneration was based solely on workpoints. Peterson, “Socialist China and the Huaqiao”, p. 320.

⁵³⁴ “Nan'an qiaojuan Zhang Xiantou de xianjinshiji” 南安侨眷张线头的先进事迹 (The Exemplary Deed of Zhang Xiantou, a *Qiaojuan* in Nan'an), in *Guiqiao qiaojuan guiguo xuesheng xianjin shiji huibian* 归侨侨眷归国学生先进事迹汇编 (Collection of Reports on the Exemplary Deeds of Returned Overseas Chinese, *Qiaojuan* and Returned Overseas Students), ed. *Zhonghua quanguo guiguo huaqiao lianhehui bianyin* (Beijing: *Zhonghua quanguo guiguo huaqiao lianhehui*, 1959), pp. 96-98.

and thought of the fact that she, a young woman, lived like a widow because of the absence of her husband. She changed her lifestyle by joining the cooperative in early 1958. She laboured in the day time and built a good appetite, abandoning her bad habit of being fastidious about her food. During her labouring process, she had nice talks with people and learnt new skills. As a result, she enjoyed her days and her body became strong. Her illness of stomach trouble was cured. She then valued labour.⁵³⁵ These *fankeshen* who actively attended the study and labour campaigns improved their social position in local society and had the opportunities to be involved in a variety of socio-political movements, which not only changed their lives economically, socially and politically, but also in turn made a favourable impression on the other *fankeshen*, encouraging more *fankeshen* to participate in the social and political activities.

However, not all *fankeshen* welcomed the dramatic changes to their lives. An increasing number of *qiaojuan* who participated in agricultural labour or joined cooperatives did not always do so voluntarily.⁵³⁶ In Jinjiang County, one third of the *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* who “followed the main trend” (*sui daliu* 随大流) of participating in labour during the Great Leap Forward (1958-1960), persisted in joining the movement although 60% of them considered the work too heavy and too exacting for them. Thirty percent of these followers simply felt compelled to follow the main trend, while complaining all the time. Ten percent of the followers were totally against it. They were old or middle-aged people who were used to live leisurely. Apart from the one-third of followers, there were still some *qiaojuan* or

⁵³⁵ Chen, “Xianzai jiaowo bu laodong ye buxingle”.

⁵³⁶ Fitzgerald, *China and the Overseas Chinese*, p. 62; Peterson, “Socialist China and the Huaqiao”, pp. 320-324.

guiqiao who continued to receive regular remittances and did not labour.⁵³⁷ These hapless *qiaojuan* faced big pressure from the campaign. In Qunli town, Jinjing, it was found that about 25% of the *qiaojuan* were forced to participate in agricultural labour in 1956. Some *qiaojuan* who did not want to join the cooperative were criticized for “leading the capitalist way”. Some were threatened with the non-provision of grain.⁵³⁸ In the village of Gangqian, Longhu town, where remittances from the Philippines occupied 60% of the village income, all the *qiaojuan* joined the cooperative in 1958. Some of them were forced to participate in labour. Those who did not join were fined, together with a reduction of grain allocation, and were criticized by the masses in meetings.⁵³⁹

Forced by the pressure from politics and society, more and more *fankeshen* laboured. In Dalun village, Shishi, there were 204 *qiaojuan* women who did not labour before the Great Leap Forward. Since 1958, most of them laboured in the paddy fields or did weaving work and developed the habit of labour. Two *qiaojuan* women Xu Suhua and Huang Xue’e became good at work and were praised.⁵⁴⁰ In Nan’an, there were two villages with a large percentage of *qiaojuan* who did not labour before the Great Leap Forward. One of them, Guanshan, was a rich village whose villagers mostly migrated to Indonesia. Eighty percent of the *qiaojuan* did not labour and most of them did not have productive tools such as a pickaxe or a bamboo dustpan. The other village, Jinban, was called “a village filled with villagers who were

⁵³⁷ “Jijiang xian qiaojuan guiqiao zai dayuejin zhong de yixie sixiang fanying” 晋江县侨眷归侨在大跃进中的一些思想反映 (The Thoughts of Jinjiang *Qiaojuan* and *Guiqiao* on the Great Leap Forward) [March 1958], in Fujiansheng dang’anguan: file 148-1-136.

⁵³⁸ “Zhonggong Jijiang xianweihui guanyu Jinjing Qunli xiang qiangpo qiaojuan laodong de tongbao” 中共晋江县委关于金井群力乡强迫侨眷劳动的通报 (The Pronouncement of the Jinjiang County Government on the Issue of the Government of Qunli Village, Jinjing Town Forcing the *Qiaojuan* to Labour), *Fujian qiaowu gongzuo tongxun* 7, (15 May 1956), pp. 7-10.

⁵³⁹ “Longhu Qiangang cun huaqiao zichanjieji qingkuang diaocha baogao”.

⁵⁴⁰ “Yuandan xinwen: Fujian guangda qiaojuan guiqiao zai shengchan jianshe fangmian zuochu gongxiang” 元旦新闻: 福建广大侨眷、归侨在生产建设方面作出贡献 (New Year’s Day’s News: the Vast Majority of the *Qiaojuan* and *Guiqian* in Fujian Have Contributed to the Industrial and Construction Sectors), *Zhongguo xinwen* 中国新闻 (News of China), 1 January 1960.

pampered and spoiled” (*jiaosheng guanyang cun* 娇生惯养村), where all the *qiaojuan* were dependent on their relatives in the Philippines. All these *qiaojuan* eventually were forced to participate in labour during the Great Leap Forward.⁵⁴¹

The socialist campaigns disrupted the daily lives of the *fankeshen*. They were not allowed to visit their natal families and relatives with whom they developed close relationships over the years, or to celebrate festivals and wedding or attending funerals. These activities were considered a waste of labour time. Some of them became sick, due to the heavy workload, and were upset with the cooperative. In Qunli town, one *fankeshen* was too weak to labour and planned to migrate to Xiamen city. Another *fankeshen* bought a baby as an adopted son in order to avoid the labour.⁵⁴² More and more *fankeshen* chose to simply migrate to Hong Kong or foreign countries and escape the considerable stress. Those who did not plan or failed to migrate had to get used to the hard labour for their survival.

Such experiences of *fankeshen* make it clear that the Communist state and its policies had greatly impacted the lives of the *qiaojuan*, including the *fankeshen*, more than the preceding government under the Nationalist Party. They were urged to take part in the socialist movements continuously after 1949. Under these circumstances, the *fankeshen* had to work out different ways to manage the complicated and unpredictable environment, pressure and opportunities. Some tried to persist with the lifestyle that they were used to, sometimes succeeding. However, most of the time, they failed and had to adapt to the hostile environment through participating in labour and other social activities.

⁵⁴¹ “Nan’anxian qiaojuan guiqiao zai dayuejin zhong de ganjin he cunzai wenti” 南安县侨眷归侨在大跃进中的干劲和存在问题 (The Enthusiasm and Problems of the *Qiaojuan* and *Guiqiao* in Nan’an County during the Great Leap Forward) [17 April 1958], in Fujiansheng dang’anguan: file 148-1-136.

⁵⁴² “Zhonggong Jijiang xianweihui guanyu Jinjing Qunli xiang qiangpo qiaojuan laodong de tongbao”.

Transcending Boundaries for a New World in Hong Kong

The lives of Fujianese in Hong Kong were described in an anthropological study by Gregory Elliott Guldin in 1977. On the Fujianese women, Guldin finds that they had already developed their faculty for self-reliance when they were in China and became even “more self-reliant” in Hong Kong. They settled down in Hong Kong as the breadwinners and “usually the backbone of the Hong Kong Fujianese households”, especially when their men were in the Philippines.⁵⁴³ However, Guldin studies the Fujianese as an ethnic group. He did not pay much attention to the migrant *fankeshen* who were one group among the Fujianese in Hong Kong. One could propose another perspective by focusing on the migrant *fankeshen* and taking into account their agency in their migration decision, survival strategies in Hong Kong and distribution of their fortune which they made in Hong Kong. Furthermore, the exploration of *fankeshen*'s socio-economic lives in Hong Kong will add a new dimension to the discussion on working-class women in Hong Kong of the period which has hardly been paid special attention to.⁵⁴⁴ It also allows one to track the *fankeshen*'s lives in the second half of the twentieth century. Guldin has provided substantial data for the topic. Since his work was done nearly three decades ago, the present study is intended to update it by using eyewitness accounts and other resources that he had not used.

⁵⁴³ Guldin, “Overseas at Home: the Fujianese of Hong Kong”, pp. 135-36. For a general introduction of Chinese immigration to Hong Kong, see Lui Ping-heung, “Hong Kong Special Administrative Region: Waves of Chinese Immigrants and Their Children”, in *The Changing Population of China*, eds. Peng Xizhe and Guo Zhigang (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), pp. 257-285.

⁵⁴⁴ For the discussions on women working class in Hong Kong, see Ng C. H., “Women’s Employment and Family Change”, in *Building a New Era in Hong Kong*, ed. Joseph Y. S. Cheng (Hong Kong: Breakthrough Press, 1995), pp. 54-68 [in Chinese], cited in Ho Chi-kwan, “Of Flesh and Blood: The Human Consequences of Economic Restructuring on Women Workers in Hong Kong”, in *The Chinese Triangle of Mainland China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong: Comparative Institutional Analyses*, eds. Alvin Y. Lin, Nan So and Dudley Poston (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2001), pp. 118, 131; Janet W. Salaff, *Working Daughters of Hong Kong* (Cambridge University Press, 1983); Veronica Pearson, Benjamin K.P. Leung eds., *Women in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1995).

The *fankeshen*'s migration strategy can be divided into the pre- and post-early 1970s periods. Guldin attributes the earlier emigration—the process of Fujianese emigration to Hong Kong before 1972, with a high proportion of these migrants coming from the middle-class background, to the need for physical survival or the reestablishment of ties with relatives abroad.⁵⁴⁵

As mentioned, communication between Southeast Asia and China had never been smooth since the Second World War. The *huaqiao* question was sensitive for independent or near-independent countries in Southeast Asia. The founding of the PRC in late 1949 further stimulated the fears of the connection between the *huaqiao* and China. Thus, more legal barriers on migration increased the difficulty of returning home for these Chinese living abroad. For instance, in 1949, the Philippines government halted all Chinese entry into or departure from the Philippines, although illegal migration continued to a limited extent.⁵⁴⁶ The PRC did not have diplomatic relations with the Philippines until 1975, after which there was an official avenue for the reunion of large numbers of family members through visits. Normal remittance transmissions also resumed as before. Hong Kong, the bridge between Chinese living abroad and China, had played an important role in this aspect after 1949.⁵⁴⁷ Through describing the picture of migrant family members' immigration from Fujian (predominantly from Quanzhou) to Hong Kong after 1949, Guldin observes that Hong Kong “provided probably the only available middle ground” for the Philippine Chinese and the Fujianese when the direct contact between Fujian and the Philippines

⁵⁴⁵ Guldin, “Overseas at Home”, pp. 62-63.

⁵⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁵⁴⁷ On the topic of Hong Kong as a bridge for Fujianese migrant overseas between Southeast Asia and China, the present author has presented a preliminary discussion in the HKU-NUS Joint Workshop on Hong Kong and Singapore in History in December 2003. Shen Huifen, “Hong Kong as a Bridge for the Overseas Chinese”, paper presented at HKU-NUS Joint Workshop on Hong Kong and Singapore in History: A Comparative Study. Hong Kong, 4-5, December 2003.

had ended.⁵⁴⁸ In order to meet their family members and to avoid being rejected from entry or exit by the host country's government, Hong Kong was the station for migrant families and their men to meet under the auspices of the British colonial government of Hong Kong.⁵⁴⁹

In the early 1950s, former capitalists, landlords, or other members of the more affluent classes from Fujian, like those from Shanghai and other places, left China for Hong Kong illegally, when only the Cantonese were allowed to immigrate to the colony previously. After the Bandung Conference in 1955, the Chinese government policy was to encourage the Fujianese and others to join their relatives living overseas by granting exit permits to those who had close relatives living abroad.⁵⁵⁰ The Chinese government had a keen interest in resolving the marital separation dilemma and uniting the *huaqiao* and *qiaojuan* as an endeavour to win their support in the late 1950s to early 1960s. It was in fact organizing some Fujian *qiaojuan* including left-behind wives, like the *fankeshen* in Quanzhou, to migrate illegally to Hong Kong through Macao so as to meet their relatives.⁵⁵¹

The *fankeshen*, who generally did not migrate to foreign countries in the first half of the twentieth century, now chose to leave their hometowns for this “overseas” land of Hong Kong, with support from their relatives overseas and the Chinese government. These left-behind wives, especially those whose husbands were in the Philippines, formed an important group who capitalized on the opportunity.

⁵⁴⁸ Guldin, “Overseas at Home”, p. 61.

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 57-66, 76-81.

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 61.

⁵⁵¹ By the 1970s, the people who migrated to Hong Kong also included parents, children, brothers, brides, etc who migrated with different aims, such as meeting their relatives, marriage, inheriting, seeking for jobs, etc. “Shishi xiang Pengtian cun qiaojuan wang gang qingkuang diaocha” 石狮乡彭田村侨眷往港情况调查 (The Investigation on the *Qiaojuan* in Pengtian Village Who Migrated to Hong Kong) [25 May 1962], in Jinjiangshi dang'anguan: file 33-1-39-16.

Guldin's research reveals that in the early 1950, the Fujianese settled in Sai Ying Poon, Hong Kong, where many of them worked in local factories to pay for lodging, which was expensive. Those already in the colony were joined by more family members who arrived after the Bandung Conference. Many male migrants also left the Philippines to visit them at times. During this period, Hong Kong was a place for family reunions. Since the mid- and late 1950s, newer immigrants began to settle down in North Point. Later on, Fujianese communities would spring up in Hung Hom, Gwa Wan, Quarry Bay, Kwun Tong and the New Territories, etc.⁵⁵²

Some *fankeshen* stayed on in Hong Kong because they failed to migrate from Hong Kong to Indonesia or other Southeast Asian countries to meet their husbands.⁵⁵³ In 1954, in order to escape the threat of attacks by the Nationalists in Taiwan on the Quanzhou coast, a *fankeshen* named Qiu Yushuang left the village of Sanmei, Shishi town, for the Philippines through Hong Kong with her six-year-old son. However, they did not get immigration approval from the Philippines and were forced to settle down in Hong Kong.⁵⁵⁴

To escape the pressure of politics and to seek a new livelihood were two main reasons for the *fankeshen* to move to Hong Kong, especially after the Great Leap Forward. For instance, the number of *qiaojuan* migrants, including the migrant *fankeshen*, from Shishan, Nan'an alone, had increased since 1958. In Huamei village, there were 83 *qiaojuan* who left for Hong Kong in 1960. In the months of January to April, 1961, another 25 *qiaojuan* left for the colony when the migrant families faced

⁵⁵² Guldin, "Overseas at Home", pp. 79-81.

⁵⁵³ Ibid., p. 61. On the entry of Fujianese into the Philippines in 1949-1965, see Edgar Wickberg, "Notes on Some Contemporary Social Organizations in Manila Chinese Society", in *Chinese across the Seas: The Chinese as Filipinos*, eds. A.S.P. Baviera and T. Ang See (Quezon City: Philippine Association for Chinese Studies, 1992), pp. 49-50.

⁵⁵⁴ Wu Yongsheng 吴永胜, "Xiangjiang jiaozi – ji xianggang Rongli jituan Lu Wenduan xiansheng" 香江骄子—记香港荣利集团主席卢文端先生 (The Son of Hong Kong – Mr. Lu Wenduan, Chairman of Hong Kong Wingli Group), *Shishi wenyi* 2&3 (June 1997), pp. 70-71. The son later rose to become the chairman of the Hong Kong Wingli Group through his efforts in the service of the enterprise.

the problem of food shortage, the destruction of their homes and ancestral tombs, and the tension that arose from the ill-treatment by local cadres.⁵⁵⁵ The *qiaojuan* emigration reached its peak in the late 1950s and the early 1960s (heaviest during 1957-1962) with most of them coming from Jinjiang and Nan'an counties.⁵⁵⁶ Official statistics show that 16,834 people from Jinjiang arrived in Hong Kong and Macao in 1955-59 while an additional 12,350 arrived in 1960-65, the majority of them being *qiaojuan*.⁵⁵⁷ The 1971 Census by the Hong Kong government shows that Fujianese women aged 40 and above had outnumbered the men. For the age group of 40-54, the gender ratio was 23 males to 77 females, and for those aged 55 and above, the ratio was 33: 67.⁵⁵⁸ The gender ratios strongly suggest that there were substantial number of married women who migrated to Hong Kong by the early 1970s. They could apply for a Certificate of Identity issued by the Hong Kong government if they managed to avoid detection the first day or so.⁵⁵⁹

Around the time of the arrival of the earlier *fankeshen* migrants, Hong Kong was undergoing rapid economic development. Since the early 1950s, it had entered into a phase of industrialization. Textiles and garment manufacture, toys, electronics and plastic goods industries emerged and flourished. By the end of the 1960s, Hong

⁵⁵⁵ “Nan’an Shisan Huamei dadui zhengfeng zhengshe zhong de yixie wenti” 南安诗山华美大队整风整社中的一些问题 (Some Problems of the Societal Refinement Campaign in Huamei, Shishan, Nan’an) [13 May 1961], in Fujiansheng dang’anguan: file 148-1-192.

⁵⁵⁶ Guldin, “Overseas at Home”, pp. 61-63. Through his investigation in Longhu town, Ishida Hiroshi also argues that there were increasing numbers of people migrating to foreign countries during the most difficult economic years. Ishida, “Huanan nongcun de zongzu zuzhi yu xiangcun jianshe”, pp. 390-391. This was also observed from the archival documents in Fujian Provincial Archives on the reports on and investigations of the *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* in the variety of social and political movements, as well as the guidelines provided by higher level government on Overseas Chinese affairs in Quanzhou in the 1950-60s. For example, “Nan’an Shisan Huamei dadui zhengfeng zhengshe zhong de yixie wenti”.

⁵⁵⁷ Most of them arrived in Hong Kong. Jinjiangshi difang bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Jinjiangshi zhi* 晋江市志 (The Gazetteer of Jinjiang City), (Shanghai: Sanlian shudian, 1994), p. 1220.

⁵⁵⁸ Guldin, “Overseas at Home”, p. 126.

⁵⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

Kong had successfully established itself as an export-oriented industrial economy.⁵⁶⁰ The industrialization of Hong Kong provided work opportunities for immigrants, attracting the Fujianese, including the *fankeshen* from Quanzhou, to migrate and seek fortune in Hong Kong.

The post-early 1970s saw new reasons for the *fankeshen* to migrate to Hong Kong. Partly due to the improved bilateral relations with the United States since the late 1960s, the Chinese government had relaxed exit regulations to facilitate the departure of some *guiqiao* and *qiaojuan* for Hong Kong beginning from 1970.⁵⁶¹ At the same time, Hong Kong's immigration policy changed to allow the Fujianese legal entry.⁵⁶² Compared with the earlier groups, the new migrant Fujianese to Hong Kong from the early 1970s were relatively poorer people.⁵⁶³

The political chaos and shortage of living materials during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), were two push factors for the Fujianese, including the *fankeshen*, to leave for Hong Kong when the migration regulations were relaxed. The interviewee Hong Zuliang remembered that he was planning to migrate to Hong Kong by making use of his ties with his elder brother living in the Philippines in the early 1970s. The government department in Jinjiang had received thousands of application forms, and only a limited number of them were approved every month. In this case, people had to use their connections (*guanxi* 关系) to get their exit permits, or send

⁵⁶⁰ Benjamin K.P. Leung, "Women and Social Change: the Impact of Industrialization on Women in Hong Kong", in *Women in Hong Kong*, eds. Veronica Pearson and Benjamin K.P. Leung (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 21-24; Ho, "Of Flesh and Blood".

⁵⁶¹ For the relaxation of exit regulations and their implementation, see Michael R. Godley, "The Sojourners: Returned Overseas Chinese in the People's Republic of China", *Pacific Affairs*, 62, 3 (Fall 1989), pp. 348-49.

⁵⁶² Guldin, "Overseas at Home", p. 80.

⁵⁶³ Among whom, perhaps the ratio was 70% workers/farmers to 30% middle-class. Guldin, "Overseas at Home", p. 63.

their applications in other counties which had fewer *qiaojuan* to expedite the approval process. Due to this complication, Hong had decided to give up his migration plan.⁵⁶⁴

Li Minghuan's recent work has explained how the Fujianese were able to use their "*qiaoxiang* social capital" to obtain a visa to Hong Kong in the 1970s. Guldin also finds that the Fujianese relied on their ties with friends and relatives abroad.⁵⁶⁵ They managed to migrate to Hong Kong, "with their ears half cocked for the sounds and calls of foreign places, listening to the tales and opinions of travelers from outside China and quite sensitive to minor shifts in China's geopolitical situation."⁵⁶⁶ For those new migrants without direct relatives living abroad, "distantly recognized kinship relations or even fictive kin ties are manipulated to obtain a visa to the land of opportunity."⁵⁶⁷ Some Fujianese used the pretext of meeting relatives in Southeast Asia and waited in Hong Kong until they became legal residents.⁵⁶⁸

Since the early 1970s, many *fankeshen* with overseas connections grasped the opportunity to migrate to Hong Kong, looking for job opportunities. Among the interviewees of the present study, Cai CL, Chen LD, Chen XL and Hong Q all intended to migrate to Hong Kong to support their families, but not to visit their husbands, although they used this pretext to facilitate their applications.

Guldin finds that for the Fujianese from the early 1970s, Hong Kong was no longer "a temporary way-station to fill the gap in Filipino-Chinese relations", but

⁵⁶⁴ Interview with Hong Zuliang.

⁵⁶⁵ Li Minghuan argues that "the network of prompt information exchange and the unwritten custom of mutual benefits successfully established between the settled emigrants and their home communities have formed the basis of *qiaoxiang* social capital". Li Minghuan 李明欢. "Qiaoxiang shehui ziben' jiedu: yi dangdai Fujian kuajing yiminchao weili" "侨乡社会资本"解读: 以当代福建跨境移民潮为例 (Understanding *Qiaoxiang* Social Capital: A Study of Contemporary Migration Patterns in Fujian Province), *Huqian huaren lishi yanjiu* 2 (2005), pp. 38-49.

⁵⁶⁶ Guldin, "Overseas at Home", p. 248.

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 65; Li, "Qiaoxiang shehui ziben' jiedu", pp. 41-42.

⁵⁶⁸ Li, "Qiaoxiang shehui ziben' jiedu", p. 42. An estimated 10 % of the *fankeshen* who emigrated in the 1970s left for the Philippines. Tam, "Engendering Minnan Mobility", p. 157.

became “an ‘overseas’ center of Fujianese in its own right”.⁵⁶⁹ According to Guldin and Lanxin, with the increasing migrants from Fujian, North Point in Hong Kong, which once was called “little Shanghai” and previously dominated by people from Zhejiang province had now changed into a “little Fujian”.⁵⁷⁰ In 1987, official statistics showed that there were 298,500 Jinjiangese in Hong Kong and Macao, of which only more than 20,000 were in Macao.⁵⁷¹

The increasing number of *fankeshen* migrants after 1949 had modified the old pattern of Chinese peasant migration in the following ways: Firstly, many women were the agents of their own migration. They exploited the preferential policies of the Chinese government on the wives’ right to meet their husbands overseas and succeeded in migrating during the periods before and after the early 1970s. Secondly, it was the first time that large numbers of the left-behind wives departed to settle in a foreign territory, thus changing the male-dominated picture of Chinese traditional migration. By doing so, they changed their own identities from *qiaojuan* to “*fanke*”.⁵⁷² Through migration and their efforts in Hong Kong, many of these *fankeshen* became self-reliant “*fanke*” in their own right, sending remittances to their home families and communities in Fujian where they had only been recipients before, which will be elaborated below. Thirdly, with increasing numbers migrating to Hong Kong and fewer migrants going on to Southeast Asia, Hong Kong had become an important destination for migrants from Quanzhou after 1949.⁵⁷³

⁵⁶⁹ Guldin, “Overseas at Home”, p. 68.

⁵⁷⁰ Guldin, “Overseas at Home”; Lan Xin 兰心, “Xianggang de Fujianren” 香港的福建人 (The Fujianese in Hong Kong), *Shishi wenyi* 2&3 (June 1997), p. 54.

⁵⁷¹ Jinjiangshi difang biancuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Jinjiangshi zhi*, p. 1220. According to Lan Xin, Incomplete statistics shows that there were about 300,000-400,000 people coming from Jinjiang and Shishi. Lan, “Xianggang de Fujianren”, p. 54.

⁵⁷² The term “*fanke*” was generally understood as that applied to male migrants. With the appearance of independent female migration, interestingly, the term had also been used to refer to these independent women migrants.

⁵⁷³ Compared with the statistics of the people who migrated to Southeast Asia and Hong Kong, Shen, “Jinjiang guiqiao qiaojuan zai qiaoxiang shehui he jingji bianqianzhong de diwei he zuoyong”, p. 3.

Migration to Hong Kong heralded the beginning of a new life for the *fankeshen* in a new, hostile and urban environment. Maria Tam reveals that the *fankeshen* who did not speak Cantonese were addressed as “*minnan po*” (闽南婆 Minnan women or Southern Fujian women), indicating the discriminatory attitudes of the Cantonese.⁵⁷⁴ How did these migrant *fankeshen* adapt and settle in the new social environment? Scholars have found that the Chinese migrant women in the diaspora in modern times acted as agents who use their cultural and network capital to adapt to new environment and succeed in economic pursuits. Groups of women that academic studies have paid attention to included middle-class women with financial and educational resources who had the abilities to call upon their kinship and co-ethnic networks, women entrepreneurs who worked side by side with male counterparts and had the support of cultural and network capital, and lower-class women such as the wives of Hong Kong men with little or no cultural and social capital.⁵⁷⁵ This discussion will probe the issue further by taking another group of migrant Chinese women, the *fankeshen*, into account and examining how they managed to make a living and fulfill their ambitions in Hong Kong.

Although most migrant *fankeshen* came from a rural background and possessed little education or skills, they occupied one of the four categories of networks that migrant families locked into to provide them with a new social space – “original home area networking” as termed by Deborah Bryceson and Ulla Vuorela.⁵⁷⁶ Before their arrival, many *fankeshen* had the networks of kinship and

⁵⁷⁴ Tam, “Engendering Minnan Mobility”, p. 154.

⁵⁷⁵ Kuah-Pearce Khun Eng, ed., *Chinese Women and Their Cultural and Network Capitals*, (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish International, 2004), pp. 12-16.

⁵⁷⁶ For the discussion on four categories of networks, see Deborah Bryceson and Ulla Vuorela, eds., *The Transnational Family: New European Frontiers and Global Networks*, (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2002), p. 22, cited in Kuah-Pearce, ed., *Chinese Women and Their Cultural and Network Capitals*, p. 7.

fankeshen friends in Hong Kong.⁵⁷⁷ The connections with villagers, kinship and relatives, especially their natal families, became significantly useful resources for them when they were in Hong Kong.⁵⁷⁸ Most Fujianese relied “substantially on a network of friends” and the network of fellow villagers (同乡关系 *tongxiang guanxi*) to meet the “most fundamental concerns” of employment and accommodation.⁵⁷⁹ At the same time, migrant *fankeshen* founded associations with other *fankeshen*, taking care of one another as they strove for a better life. Those Fujianese women who settled in North Point with their families built strong friendships for life. They depended on their friends as well as their families to help them through crises and major emergencies. The women-to-women bond of Fujianese mothers was one of the strongest ties in “Little Fujian”. The Fujianese women who arrived in the mid-1950s liked to gather at temples on Sundays “to get together and share their problems and thoughts with each other”.⁵⁸⁰ Once they worked as new employees, they would also “find friendship networks” among those who spoke the same dialect.⁵⁸¹

The interviewee Yang LQ’s experience shows how a *fankeshen* who did not have family in Hong Kong settled down. When Yang arrived in Hong Kong in 1960, she did not have any relatives to rely on except a sworn sister. In order to settle down, she rented the house of her sworn sister’s brother and lived together with the family, paying one Hong Kong dollar per day for the small room, out of her daily earnings of 3.5 dollars. She worried about the livelihood of her mother-in-law and adopted son

⁵⁷⁷ It is possible that these women also used the connection of Chinese social institutions such as territorial-base associations, *tongxianghui* and clan associations in Hong Kong, which needs further investigation. Very recently, Maria Tam finds that the women “did not take part in *tongxianghui* activities” for the sake of their good reputation, because *tongxianghui* were dominated by men and it would be thus easy to invite rumours and spoil the women’s reputation. Tam, “Engendering Minnan Mobility”, pp. 154-55.

⁵⁷⁸ Guldin, “Overseas at Home”; Tam, “Engendering Minnan Mobility”, p. 155.

⁵⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 222-223.

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 119, 215.

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

during her earlier and most arduous years in Hong Kong. Four to five years later, she began to work in a silk shop for her nephew, the son of her older sister who was in the Philippines.⁵⁸² Yang's experience as a woman who survived in Hong Kong without her family members' assistance paralleled that of large numbers of the migrant *fankeshen* who arrived in earlier 1970s and after.

Similar to the earlier *fankeshen* migrants, the later migrants also had the wisdom to adjust to the new environment. For many of them who did not have the assistance from husbands or relatives, "original home area networking" and partnerships with *fankeshen* sisters were more important than assistance from family. For example, the interviewee Cai CL had formed associations with her *fankeshen* friends in Hong Kong. She rented a house with three *fankeshen* friends of the same age who had come to Hong Kong to "meet husbands". The house was so small that there was only room for the bed that they slept in. They took care of one another and cooked food together. They regarded one another as *zijiren* (自己人 kin).⁵⁸³ With little education and skills in an urban environment and with their husbands absent, they depended greatly on the assistance, comfort and company provided by home networks or friends in Hong Kong. This definitely contributed to the women's ability to adapt and settle down in a challenging environment.

The industrialization of Hong Kong meant that many female labourers were absorbed into the labour market and worked as production workers. They served as the backbone of local industries, especially in the manufacturing sector, and thus

⁵⁸² Interview with Yang LQ.

⁵⁸³ Interview with Cai CL.

contributed substantially to Hong Kong's subsequent economic growth.⁵⁸⁴ The migrant *fankeshen* formed a significant percentage of these female workers.⁵⁸⁵

Although many of the earlier migrant *fankeshen* were well-off, living in Hong Kong with the substantial support of remittances from the Philippines, the bulk of migrant *fankeshen* still needed to find ways and means to survive.⁵⁸⁶ For example, Qiu Yushuang settled down in Hong Kong with her son, and her husband often traveled from the Philippines to visit them in Hong Kong. However, with the anti-Chinese movement in the Philippines, the father could not afford the livelihood of the family in Hong Kong. In order to support the family and education fees of two children, Qiu tried her best to earn money for the family. In 1957, they moved to North Point. There the mother assembled beads for garment factories every day and night.⁵⁸⁷ According to the interviewees Lin D, Hong Q and Cai CL, it was popular among the women to engage in such a job.⁵⁸⁸

On women who had to take care of their family members without their husbands around in Hong Kong, Guldin observes that they acted as caretakers of families and children while having to deal with “a high level of anxiety and tension” from “long hours of work and loneliness”.⁵⁸⁹ Cai Qionxia, the mother of Chen Yongzai who was a successful entrepreneur and prominent leader of the Philippine Chinese, had an experience similar to Qiu Yushuang's. Cai was a *fankeshen* who migrated to Hong Kong from Qingyang town, Jinjiang in 1958. She worked to

⁵⁸⁴ Salaff, *Working Daughters of Hong Kong*. For the women workers in Hong Kong, see Leung, “Women and Social Change”; and Ho, “Of Flesh and Blood”.

⁵⁸⁵ Some migrant *fankeshen* worked in service industry and other jobs. For example, the interviewee Xu LD worked in McDonald's for many years. For these *fankeshen*'s experiences, more investigations are needed. For the Jinjiangese in Hong Kong who played a significant role in Hong Kong, see Wu, ed., *Jinjiang huaqiaozhi*, p. 230.

⁵⁸⁶ The flow of remittances continued but was not stable in this period, due to the discriminatory economic policies towards Chinese, which threatened some *fankeshen*'s livelihood.

⁵⁸⁷ Wu, “Xiangjiang jiaozi”, p.71.

⁵⁸⁸ Interview with Lin D, Hong Q, and Cai CL; except Lin D, the other two *fankeshen* had worked in Hong Kong for several decades.

⁵⁸⁹ Guldin, “Overseas at Home”, pp. 116, 134-164.

support a family of 10 people in Hong Kong when her husband fell ill and became bedridden in the late 1950s.⁵⁹⁰ On the whole, Guldin points out that the Fujianese in Hong Kong lived with a “defensive” life strategy. They worked to support not only the dependants in Hong Kong, but also the families back home in Fujian, and even future generations.⁵⁹¹

For those individual migrant *fankeshen* who did not had family members in Hong Kong, they worked hard to support their families in their hometown, facilitated their children’s migration to Hong Kong to seek opportunities, or even assisted their relatives from Southeast Asia who were unable to go home with their traveling expenses. The interviewee Yang LQ who migrated alone in 1960 when she was in her twenties, worked for about 40 years in many factories and did many kinds of jobs. When she worked in a factory, she woke up at 6 am and started work at 9 am. She ate bread for breakfast and cooked a simple lunch in the factory. She ate bread for dinner if she did an extra shift, which lasted till 8pm. The factory would provide food if they worked overtime until 11 pm. If they stopped working at 8 or 9pm, Yang and her fellow worker sisters would call on other factories, seeking opportunities to work the whole night. She said they wanted to make more money. Even though she wanted to sleep badly, she could not do so. In order to make more money and save on the cost of traveling, in her first 18 years in Hong Kong, she only returned to Jinjiang for 18 days in total. She trained herself to get used to her absence from the hometown during the Spring Festival, which was considered by the Chinese the most important festival in the year. Through her hard work, she at least contributed to her family in the following ways. Firstly, she earned and saved enough money to send to her sick

⁵⁹⁰ Bei, *Shishi bairen* (2), pp. 227-231. Apart from this, Cai’s education of the children and her personality had impressed Chen since he was a young boy. The son considered that his mother was a great mother, whose personality had greatly influenced himself and his siblings, to succeed in their enterprise.

⁵⁹¹ Guldin, “Overseas at Home”, pp. 146, 150.

father-in-law, who had returned to Hong Kong from the Philippines and had to stay in Hong Kong because of little money, back home. She also saved about 4,000 Hong Kong dollars and succeeded in sending money to her husband, who had been an illegal immigrant in the Philippines for many years, to enable him to join her in Hong Kong in the mid-1960s. Secondly, after her husband's arrival, they worked hard to remit money back home to support their parents and son. Thirdly, after her husband died in the early 1980s, she continued to work for the family, built a house in Jinjiang and applied for her son to come to Hong Kong in 1982, which meant that if he worked hard, her son would have the opportunity to live a better life than those who remained in their hometown.⁵⁹²

Like the earlier migrant *fankeshen*, the later migrant *fankeshen* struggled for the sake of their families. These women adopted the strategy of migrating to Hong Kong for the benefit of their families. Although they did not have children to care for, they faced much pressure. They rushed to make as much money as they could to remit to Fujian for their families. Similar to the earlier migrant *fankeshen*, they worked in the lower ranks of the manufacturing industry, service sectors, and in part-time jobs with low wages, poor working conditions and little welfare. Long working hours and multiple jobs were common.

For several years, the interviewee Cai CL and her partners got up as early as 4 am in the morning, took the ferry to the factory and returned at 5 pm if there was no extra shift. In order to make more money, they often worked extra shifts until mid-

⁵⁹² Interview with Yang LQ. Since the house was built using Yang's remittances, her name was caved into the plaque on the gate. Similarly, another interviewee Xu LD showed the present author her name on the plaque on the gate of her pretty house with four stories, a western style building. Two ladies were proud of what they did for the families. Unfortunately, although she had done a lot for the family, Yang did not receive filial piety from her adopted son and his wife. She was very angry with the couple and survived on her savings after she returned back to Jinjiang. However, her achievement and contribution allowed her to live as happy as possible even though she had an unfilial son and daughter-in-law. Moreover, she was satisfied that she could live with her husband for about twenty years and that her husband appreciated her very much.

night. They were exhausted when they returned. They ate cookies with water, took a shower and went to sleep. If they could not find a job in a factory, they did piecework at home such as assembling beads in clothes for very low wages (one dollar for twelve strings of beads) at the sacrifice of their sleep. Furthermore, they often skimmed on food, spending little money on meat. In her earlier working days, Cai received her wages every fortnight. Half of her wages went to living expenses, while the rest was sent back to her family in Jinjiang. In her thirty years of working life, she did not return home to Jinjiang although she was home-sick. In order to meet family members only briefly so as to have the time to make more money in Hong Kong, she met them in Guangzhou or Shenzhen. She later applied for her son and elder daughter to join her in Hong Kong.⁵⁹³

Apart from supporting their families in Hong Kong or at home with the wages they earned in Hong Kong, the *fankeshen* also played substantial roles for their families in the 1950-60s, through passing the remittances from relatives living abroad home when the funds were available. Hong Kong was an exchange point for Fujianese remittances in the years immediately following the founding of PRC.⁵⁹⁴ Since the 1950s, some Fujianese had used Hong Kong as a channel for remittances that could no longer be sent directly to Fujian.⁵⁹⁵ The difficult years of the 1960s, when families in Quanzhou suffered severe shortages, saw more assistance from Overseas Chinese being sent through Hong Kong to their families in need in Quanzhou. Wang Renqiu, member of the Editorial Board of the Literary and Historical Documents of Shishi City, had an eldest brother in the Philippines. His parents died when he was five-year old in 1946. He grew up under the care of his sister-in-law, Huang Jizhi, a wife left behind by his eldest brother. Huang was a

⁵⁹³ Interview with Cai CL.

⁵⁹⁴ Guldin, "Overseas at Home", p. 76.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid., pp. 61-62.

daughter of a rich migrant family in Shishi. She married Wang in 1946 and the parents-in-law died of the plague at the same time. She took care of Wang Renqiu and his young sister, as well as her son in Shishi when her husband migrated to the Philippines in 1949. In 1954, Huang went to Hong Kong to meet her husband and stayed on. According to Wang, even though Huang's husband did not send much money to her, she never stopped the remittances, which included cloth, stationery and money, to Wang and his sister. With the shortage of rice in the 1950s, Huang asked Wang and his sister to apply for migration to Hong Kong. The application failed, so she sent rice, cans of fish and cloth to them. As a result, Wang and his sister did not go hungry in the difficult years of the 1960s. Wang later on graduated from a normal school and became a teacher. He respected his sister-in-law as much as his mother.⁵⁹⁶

The interviewee Xu Wuqi who migrated to Hong Kong from Pengtian village, Shishi, in 1956, lived in Hong Kong with the remittances from her husband and often sent materials home with the remittance support. In 1962, it was officially recorded that she had sent more than thirty packages from Hong Kong to her home family.⁵⁹⁷

The financial support provided by these *fankeshen* helped not only their families, but also the people of Quanzhou.⁵⁹⁸ According to her son, Qiu Yushuan showed great interest in the building of Ziyang Hospital in Shishi. She also treated

⁵⁹⁶ Wang Renqiu 王人秋, "Tianxia nanxun de hao saosao" 天下难寻的好嫂嫂 (A Hard-to-find Good Sister-in-law), *Shishi wenyi* 2&3 (July 1996), pp. 30-31; Gengyun 耕耘, "Quanguo youxiu banzhuren Wang Renqiu" 全国优秀班主任王人秋 (Wang Renqiu: A National Excellent Teacher-in-Charge), *Shishi wenshi ziliao* 石狮文史资料 (Literary and Historical Documents of Shishi), 9 (December 2002), pp. 124-125.

⁵⁹⁷ "Shishi xiang Pengtian cun qiaojuan wang gang qingkuang diaocha"; Interview with Xu WQ, Pengtian village, Shishi city, 9 December 2004.

⁵⁹⁸ On the donations by Overseas Chinese or Chinese overseas to Quanzhou since the late 1970s, see Wang Fubing 王付兵, "Gaigekaifang yilai huaqiao huaren yu gang'ao tongbao zai Fujian de juanzeng" 改革开放以来华侨华人与港澳同胞在福建的捐赠 (The Donations by Chinese Overseas and Compatriots in Hong Kong and Macao since the Reform and Open Door Policies), in *Gaigekaifang yu Fujian huaqiao huaren* 改革开放与福建华侨华人 (The Reform and Open Door Policy and the Chinese Overseas of Fujian), eds. Yang Xuelin 杨学滨 and Zhuang Guotu 庄国土 (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue chubanshe, 1999), pp. 173-83.

relatives and friends from her hometown warmly.⁵⁹⁹ Qiu's affection for her hometown influenced her son very much. He donated more than 10,000,000 yuan to build kindergartens, primary schools, middle schools, a Public Park and roads in Shishi.⁶⁰⁰ Lin Guipan, who was a revolutionary *fankeshen*, joined the underground Chinese Communist Party at a young age. She did a lot of work for the revolution in Shishi with the support of her husband in the Philippines, and was one of the government leaders of Jinjiang County in the 1950s. From the late 1970s, she used Hong Kong as a base and traveled to the Philippines with some migrant villagers from Shishi. She succeeded in persuading fellow Chinese in the Philippines to donate to the construction of the Shishi Huaqiao Middle School.⁶⁰¹ In the village of Liushi, Chidian town, Quanzhou city, the first story told by a cadre of the village was about a *fankeshen* in Hong Kong, Zu Caozhi, who donated money to build the kindergarten for the village.⁶⁰² Indeed, the *fankeshen* in Hong Kong had become public donors as much as successful male migrants did so previously. Obviously they earned the locals' respect through their generous contributions to the villages, towns and cities.

While the contributions that the people who migrated from Quanzhou to Hong Kong had made to the economic development of Quanzhou, including Jinjiang and Shishi cities, has gradually been discussed and recognized since the 1990s, those made by the *fankeshen* have not been fully recognized. The *fankeshen* were always subsumed under the more general category of “*gang'ao tongbao*” (港澳同胞 compatriots of Hong Kong and Macao).⁶⁰³

⁵⁹⁹ Guldin points out that for Fujianese in Hong Kong, *tongxiang* were treated as equally important as relatives, Guldin, “Overseas at Home”, p. 212.

⁶⁰⁰ Wu, “Xiangjiang jiaozi”, p. 74.

⁶⁰¹ Gan and Lin, *Xia si*, pp. 94-120.

⁶⁰² Interview with head cadres of the office of Zishi village branch of the Party, Zishi village, Chidian town, Jinjiang city, 21 December 2004.

⁶⁰³ For example, Wu, ed., *Jinjiang huaqiao zhishi*, pp. 113-118; Shen, “Jinjiang guiqiao qiaojuan zai qiaoxiang shehui he jingji bianqianzhong de diwei he zuoyong”; Shishishi difangzhi biancuan

Without doubt, the *fankeshen* had contributed to the economic development of Quanzhou, and perhaps even the whole country, since the country opened its doors and implemented economic reform in the late 1970s. When the Chinese Customs relaxed in 1979 the rules and regulations governing the permissible commodities that could be carried by visiting or returning *huaqiao* and *gan'ao tongbao* as part of their luggage, and compounded with unfavourable exchange rate of the Hong Kong dollar to Renminbi, the sale of the “foreign commodities” (*yanghuo* 洋货) from overseas, Hong Kong and Macao had become a lucrative business. Many *fankeshen* sent large numbers of items, such as clothes, TV sets, radios, toys, chemical fertilizers etc. to their families.⁶⁰⁴ These items were largely sold in the market in Quanzhou. The “old-cloth stalls” that flourished in the years of 1941-1945 re-emerged and multiplied, and the streets of Shishi town were filled with more than 600 of these stalls in the early 1980s. The variety of low cost foreign commodities had attracted merchants from other parts of the country who congregated in the town of Shishi. The flourishing trade in *yanghuo* made the town of Shishi the market centre of the foreign commodities and Shishi town was known as “little Hong Kong”.⁶⁰⁵ Guo Biliang's

weiyuanhui, ed., *Shishishi zhi* 石狮市志 (the Gazetteer of Shishi City) (Beijing: Fangzhi chubanshe, 1998), pp. 916-920; Guo, *Shishi*; Yang Guodong 杨国栋, Zheng Zhentai 郑振泰, Wang Xiaoyue 王晓岳, *Dongfang xingshi* 东方醒狮 (The Awoken Lion of the East) (Fuzhou: Huayi chubanshe, 1992). On the *gan'ao tongbao* in the PRC's policies, see Wang, “External China as a New Policy Area”, *Pacific Affairs* 58 (spring 1985), pp. 31-33.

⁶⁰⁴ The interviewee Cai Shijia personally encountered the enthusiastic *fankeshen* who were passing through the customs in Shenzhen. Some of the *fankeshen* queuing at the customs and carrying big bags were perspiring in the heat, yet they wore many layers of clothes. They were going to remit items to relatives in Quanzhou. Cai speculated that the clothes that some wore were meant for their relatives. As an experienced staff member of the Shishi Overseas Chinese Affairs Office and a propagandist who participated in an anti-capitalist campaign against the trade in Shishi under the orders of the central government, Cai attributed the economic success of Shishi by 1987 to the *fankeshen* in Hong Kong. Interview with Cai Shijia.

⁶⁰⁵ Guo, *Shishi*, pp. 23-28; Cai shijia 蔡世佳, “Shishi xiao shangpin shichang chenfu ji” 石狮小商品市场沉浮记 (The Ups and Downs of the Small Commodities Market in Shishi), in *Shishishi wenyi zuopin ji* 石狮市文艺作品集 (Collection of Literary Works on Shishi City), eds. Shishishi keweiventiju and shishishi wenhuaguan (Hong Kong: Huaxing chubanshe, 1993), pp. 30-34; Shishi shi difangzhi biancuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Shishi shizhi*, pp. 901-903; Interview with Cai Shijia. In 1979-1981, there were 20,000-30,000 merchants from the other parts of the country who had arrived in Shishi to

work mentions that the sale of *yanghuo* was important for Shishi because it contributed to the growth of the town's small commodities, capital and information market, and the growing status of Shishi in the county, all of which improved the business acumen and foresight of the people of Shishi.⁶⁰⁶

The trade in *yanghuo*, however, was closed down in June 1982, because it was regarded as a “restoration of capitalism”.⁶⁰⁷ Facing the prohibition and the PRC's economic policies to attract foreign investment, migrant Quanzhouese in Hong Kong, including, the *fankeshen* shifted to sending capital equipment, and assisted their home relatives in starting enterprises, or invested directly in the enterprises in the three forms of Sino-joint ventures, cooperative businesses and exclusively foreign-owned enterprises. The *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* therefore contributed to the economic development of Jinjiang while developing themselves to become independent labourers.⁶⁰⁸ As a result, the external linkage to Hong Kong has greatly changed the process of economic development of Quanzhou.⁶⁰⁹

purchase the goods. There were 85 stalls in January 1980 and 315 stalls in February 1982. Shishi shi difangzhi biancuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Shishishi zhi*, p. 901.

⁶⁰⁶ Guo, *Shishi*, p. 28.

⁶⁰⁷ Yang, Zheng, Wang, *Dongfang xingshi*, pp.19-22; Cai, “Shishi xiao shangpin shichang chenfuji”, p.33.

⁶⁰⁸ On this issue, see Shen, “Jinjiang guiqiao qiaojuan zai qiaoxiang shehui he jingji bianqianzhong de diwei he zuoyong”; shen, “guiqiao qiaojuan yu jinjiang xiangzhen qiye”; Yu Yunping 俞云平, “Gaigekai fang yilai huaqiao huaren yu gang’ao tongbao zai Fujian sanziqiye fazhang zhong de diwei” 改革开放以来华侨华人与港澳同胞在福建三资企业发展中的地位 (The Position of the Enterprises in the Three Forms of Joint Venture of the Chinese Overseas and Compatriots in Hong Kong and Macao in Fujian since the Implementation of the Reform and Open Door Policies), in *Gaigekai fang yu Fujian huaqiao huaren*, eds. Yang and Zhuang, pp. 12-24; Zhang Xuehui 张学惠 and Jiang Zuodong 江作栋, “Fujian qiao gang’ao touzi qiye 20 nian fazhang gaikuang” 福建侨港澳投资企业 20 年发展概况 (The Status of the Investment of the Compatriots in Hong Kong and Macao in Fujian in 20 years), in *Gaigekai fang yu Fujian huaqiao huaren*, eds. Yang and Zhuang, pp. 25-42; Zheng Bingshan 郑炳山, “Quanzhou haiwai xiangqin dui gaigekai fang de gongxian” 泉州的海外乡亲对改革开放的贡献 (The Contribution of the Chinese Overseas from Quanzhou to the Reform and Open Door Policies of China), in *Gaigekai fang yu Fujian huaqiao huaren*, eds. Yang and Zhuang, pp.167-172.

⁶⁰⁹ This is similar to the role of Hong Kong in the economic development of the Pearl River delta region. Hong Kong has also become critical for the development of the economic reform in this region, especially in the counties or cities which had close relationship between the people and their relatives in Hong Kong, providing important sources of investment capital and entrepreneurial skill, commercial information, and personal relationship. See for example, Johnson and Woon, “The Response to Rural Reform in an Overseas Chinese Area: Examples from Two Localities in the Western

Through their efforts for their dependants in Hong Kong and home families, the *fankeshen* were largely empowered in Hong Kong. Guldin observes that “perhaps free from the direct and constant control of men for the first time in their lives, many grow to appreciate their position in Hong Kong even though life in the colony has more than its share of hardships and anxieties”.⁶¹⁰ They played important roles in the building of their hometown and did not stop their efforts to forge a better life for their families at every stage of their lives. The *fankeshen*’s active role looks to be a sharp contrast to the *qiaojuan* women after the late 1970s in Siyi, as described in Woon Yuen-fong’s study. In the latter case, the old women were ignored and the *qiaojuan* women were seen as “waiting” women who depended on men’s material support.⁶¹¹

The migrant *fankeshen*’s experiences contribute to a new page in their life history. However, the contributions made by the *fankeshen* have not brought about women’s emancipation. Guldin observes that “the economic necessities and social relatives of Fujianese women ... have not caused a corresponding shift in the overall male Fujianese perception of the proper roles of men and women. Fujianese men continue to be more oriented on the theoretical level to the concepts of lineage, home village and the ties of the home soil”.⁶¹² The *fankeshen*’s position, however, is consistent with other groups of Hong Kong female workers who did not gain emancipation despite gaining some autonomy and influence within the family. Benjamin Leung argues that “the Chinese family with its patriarchal values remains, even in contemporary Hong Kong”, and it is “the main impediment to women’s

Pearl River Delta Region, South China”; Yow Cheun Hoe, “The Changing Landscape of *Qiaoxiang*: Guangdong and the Chinese Diaspora, 1850-2000”, (Ph.D dissertation, National University of Singapore, 2002).

⁶¹⁰ Guldin, “Overseas at Home”, pp. 128,135-136.

⁶¹¹ Johnson and Woon, “The Response to Rural Reform in an Overseas Chinese Area”; Woon, “From Mao to Deng”.

⁶¹² Guldin, “Overseas at Home”, p. 142.

liberation”.⁶¹³ Many *fankeshen* still find it hard to transcend gender norms although they had succeeded in transcending the boundaries of geographical, social and economic spaces. They had lived for the continuation of the family line before they left for Hong Kong and they continued to work hard for the same purpose there.⁶¹⁴

To summarize, this chapter has shown that the gender roles of the left-behind wives during the migration process had undergone a drastic change. The women began to make important contribution to the maintenance of their households through participating in the variety of socio-economic activities outside their houses.

Migration studies have perceived that migration can be a factor that empowers the left-behind women.⁶¹⁵ According to Gita Sen and Srilatha Batliwala, empowerment refers to “the process by which the powerless gain greater control over the circumstances of their lives, control relating to both resources and ideology’. The power relations that have to be transformed enmesh women’s lives at multiple, interlinked levels: the household/family, the community, the market, and the state”.⁶¹⁶ Graeme Hugo links the empowerment of left behind women to the internal and international emigration of men in “Southern countries”. Through examining related case studies, he recognizes the complexities and variability of the women’s

⁶¹³ Leung, “Women and Social Change”, p. 41.

⁶¹⁴ However, some of them must have developed new thoughts. For example, Yang LQ did not have a filial son and daughter-in-law, although she contributed to the family very much. She strongly declared that a daughter would be better than a son, because she would care more for her parents. More investigations are needed to examine this issue.

⁶¹⁵ For example, Abadan-Unat, “International Labour Migration and Its Effect upon Women’s Occupational and Family Roles”; Nelson, “The Women Who Have Left and Those Who Have Stayed behind”; Gulati, “Social Consequences of International Migration”; Hugo, “Migration and Women’s Empowerment”, pp. 306-308; Delia Davin, “Women and Migration in Contemporary China”, *China Report* 41, 1 (2005), pp. 29-38.; T. V. Sekher, “Women Left-behind: Impact of Male Emigration on Muslim Women in South India”, paper presented in the International Workshop on The Impact of Migration on the left-behind in Asia, 10-11 March 2005, Hanoi, Vietnam.

⁶¹⁶ Harriet B. Presser and Gita Sen, “Women’s Empowerment and Demographic Processes: Laying the Groundwork”, in *Women’s Empowerment and Demographic Processes: Moving beyond Cairo*, ed. Harriet B. Presser and Gita Sen (New York: Oxford University Press, c2000), p. 5.

experiences in men's emigration and that some women gained power and some did not, depending on the context. He also calls for more research to fill the many gaps in the field.⁶¹⁷ Furthermore, Katie Willis and Brenda Yeoh suggest that migration could be an "a double edged sword" for left-behind women, that "the absence of a husband or male partner may provide greater freedom, but there may be economic disadvantages, especially if remittances are irregular or non-existent".⁶¹⁸

Studies on the left-behind women in Chinese migrant families suggest two seemingly contradictory arguments. The studies consider women dependence on the male migrants who sent substantial remittances on the one hand; they also indicate that women were empowered, demonstrating that some southern Chinese women became female-heads of migrant households, effectively managing their family affairs, and controlling the investment of overseas property on the other hand.⁶¹⁹ Through investigating the survival strategies of the *fankeshen* from different remittance-income groups in different periods, this chapter provides an inner and complex history of the empowerment of the *fankeshen* during their husbands' migration process. It finds that a certain percentage of the *fankeshen* did depend on the remittances and some of them were empowered by the migration of their husbands through being involved in managing the family affairs and controlling their family investments. However, it further demonstrates that male migration had put the *fankeshen* in a disadvantageous position with the irregular and unreliable flow of remittances due to the changing

⁶¹⁷ Hugo, "Migration and Women's Empowerment", pp. 306-08.

⁶¹⁸ Willis and Yeoh, "Introduction", p. xix.

⁶¹⁹ For example, Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*; Sun, *Qingdai huaqiao yu minyue shehui bianqian*; Szonyi, "Mothers, Sons and Lovers", pp. 60-61; Tam, "Engendering Minnan Mobility"; Woon, "From Mao to Deng". However, Michael Szonyi points out that the improvement in females' position in migrant families did not bring about significant changes for women. They were still limited to traditional and subordinate roles in the "new form of patriarchy" that came along with the "new type of regulation". Szonyi, "Mothers, Sons and Lovers", p. 61. Maria Tam concludes that the women "were simultaneously agents who contributed to and were victims of patriarchal social system". Tam, "Engendering Minnan Mobility", p. 146. For details, also see Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China*, p.129; Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold*, Chapter 4. Tam, "Engendering Minnan Mobility".

socio-economic and political circumstances in China, Southeast Asia and the wider world, especially during the Pacific War and the period shortly after. However, thousands of the *fankeshen* responded actively to the negative effects of migration. They explored new spheres where women had seldom been involved. During the process, they gained control in almost every sphere in which they were involved when they were forced to support themselves and their families in times of difficulty. Some of them further improved and established their socio-political position in Communist China through their involvement in productive work, or managed to migrate to “overseas” land and served the industrialization of Hong Kong through working in various industrial sectors. They developed skills, enhanced their knowledge and became proud of themselves, while suffering from the hardship and challenges confronting them in the process.

Chapter VI

The Evolution of a *Qiaojuan* Discourse

This chapter explores the impact of the husbands' migration on the *fankeshen*'s socio-political lives. It investigates how the *fankeshen* were represented in a series of Overseas Chinese policies, what the interplay was among the wives, the migrant husbands and the governments at different administrative levels and how the *fankeshen* reacted to the changes in political environments.

The *fankeshen* were part of the *qiaojuan* in China who had received a lot of attention from the state since the early twentieth century. The usage of *qiaojuan* is in itself problematic as its definition has altered over different time periods and contexts. So far there has been no academic consensus on the definition of the term.⁶²⁰ At the same time, it is a trend in current academic circles to regard *qiaojuan* and the returnees, *guiqiao*, as one entity and discuss their roles generally within the context of the social, economic and cultural development of *qiaoxiang*, as well as their experiences and positions with changing Overseas Chinese policies in different

⁶²⁰ Although most scholars define *qiaojuan* as the dependants of Chinese living abroad, their definitions do vary somewhat. For example, Stephen Fitzgerald defines them as “the relatives or dependants of Chinese living abroad”, Fitzgerald, *China and the Overseas Chinese*, p. 4; for Wang Gungwu, they were “dependants of *huaqiao*”; however, he considers that the term *qiaojuan* is “a misnomer”, for when he wrote his article, it “could refer to anyone who has relatives among the Chinese overseas, including those who are permanently settled abroad as foreign citizens”. Wang, “External China as a New Policy Area”, p. 34; Glen D. Peterson considers them “overseas Chinese family dependents”, Peterson, “Socialist China and the Huaqiao”, p. 309; Woon Yuen-fong refers them to “Overseas Chinese dependents”, Woon, “International Links and the Socioeconomic Development of Rural China”, p.165, n. 3; In the other article by Woon, the *qiaojuan* refers to “Overseas Chinese dependent household”, Johnson and Woon, “The Response to Rural Reform in an Overseas Chinese Area”, p. 36, n. 7; Zhuang Guotu calls them “the mainland Chinese dependants of overseas Chinese”, Zhuang Guotu, “The Policies of the Chinese Government towards Overseas Chinese (1949-1966)”, p. 16; Mette ThunØ writes that the *qiaojuan* were “relatives of migrants living in China (dependants). Mette ThunØ, “Reaching Out and Incorporating Chinese Overseas: the Trans-territorial Scope of the PRC by the End of the 20th Century”, *The China Quarterly* 168 (November 2001), p. 91; Elizabeth Sinn delineates the *qiaojuan* as family members of Chinese overseas, Elizabeth Sinn, “Xin Xi Guxiang: A Study of Regional Associations as a Bonding Mechanism in the Chinese Diaspora. The Hong Kong Experience”, *Modern Asian Studies* 31, 2 (1997), p. 388.

periods, without differentiating between the two groups.⁶²¹ Such an approach can hardly provide a comprehensive analysis of the complex interactions among the Overseas Chinese, the state and the *qiaojuan*. Furthermore, as some scholars have pointed out, these studies often offer only a general introduction or analysis on a broad level, touching little on how the policies had been implemented in provinces or on the effects of these policies on the Overseas Chinese and the *qiaojuan*.⁶²² Very recently, Glen D. Peterson's study on the *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* in rural Guangdong province in 1949-56 discusses the problems that the *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* experienced under the Overseas Chinese policies during the transition to socialism. At the same time, his discussion also addresses the problems encountered by the communist cadres who implemented the policies at the local level.⁶²³ On the *qiaojuan* women's experiences, Woon Yuen-fong provides a rare case study which explains how the changing politics and policies had shaped *qiaojuan* women's lives in Kaiping, Guangdong, in the twentieth century.⁶²⁴ The following discussion will address not only the general development of *qiaojuan* politics, but also the process of the implementation of concrete policies at different administrative levels by focusing on the *fankeshen*'s responses to illegitimate acts by local officials and to the dilemma of

⁶²¹ See for example, Mao Qixiong 毛起雄 and Lin Xiaodong 林晓东, *Zhongguo qiaowu zhengce kaishu* 中国侨务政策概述 (A General Summary of the Chinese Overseas Affairs Policies) (Beijing: Zhongguo huaqiao chubanshe, 1993); Wu, ed., *Dongnanya huaqiao tongshi*, pp. 667-686; Dou Wenjin 窦文金, "Nanjing guomin zhengfu qiaowu gongzuo pouxi" 南京国民政府侨务工作剖析 (1927-1929年) (An Analysis of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Work of the Nanjing Nationalist Government during 1927-1949), *Bagui qiaoshi* 4 (1996), pp. 46-51; Bao Aiqin 包爱芹, "1925-1945 nian guomin zhengfu qiaowu zhengce ji gongzuo shulun" 1925-1945年国民政府侨务政策及工作述论 (A Survey of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Policies and Work of the Nationalist Government during 1925-1945), *Huaqiao huaren lishi yanjiu* 2 (2000), pp. 43-48; Zhuang, "The Policies of the Chinese Government towards Overseas Chinese (1949-1966)"; Shen, "Jinjiang guiqiao, qiaojuan zai qiaoxiang shehui he jingji bianqianzhong de diwei he zuoyong"; Fitzgerald, *China and the overseas Chinese*; Peterson, "Socialist China and the Huaqiao".

⁶²² Wang, "Patterns of Chinese Migration in Historical Perspective", p. 15; Dai and Song, "Fujian qiaoxiang yanjiu de huigu yu qianzhu", pp. 44-45.

⁶²³ Peterson, "Socialist China and the Huaqiao".

⁶²⁴ Woon, "From Mao to Deng".

seeking divorce, reflecting the intricate relationship between migration, left behind wives, and politics.

Shift of Emphasis from Sojourners to Their Relatives

The first section of this chapter traces the evolution of a *qiaojuan* discourse since the late nineteenth century through examining the formation of the concept of *qiaojuan* and the Overseas Chinese policies towards the *qiaojuan*. It also explores the interactions among the Overseas Chinese, the *qiaojuan* and the state. Thus it presents a general picture of the changing political position of the *fankeshen* (or *qiaojuan*) and their relationship with the state, mediated through the Overseas Chinese.

Since the late nineteenth century, the state has been trying to control the resources of the Overseas Chinese (or Chinese overseas) in the economic, political and social spheres through the formulation and implementation of the Overseas Chinese policies towards the Overseas Chinese (or Chinese overseas) and their left-behinds. The evolution of the *qiaojuan* discourse reflects the multi-faceted relations between the Overseas Chinese, the state and the left-behinds in different periods.

In the first half of the twentieth century, the term *qiaojuan* emerged as an official government term referring to the family members left behind by their relatives who had migrated to foreign countries. Generally speaking, it is the “Chinese sojourner discourse (or *Huaqiao* discourse)”, as termed by Leo Douw, that has led to a series of policies towards the *qiaojuan*, thus in turn creating a *qiaojuan* discourse.⁶²⁵

⁶²⁵ Leo Douw, “The Chinese Sojourner Discourse”, in *Qiaoxiang Ties: Interdisciplinary Approaches to "Cultural Capitalism" in South China*, eds. Leo M. Douw, Huang Cen and Michael R Godley (London: Kegan Paul International, 1999), pp. 22-44. According to Leo Douw, since the mid-1860s, Chinese governments including the Qing Government, the ROC and the PRC had continuously built a sojourner discourse to use the resources of the transnational sojourners who had close relations with their hometowns and had difficulty integrating into the host society in the first half of the twentieth century and whose relations with and identities vis-à-vis the Chinese state shifted during the second half of the twentieth century. For the contents of the discourse, see the following discussion.

The Qing government introduced the protection policy by setting up overseas and domestic institutions to safeguard the interests of the successful sojourners and returned sojourners who were often blackmailed or maltreated by the local officials, which deterred and frightened others from returning to and investing in China.⁶²⁶ It was also around 1903 that Chinese government's concept of *huaqiao* was broadened to include the lower strata of society, due to the presence of numerous coolie labourers and a small number of successful new immigrants in the various Chinese communities in Southeast Asia.⁶²⁷ Douw's study indicates that in the Chinese government's process of gaining the allegiance of the sojourners, the latter themselves responded actively to the protection offered by their home country. In the 1900s, Chinese Chambers of Commerce and various Chinese associations in Southeast Asia and Hong Kong all "supported the business transactions and the fostering of contacts with the bureaucracy in China on a Chinese ethnic basis".⁶²⁸ As a result, in 1911 when the Qing fell, "a solid basis had already been laid for the full development of the first phase of the Chinese sojourner discourse".⁶²⁹

Unlike the official attention given to the sojourners, there was little concern at this point for the left-behind kin, including those of the merchants'. However, the contracts and regulations signed between the Qing government and the Western countries on the employment of coolie labourers indicated some recognition of the position and value of the left-behind kin.⁶³⁰ In these contracts, there were clauses to

⁶²⁶ Douw, "The Chinese Sojourner Discourse", pp. 31-32. However, the protection measures were ineffectively implemented. At the same time, the targets were limited to the Chinese businessmen, see Yen Ching-hwang, *Coolies and Mandarins: China's Protection of Overseas Chinese during the Late Ch'ing Period (1851-1911)* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1985); Zhuang Guotu, *Zhongguo fengjian zhengfu de huaqiao zhengce* 中国封建政府的华侨政策 (The Overseas Chinese Affairs Policies of the Chinese Feudal Government) (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue chubianshe, 1989).

⁶²⁷ Douw, "The Chinese Sojourner Discourse", pp. 32-33.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁶²⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶³⁰ Qi Xiong 启雄, "Qiaojuan de falü gainian ji fanwei" 侨眷的法律概念及范围 (The Legal Concept and Scope of *Qiaojuan*), in *Huaqiao huaren baike quanshu. falü tiaoli zhengce juan* 华侨华人百科全书

protect the interests of the coolies' family members. For the coolie labourers in America, the early regulations of 1888 and 1894 already stipulated that the American Chinese coolies were allowed to transit between America and China if they had parents, formal wives and children remaining at home, or if they owned at least 1000 silver yuan's worth of property.⁶³¹ These clauses indicate that the Qing government regarded the parents, wives and children of the Chinese coolie labourers as important links to the overseas coolie labourers. Qi Xiong considers that this reflected the emergence of an early concept of *qiaojuan*.⁶³²

After the Qing fell, these imperial regulations were inherited by the Beiyang government (*Beiyang zhengfu* 北洋政府) (1912-1927) in Peking. The sojourner discourse developed quickly in the hands of the Beiyang government in the North and the nationalists in the South at the same time. According to Douw, during the years from the 1910s to the 1930s, "the *Huaqiao* discourse may be said to have reached an apogee in the sense that it was effective in generating economic support and political loyalty among the Chinese overseas".⁶³³ In this period, there were also important regulations instituted by the Overseas Chinese institutions at the central and provincial levels to protect the returnees.⁶³⁴ Until 1917, the targets of protection were still Chinese merchants overseas.⁶³⁵

书. 法律条例政策卷 (Encyclopedia of Chinese Overseas: Volume of Laws & Policies), ed. Huaqiao huaren baike quanshu. falü tiaoli zhengce juan bianjiweiyuanhui (Beijing: Zhongguo huaqiao chubanshe, 2000), p. 335.

⁶³¹ Mao Qixiong 毛起雄, "Zhongguo wanqing zhengfu de qiaowu lifa" 中国晚清政府的侨务立法 (The Late Qing Government Legislation on Overseas Chinese Affairs), in Huaqiao huaren baike quanshu. falü tiaoli zhengce juan bianjiweiyuanhui, ed., *Huaqiao huaren baike quanshu. falü tiaoli zhengce juan*, p. 596.

⁶³² Qi, "Qiaojuan de falü gainian ji fanwei", p. 335.

⁶³³ Douw, "The Chinese Sojourner Discourse", p. 34.

⁶³⁴ On the central, see Huaqiao huaren baike quanshu. falü tiaoli zhengce juan bianjiweiyuanhui, ed., *Huaqiao huaren baike quanshu falü tiaoli zhengce juan*, pp. 36, 42-44, 492-93. On the provincial level, see the regulation of Fujian Jinan Bureau (October 1912), Fujiansheng dang'anguan, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang'an shiliao*, p. 2.

⁶³⁵ This is reflected by the appeal of Fujian *huaqiao* to the central government about not putting Fujian Jinan Bureau under the Bureau on the Overseas Coolie Labourers' Affairs, because its jurisdiction, by

The Beiyang government cared little about the left-behinds. The government proclamations did not use the term *qiaojuan*. But *jiajuan* (家眷 family members) emerged as a term to refer to the family members of the Chinese coolie labourers when the state set up a Chinese Coolie Labourers' Bureau to deal with the affairs of the people. The constitution of the Beiyang Government Bureau on Overseas Coolie Labourers' Affairs (*Beiyang zhengfu qiaogong shiwuju* 北洋政府侨工事务局) was promulgated in September 1917. It stipulated that the Bureau would be in charge of remittances from the coolies overseas. In addition, it would order a Chinese bank to remit the money to the coolies' *jiajuan* in China. One important clause in the 1918 "Beiyang Government's Regulations for the Contract of Chinese Coolie Labourers" (*Beiyang zhengfu qiaogong hetong gangyao* 北洋政府侨工合同纲要) said that in the event of a coolie dying in an accident before he fulfilled his part of his contract, the employer should pay an insurance premium and other outstanding payments. The employer should also pay compensation to the dead man's *jiajuan* according to the law and customs of the country.⁶³⁶ Thus, it could be seen that the Beiyang state was beginning to protect the interests of the families of the Coolie sojourners.

The Nationalist government in Guangzhou established by Sun Yat-sen, who benefited from the support of *huaqiao* financially and politically, also set up a Bureau of Overseas Chinese Affairs and put in place regulations to deal with Overseas Chinese affairs. Moreover, it was the first time that the relatives of *huaqiao* and

being limited to coolie labourers, cannot cover all the strata of overseas Chinese. Furthermore the merchants were much more significant than coolies in overseas Chinese communities. "Huaqiao daibiao Hong Wanxin deng qingmian jian Fujianjinanju gailü Qiaogongju zhi Neiwubu cheng" 华侨代表洪万馨等请免将福建暨南局改隶侨工局致内务部呈 (1917年11月7日) (The Appeal from the Representatives of Overseas Chinese Hong Wanxin etc for the Request of not Merging the Fujian Jinan Bureau into the Bureau on the Overseas Coolie Labourers' Affairs, 7 November 1917), Fujiansheng dang'anguan, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang'an shiliao*, pp. 16-18.

⁶³⁶ Mao Qixiong 毛起雄, "Beiyangzhengfu qiaogong hetong gangyao" 北洋政府侨工合同纲要 (The Beiyang Government's Regulations for the Contract of Chinese Coolie Labourers), in *Huaqiao huaren baike quanshu. falü tiaoli zhengce juan bianjiweiyuanhui*, ed., *Huaqiao huaren baike quanshu falü tiaoli zhengce juan*, p. 37.

guiqiao were included as the subject of protection. In December 1923, the Guangdong Revolutionary Government made public the constitution of the Bureau of Overseas Chinese Affairs, one of the primary functions of which was the protection of the Overseas Chinese and their *jiashu* (家属 family members). In January 1924, the government issued the “Regulation of the Bureau of Overseas Chinese of the Ministry of Internal Affairs for the Protection for Sojourners” (*Neiwubu qiaowuju baohu qiaomin zhuanzhang* 内务部侨务局保护侨民专章). The regulation conceptualized “*qiaomin*” (侨民 sojourners) as both the nationals who sojourned overseas and those who returned home. For those *qiaomin* who registered with the bureau, the government protected them and their *qinshu* (亲属 relatives) in China. The seventh clause of the regulation stipulated that families and properties of registered *qiaomin* would be protected by the government. If the *qiaomin* faced discrimination or if their properties were illegally occupied, they could appeal to the bureau for help.⁶³⁷ The protection, however, was seldom provided in reality because of the civil war against the warlords. Moreover, other emigrant communities outside Guangdong were not under the control of the Revolutionary Government. Qi Xiong considers that the inclusion of the relatives of *huaqiao* and *guiqiao* in the group of *qiaojuan* was an exceptional definition of the *qiaojuan* during the Republican period.⁶³⁸

The Nanjing Nationalist government (1928-1949) further perpetuated the sojourner discourse. The Kuomintang activities in Southeast Asia and their various policies to protect the *huaqiao* and attract their investment had succeeded in gaining

⁶³⁷ Mao Qixiong 毛起雄, “Sun Zhongshan dayuanshuai zhiding neiwubu qiaowuju baofu qiaomin zhuan zhang” 孙中山大元帅制定内务部侨务局保护侨民专章 (The Ministry of Internal Affairs’s Overseas Chinese Affairs Bureau’s Regulation on the Protection of Sojourners, As Delineated by Grand Marshal Sun Yat-sen), and Mao Qixiong 毛起雄, “Sun Zhongshan dayuanshuai zhiding qiaowuju zhangcheng” 孙中山大元帅制定侨务局章程 (Regulations of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Bureau, As Delineated by Grand Marshal Sun Yat-sen), in *Huaqiao huaren baike quanshu. falü tiaoli zhengce juan bianjiweiyuanhui*, ed., *Huaqiao huaren baike quanshu falü tiaoli zhengce juan*, p. 390.

⁶³⁸ Qi, “Qiaojuan de falü gainian ji fanwei”, p. 335.

their loyalty.⁶³⁹ The *Huaqiao* discourse was “confirmed in 1929, when the *ius [jus] sanguinis* became part of the Kuomintang Nationality Law”.⁶⁴⁰ During the Anti-Japanese War, the Kuomintang used propaganda to mobilize the *huaqiao* against the Japanese, calling for donations, investments, or for the *huaqiao* to return to fight against the Japanese, a policy which led to intensive economic and political involvement among the bulk of Chinese living abroad.⁶⁴¹ It was during the 1930s and 1940s that more and more policies were issued by the Nationalist central government for domestic and external Overseas Chinese affairs to establish a relationship with the sojourners.⁶⁴²

While the Nanjing Nationalist government actively introduced policies which were favourable to Overseas Chinese affairs from 1928, the left-behinds were largely ignored before the outbreak of the Pacific War at the level of the central government.⁶⁴³ Moreover, before the war, almost all policies issued focused on *huaqiao*, *guiqiao* and *qiaosheng* at the levels of the central and local governments. The policies covered mainly nationality issues, investments, donations, education and protection for the three groups of “sojourners”. In contrast, few policies focused on

⁶³⁹ Douw, “The Chinese Sojourner Discourse”, p. 35.

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁴¹ For example, Huang Weici 黄慰慈 and Xu Xiaoshen 许肖生, *Huaqiao dui zuguo kangzhan de gongxian* 华侨对祖国抗战的贡献 (The Contribution of the Overseas Chinese to the Anti-Japanese War in the Homeland) (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 1991); Huang Xiaojian 黄晓坚 and Zhao Hongying 赵红英, *Haiwai huabao yu kangri zhanzheng* 海外侨胞与抗日战争 (Overseas Chinese and the Anti-Japanese War) (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1995); Zeng Ruiyan 曾瑞炎, *Huaqiao yu kanri zhanzheng* 华侨与抗日战争 (The Overseas Chinese and the Anti-Japanese War) (Sichuan: Sichuan daxue chubanshe, 1998).

⁶⁴² For the details, see Wu, ed., *Dongnanya huaqiao tongshi*, pp. 674-686; Bao, “1925-1945 nian guomin zhengfu qiaowu zhengce ji gongzuo shulun”, pp. 43-48; Dou, “Nanjing guomin zhengfu qiaowu gongzuo pouxi, 1927-1949 nian”; In this period, the province of Fujian also saw an increasing number of Overseas Chinese affairs policies. See Fujiansheng dang’anguan, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang’an shiliao* for reference.

⁶⁴³ For Nanjing Nationalist government’s policies, see Dou, “Nanjing guomin zhengfu qiaowu gongzuo pouxi 1927-1949 nian”.

the left-behind relatives of the sojourners.⁶⁴⁴ Having to deal with new wave of the Japanese invasion which began from 1937, the central government continued to ignore the left-behinds until the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1941 when their lives became miserable.

In contrast, during the early years of the Anti-Japanese War (1937-1941), the Fujian provincial government's response to the situation of the *qiaojuan* was different. Since the late 1930s, the Fujian authorities had seen the need to care for the left-behind relatives of the province's sojourners and had developed a preliminary discourse on the *qiaojuan*, a term that had emerged in provincial policies and speeches, though not much attention was attracted when the term was first introduced.⁶⁴⁵

What could account for the different attitudes between the central and provincial governments? Fujian was one of the two provinces with the largest number of sojourners in the Nanyang. In 1939, the number of Fujianese who were overseas reached 1,911,402.⁶⁴⁶ Before the Pacific War, these sojourners sent substantial remittances every year to support the livelihood of their left-behind kin, giving critical financial support for the economic development of the province, which often faced an

⁶⁴⁴ This is observed from Huaqiao huaren baike quanshu. falü tiaoli zhengce juan bianjiweiyuanhui, ed., *Huaqiao huaren baike quanshu falü tiaoli zhengcejuan*, pp. 491-492, 500-11, 580-581; Dou, "Nanjing guomin zhengfu qiaowu gongzuo pouxi 1927-1949 nian"; and Bao, "1925-1945 nian guomin zhengfu qiaowu zhengce ji gongzuo shulun".

⁶⁴⁵ So far, the earliest mention of the term "*qiaojuan*" has been found in an article of an official in Fujian provincial government office, Wang Jiyi, in 1939. Wang Jiyi 王继禹, "Bannianlai shengfu qiaowu de tuijin" 半年来省府侨务的推进 (The Progress of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Work of the Provincial Government in the Last Half Year), *Minzheng yuekan* 闽政月刊 (Journal of Political Affairs of Fujian), 5, 2 (October 1939), pp. 35-38. It is uncertain when *qiaojuan* first emerged in the central government edicts or policies. But in the late 1941, in the telegraph between the director of the Research Institute of International Problems in Chongqing and Liu Jianxu, *qiaojuan* was used as a term. Fujiansheng dang'an guan, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang'an shiliao*, pp. 1728-29.

⁶⁴⁶ Quanzhou huaqiaozhi bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Quanzhou huaqiaozhi*, chapter 1, p. 11.

overseas trade deficit.⁶⁴⁷ Moreover, many sojourners were also merchants who sold local products like tea, porcelain enamel, dried sea food, wood, etc. in the Nanyang and thus benefited the non-emigrant families.

Fujian had established administrative institutions to conduct its Overseas Chinese affairs since 1899, when the Merchants Protection Bureau (*Baoshang ju* 保商局) was set up. Following this, the first local institution managing Overseas Chinese affairs in the country, the Fujian Jinan Bureau (*Fujian Jinan Ju* 福建暨南局, 1912-27), was set up in October 1912 with branches in Fuzhou, Jinjiang and Longxi. In 1918, the Beiyang government set up a branch of the Bureau for Overseas Coolie Labourers' Affairs in Xiamen (*Xiamen qiaogong shiwuju* 厦门侨工事务分局) (in 1920 it was restructured into the Fujian Provincial Bureau for Overseas Coolie Labourers' Affairs, or the *Fujian quansheng qiaogongju* 福建全省侨工局) to deal with the coolie labourers' migration. In 1927, the Committee on Fujian Overseas Chinese Affairs was formed in Xiamen with branches in Fuzhou and Zhangzhou. In December 1934, the Xiamen Overseas Chinese Affairs Bureau (*Xiamen qiaowuju* 厦门侨务局) was established to serve the *huaqiao* and the returnees.⁶⁴⁸ Although these institutions sometimes did not work effectively, the province boasted of a number of administrative organs to handle its sojourner affairs.

After the Japanese occupation of Jinmen in October 1937 and Xiamen in May 1938, the Fujian government moved its capital inland from Fuzhou to Yong'an. The

⁶⁴⁷ Zheng, "Fujian huaqiao huikuan", pp. 87-88; Chen Yanjin 陈延进, "Shengfu zengshe di si ke de yiyi he renwu" 省府增设第四科的意义和任务 (The Significance and Task of the Fourth Branch of the Provincial Government), *Minqiao* 1, 1 (May 1939), p. 21.

⁶⁴⁸ Fujiansheng difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Fujian shengzhi huaqiaozhi* 福建省志华侨志 (The Gazetteer of the History of the Fujian Overseas Chinese) (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1992), pp. 273-75.

Japanese continued to launch attacks on the rest of the province, including Quanzhou. In April 1941, Fuzhou was under the Japanese control for the first time.⁶⁴⁹

The Japanese occupation of Xiamen and Japan's advance on Southeast Asia where the Fujian sojourners formed the largest dialect group among the Chinese population dramatically threatened Fujian's economic development and the lives of its people. With the loss of Xiamen, the most important entry point for the sojourners, the Fujian government faced a series of problems. Firstly, its loss cut Fujian off from the Nanyang and inconvenienced the sojourner traffic. Secondly, the flow of remittances was not smooth. Moreover, the trade of its local products was badly hit by the loss of its Nanyang market. These financial losses posed a great threat to the livelihood of the Fujian people and the financial income of the provincial government. Thirdly, the Japanese made use of their position in the occupied territories like Xiamen to try to attract the support of the sojourners through propaganda, a strategy that worried the provincial government very much.⁶⁵⁰ With the threat posed by the Japanese and the importance of *huaqiao* support for China's Anti-Japanese War, the Fujian provincial government began to realize the importance of the left-behinds in Fujian, although the central government did not quite appreciate their value. As a result, since the late 1930s, a discourse on the left-behinds was developed within the province through the emergence of the concept of *qiaojuan* and the formation and implementation of a series of policies towards these people.

In order to deal with the problems caused by the Japanese occupation in Xiamen and the Nanyang, the Branch Office of Overseas Chinese Affairs (*Qiaowu ke*

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 583-84. For the details, see Fujiansheng zhengfu, "Fujiansheng shunshi diaocha", pp.76-95.

⁶⁵⁰ Chen, "Shengfu zengshe disike de yiyi he renwu"; Zhao Jiaxin 赵家欣, "Fujian huaqiao zhengduo zhan 福建华侨争夺战" (The Fight to Win over Fujian's Overseas Chinese)", pp. 135-45, in *Fujian huaqiao huikuan* 福建华侨汇款 (The Remittances of Fujian Overseas Chinese), Zheng Linkuan 郑林宽, (Fuzhou: Fujian zhengfu mishuchu tongjishi, 1940) pp. 135-45.

侨务科) was set up in the Secretariat of the Fujian Provincial Government on 7 March 1939 with the support of the provincial governor Chen Yi.⁶⁵¹ At the same time, specialized journals designed to improve ties between the *huaqiao* and the province were published, including *Fujian yu huaqiao*, a quarterly journal, which appeared in Fuzhou in April 1938. In the first issue, the Fujian *huaqiao* were called on to defend not only the country, but Fujian in particular, as their hometown was under great threat.⁶⁵² Another journal *Minqiao*, which also targeted the Fujian *huaqiao*, began publication as a monthly in May 1939. It aimed to bring about better communication between the Fujian *huaqiao* and the people in Fujian, by reporting on Fujian and the *huaqiao* situation overseas, in order to let its *huaqiao* learn more about Fujian and its people, and vice versa.⁶⁵³

In order to to strengthen the sojourners' ties with China and encourage their contribution to the Anti-Japanese War, the provincial government considered it its responsibility to take care of the *qiaojuan*'s livelihood and safety so as to to alleviate the sojourners' concern for their relatives at home.⁶⁵⁴ The *Qiaowu ke* did a lot of work for the *qiaojuan*.⁶⁵⁵ In the first half of the working year of 1939, out of eleven initiatives, four were directed at the *qiaojuan*. These four initiatives included: firstly, the *Qiaowu ke* allowed the *qiaojuan* to delay paying the donation money (*juankuan* 捐款) to the county or special administrative area governments, depending on the

⁶⁵¹ "Shengfu Chen zhuxi gao qiaobao shu" 省府陈主席告侨胞书 (The Letter from the Provincial Governor Chen to the Overseas Chinese), *Minqiao* 1, 1 (May 1939), p. 3; Wang, "Bannianlai shengfu qiaowu de tuijin", p. 35.

⁶⁵² Zheng Zhenwen 郑贞文, "Dui ri kangzhan yu Fujian qiaobao" 对日抗战与福建侨胞 (The Anti-Japanese War and the Fujian Overseas Chinese), *Fujian yu huaqiao* 福建与华侨 (Fujian and Overseas Chinese) 1, 1 (April 1938), pp. 5-9.

⁶⁵³ "Fakan ci" 发刊词 (The Preface), *Minqiao* 1, 1 (May 1939), pp. 1-3.

⁶⁵⁴ Zhao, "Fujian huaqiao zhengduo zhan", pp. 135, 141.

⁶⁵⁵ One of the aims and tasks of the *Qiaowu ke* was to "connect with the *qiaojuan*", the others were to "communicate with the *huaqiao* ... increase the educational level of the *qiaobao*, maintain the economic status of *qiaobao*, prop up the *qiaobao* to develop overseas, and assist the returnees's living and reword *huaqiao*'s investment and socio-economic building". Wang, "Bannianlai shengfu qiaowu de tuijin", p. 35.

distance from their relatives overseas; after the payment, the governments printed out the instructions for these payments, asking the *qiaojuan* to post them to their relatives to reduce the mistakes on the payment between the sojourners and the government. Secondly, it investigated all the “relatives of Overseas Chinese” (*huaqiao juanshu* 华侨眷属) in the whole province to learn the situation of the *qiaomin* and the living conditions of the *juanshu*. Thirdly, it sent the councillor of the Provincial Parliament Lin Qingshan to inspect the *qiaojuan* in southern Fujian including Yongchun, Nan’an, Jinjiang and Hui’an, to investigate the living conditions of the *qiaojuan* during the war and to get their opinions on the government’s work on Overseas Chinese affairs. Lastly, it explored the possibility of moving inland the *qiaojuan* communities for their safety in light of the threat of the Japanese forces.⁶⁵⁶

The *qiaowu ke*’s investigation on the *huaqiao juanshu* might be the first official investigation on the left-behinds and the emigrant communities in history. This investigation was conducted in thirteen counties in central, western and southern Fujian, including Jinmen, Anxi, Hui’an, Yongchun and Nan’an in Quanzhou, the main emigration areas of the Fujian sojourners to the Nanyang. The investigation

⁶⁵⁶ Wang, “Bannianlai shengfu qiaowu de tuijin”, pp. 35-37. It was important to point out that the work on the payment of the donating money demonstrated that the provincial authority had realized the serious conflict between the left-behinds and the government and tried to alleviate the tension. Since 1929, the burden of management expense of the local autonomy system had fallen on people. See Zhang Hao 张皓, “Minguo shiqi xiangcun zizhi tuixing zhi qianyinhouguo - Cong <Minguo xiangcun zizhi wenti yanjiu> tanqi” 民国时期乡村自治推行之前因后果—从<民国乡村自治问题研究>谈起 (On the Causes and Consequences of the Implementation of Local Autonomy Policies during the Republic of China – On the Basis of *Minguo xiangcun zizhi wenti yanjiu*), *Shixue yuekan* 史学月刊 (Journal of History) 5 (May 2005), p. 77. In Quanzhou, when the authorities had limited tax income from agriculture and industry, migrant families were considered as “rich families” (*yinhu* 殷户) because of their remittances. See “Jiuqiao gongzuo zong jiantao” 救侨工作总检讨 (Review of the Relief Work), *Quanzhou ribao*, 27 March 1942. It was reported that before 1942 the migrant families paid most of the administrative expenses for the *baojia* system and the various taxes and fees, including payment for the labour service for the government, reward for volunteer soldiers, bonuses for the families of soldiers in war, arbitrarily imposed levies of money and wartime government bonds, which supported the expenses of local governments of the county, towns, and villages. See “Zizhijuan zhengshou” 自治捐征收 (Collection of the Self-Governing Levies), in Jinjiangshi dang’an guan: file 2-4-125 (2), Collection of the ROC; “Jiuji qiaojuan ji shiye guiqiao (1)” 救济侨眷及失业归侨 (1) (Relieve *Qiaojuan* and Unemployed Returned Overseas Chinese, 1), *Quanzhou ribao*, 22 December 1941.

sought to understand not only the impact of the Anti-Japanese War on the lives of the migrant families, but also the demographic characteristics of the sojourners and the left-behind family members, including the population's gender ratios and age groups.⁶⁵⁷

It was the *Qiaowu ke*'s work that, the Overseas Chinese affairs institution regarded for the first time the left-behinds as one of the main objects of its work. Although the office was soon replaced by the Liaison Committee of the Fujian Provincial Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (*Fujiansheng qiaowu bangongshi cujin weiyuanhui* 福建省侨务办公室促进委员会) in January 1941, the establishment of the *qiaowu ke* and its work laid the foundation for the *qiaojuan* discourse.⁶⁵⁸

The outbreak of the Pacific War saw the discourse being developed further at both the central and provincial levels. At the central government level, the outbreak of the Pacific War was a turning point when it began to pay attention to the *qiaojuan*. The *qiaojuan* in the entire country emerged as one of the main targets for Overseas Chinese affairs policies towards the *guiqiao*, *qiaosheng* and *qiaojuan*.⁶⁵⁹ In order to deal with the survival crisis of the *guiqiao*, the *qiaojuan* and the *qiaosheng*, on 27 December 1941, the Central Relief Committee, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee, and Ministry of Education discussed how to provide relief for the three groups of people.⁶⁶⁰ On 8 January 1942, the Executive

⁶⁵⁷ The result of the investigation was reflected in Zheng, *Fujian huaqiao huikuan*, pp.17, 45, 112-113; and Fujiansheng jingji jianshe jihua weiyuanhui xuanchuanchu, ed., *Kangri zhanzhengzhong zhi Fujian huaqiao* 抗日战争中之福建华侨 (The Fujian Overseas Chinese during the Anti-Japanese War) (Fuzhou:1941), pp. 54-58.

⁶⁵⁸ On the institutional change, see Fujiansheng difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Fujian shengzhi huaqiaozhi*, p. 275.

⁶⁵⁹ Here the *guiqiao* were the steer size of returned Overseas Chinese who returned to escape Japanese occupation and the *qiaosheng* were who had survival difficulties due to the severance of the remittances soon after the outbreak of the Pacific War.

⁶⁶⁰ "Jiuqiao gongzuo" 救侨工作 (The Relief Work towards the Overseas Chinese), in *Qiaowu shisannian* 侨务十三年 (Thirteen Years of Overseas Chinese Affairs), ed. Guomin zhengfu qiaowu weiyuanhui (Nanjing: 1945), p. 71.

Yuan ordered Fujian, Guangdong and other related provinces to rapidly provide relief for the *guiqiao* and the *qiaojuan* in their territories.⁶⁶¹ On 20 January 1942, “The Outline of the Emergency Relief Measures” (*Jinji jiuji banfa dagang* 紧急救济办法大纲) was approved.⁶⁶² The central government also ordered Fujian and Guangdong provincial governments to prohibit the extortion from the *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* and provided funds worth 30,000,000 yuan to be given as loans to *qiaojuan* in Fujian and Guangdong respectively.⁶⁶³

On the other hand, in order to make the relief work effective, the central government supervised provincial governments’ relief work. For instance, in 1943, the Central Investigation and Statistics Bureau (*Zhongyang diaocha tongji ju* 中央调查统计局) investigated the living conditions of the *qiaojuan* and the effects of the implementation of the relief work in nine counties/cities in Fujian, including Fuzhou, Fuqing, Putian, Hui’an, Jinjiang, Nan’an, Tong’an, Haiteng, and Longxi. The bureau found that the previous relief work was ineffective and the *qiaojuan* were suffering from the severance of remittances and the tax-collection staff’s blackmail and ill-treatment. In order to help the suffered *qiaojuan*, the bureau transmitted its report to the Overseas Chinese Committee. Thus the committee ordered the Fujian provincial

⁶⁶¹ “Xingzhengyuan wei xunsu tuochou jiuji guiqiao qiaojuan gei Fujian shengfu de xunli (1942 nian 1 yue 8 ri)” 行政院为迅速妥筹救济归侨侨眷给福建省府的训令 (1942 年 1 月 8 日) (The Mandate Given by the Executive Yuan for Fujian Provincial Government to Relieve the Returned Overseas Chinese and *Qiaojuan* Swiftly), Fujiansheng dang’anguan, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang’an shiliao*, pp. 1715-1716.

⁶⁶² “Jiuqiao gongzuo”, p. 71.

⁶⁶³ “Feichang yu pingshi zhi huqiao” 非常与平时之护侨 (The Protection Work towards Overseas Chinese under Special and Normal Circumstances), in *Qiaowu shisannian*, p. 23; “Jiuqiao gongzuo”, pp. 71-73. In 1944, Fujian Province appealed for and was granted more than 10,000,000 yuan for its relief work towards the *qiaojuan*. For a brief introduction on the central government’s protection and relief work, see Huang, Zhao, Cong, *Haiwai qiaobao yu kangri zhanzheng*, pp.192-201.

government to relieve the *qiaojuan* by exempting their self-governing levies and stopping the corruption of the tax-collection staff.⁶⁶⁴

At the provincial level, ordered by the central government, the Fujian provincial government implemented the decree and further realized its aims by taking a series of measures and formulating policies to protect and relieve its *qiaojuan* who suffered from the stoppage of remittances in the years of 1941-1945. A telegram exchange between the central and the Fujian provincial government in May-June 1942 on the loan of 30,000,000 yuan to the Fujian *qiaojuan* evidenced the provincial government's proactive approach. The loan was originally intended to subsidize the *qiaojuan*'s living expenses. On 9 May 1942, the Central Relief Committee had already made a request for the release 30,000,000 yuan as loans to the *qiaojuan* in Fujian in order to help their agricultural, industrial and business activities. However, the Coordinating Head Office of the four biggest national banks rejected the request because the government had already set up guidelines for agricultural, industrial and business loans and should not request for more specialized loans to finance the *qiaojuan*. The Executive Yuan agreed to the decision of the Coordinating Head Office and turned down the request for loan.⁶⁶⁵

In order to secure the loan for the *qiaojuan*, the Fujian provincial governor, Liu Jianxu, who succeeded Chen Yi in August 1941, telegraphed the Executive Yuan

⁶⁶⁴ “Shengfu zhuanfa zhongtongju guanyu Fuzhou deng jiuxianshi qiaojuan shenghuo zhuangkuang diaocha baogao” 省府转发中统局关于福州等九县市侨眷生活状况调查报告(1943年6月17日) (Transmitter of the Central Investigation and Statistic Bureau's Report on the Living Situation of the *Qiaojuan* in Nine Counties/Cities including Fuzhou from the Provincial Government, 17 June 1943), Fujiansheng dang'angaun, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang'an ziliao*, pp. 1744-1746.

⁶⁶⁵ “Guanyu shenqing qiaomin shengchan shenghuo daikuan de laiwanq handian (1942 nian 5 yue - 6 yue)” 关于申请侨民生产生活贷款的来往函电 (1942年5月-6月) (Telegraph on the Application for the Loan for Production and Living Expenses for Overseas Chinese), Fujiansheng dang'anguan, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang'an shiliao*, pp. 1756-1758.

on 1 June and appealed for its re-consideration.⁶⁶⁶ Liu's reasoning was as follows: First, the sudden cancellation of this programme would greatly disappoint the *qiaojuan* because the central and provincial governments had long publicised the plan. Second, Fujian had the most *qiaojuan* in the country. The severance of remittances impacted them tremendously and there were *qiaojuan* who committed suicide everyday. The relief policy would demonstrate the concern of the central government for the Overseas Chinese. Third, the *qiaojuan* would return the loan with interest and thus the bank would benefit from it. Liu stressed especially the loyalty of the *qiaobao* (侨胞 Overseas Chinese compatriots) towards their homeland as one most important consideration. He also coordinated with the authorities in Guangdong to make a joint appeal for the release of the loan. The central government finally granted Liu's request.⁶⁶⁷

The consultation between the Fujian provincial authorities and the central government testified to the active role of the Fujian authorities in protecting and relieving its *qiaojuan*. Furthermore, the concept of *qiaojuan* gained emphasis at the provincial level on the left-behind family members because of the contributions made by their overseas relatives to the country and the province.

There were many political motivations underpinning the Fujian provincial government and Governor Liu's concern with the *qiaojuan*. Firstly, the *qiaojuan* who were leading miserable lives in the province due to the almost complete severance of remittances strongly needed the provincial government's concern and relief. Secondly, it was in the province's interests to care for the *qiaojuan*. The survival of the *qiaojuan*

⁶⁶⁶ For the change of power between Chen Yi and Liu Jianxu, see Wang Zhenglu 汪征鲁, ed., *Fujian Shigang* 福建史纲 (A General History of Fujian) (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2003), pp. 138-39.

⁶⁶⁷ "Guanyu shenqing qiaomin shengchan shenghuo daikuan de laiwang handian", Fujiansheng dang'anguan, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang'an shiliao*, pp. 1756-58.

was a big political issue challenging the government. If Liu had not been able to stand up to the task, he would have probably lost his position like Chen Yi, the former provincial governor who had to quit because of the severe criticisms made by Tan Kah-kee, a prominent Overseas Chinese leader in Singapore. Thirdly, in Fujian, *huaqiao* had become an important force in local society, often publishing articles in local newspapers clamouring for the government to protect and provide relief for the *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao*. Furthermore, soon after the outbreak of the Pacific War, provincial and county newspapers kept reporting on the implementation process and reflecting the views of the *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao*. These media showed great concern for the sojourners and the left-behinds, made appeals to the government for protection and relief and criticized the flaws in the implementation of the government policies. Their reports had put the government under great public pressure.⁶⁶⁸ The newspapers which had great influence on public opinion included the provincial newspapers, like *Zhongyang ribao* (Fujian edition) and the county newspapers like *Nanfang ribao* and *Dongnan shibao* in Fuzhou, *Quanzhou ribao*, *Minsheng bao*, *Fujian ribao* and *Nanguang ribao*, etc. in Quanzhou, *Fujian xinwen* in zhangzhou, *Dacheng ribao* 大成日报 in Liancheng of western Fujian and several others.⁶⁶⁹

⁶⁶⁸ Liu himself also recognized the power of the media and used it to persuade the central government to grant the production loan. “Guanyu shenqing qiaomin shengchan shenghuo daikuan de laiwang handian (1942 nian 5 yue - 6 yue)”. This demonstrates that government concern for the *qiaojuan* was accepted in the society, and the society also sought a better treatment for these people who suffered from the financial cut-off. It indicates that the privileges of *qiaojuan* were accepted and embraced by the general public.

⁶⁶⁹ From the late 1941 to 1945, there were daily reports on the *qiaojuan*, *guiqiao* and the implementation of the protection and relief work, which provided a window for us to see the concern. This is observed through reading these newspapers during the years of 2001-02, and 2005 in Fujian Normal University and Fujian Provincial Library. On such reports, see for example, “Mianli guiguo wenhuaren” 勉励归国文化人 (Encouraging Returned Overseas Intellectuals), *Zhongyang ribao* (Fujian edition), 4 May 1942; “Lun nanqiao jiuji” 论难侨救济 (Discussion on the Relief Work on the Suffered Overseas Chinese and the *Qiaojuan*), *Zhongyang ribao* (Fujian edition), 24 January 1942; “Qiaojuan shenghuo” 侨眷生活 (The Lives of the *Qiaojuan*), *Fujian xinwen*, 21 January 1942; “Jiuqiao gongzuo yao kuai” 救侨工作要快 (It Is Emergency to Relief the *Guiqiao* and the *Qiaojuan*!), *Fujian xinwen*, 25 March 1942; “Jiuqiaozhe tingjue ruhe” 救侨者听觉如何 (What is the Opinion of the Staff Working on the Relief Work for the Overseas Chinese), *Fujian xinwen*, 19 July 1942; Zheng

In short, the status of *qiaojuan* had greatly improved in Fujian and the country during 1941-1945 when the survival of large numbers of the *qiaojuan* became a sticky political issue for the authorities.⁶⁷⁰ With the help from the provincial government and the media, the *qiaojuan* gained a privileged status in the eyes of the government and society. Together with the implementation of protection and relief policies, a *qiaojuan* discourse had been fully formed.

However, the Nationalist government did not give an official definition of the term *qiaojuan*. Moreover, the word was used together with *qiaoshu* (侨属 relatives of the Overseas Chinese) in the policy or government documents or announcements. Even in 1945 the Central Committee for Overseas Chinese Affairs of the ROC continued to use the various terms concurrently. Besides *qiaojuan*, other terms such as *guonei jiashu* (国内家属), *qiaomin yuanji jiashu* (侨民原籍家属), *qiaobao guonei zhi jiashu* (侨胞国内之家属), *qiaoshu* and *huaqiao juanshu* also appeared to refer to the left-behind kin of the Overseas Chinese.⁶⁷¹ This means that, in the Republican period, the word *qiaojuan* covered broadly the close relatives of the Overseas Chinese, namely their left-behind family members.

The Communist victory in mainland China saw a continuous development of the *qiaojuan* discourse. Before the formal official definition of *qiaojuan* that appeared in 1957, a *qiaojuan* was “one who had immediate relatives who had lived and worked outside China for more than one year”.⁶⁷² Previous studies have argued over whether the PRC had directed the bulk of its bureaucratic effort in Overseas Chinese policy

Zhou 郑州, “Jinjiang zongheng tan” 晋江纵横谈 (Talking about Jinjiang), *Zhongyang ribao* (Fujian edition), 1 February 1943; Yu Jia 俞伽, “Qiaoxiang tanxi sheng” 侨乡叹息声 (The Sighs from the Emigrant Communities), *Dongnan ribao*, 24 April 1945; Wang, “Quanzhou qiaojuan de zhengzha”.

⁶⁷⁰ For related resources, see Fujiansheng dang’anguan, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang’an shiliao*, pp. 1715-60.

⁶⁷¹ Guomin zhengfu qiaowu weiyuanhui, ed., *Qiaowu shisan nian*, pp. 23, 27-28, 68, 71-72, 76.

⁶⁷² *Fujian qiaoxiangbao*, 14 September 1956, cited in Fitzgerald, *China and the Overseas Chinese*, p. 212, n.17.

not towards the sojourners, but the domestic affairs of *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao*.⁶⁷³ Undoubtedly the *qiaojuan* had become one of the main objectives for the PRC's Overseas Chinese policies and work.⁶⁷⁴ They were to experience special treatment in almost every aspect of their lives, due to complex internal and external political, economic and ideological factors.

Before 1956, the central government had formed administrative institutions to handle Overseas Chinese affairs, with particular emphasis being put on the *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao*.⁶⁷⁵ It also offered the *qiaojuan* a privileged position by law, granting protection against abuses of “the legal interests and rights of” the *qiaojuan* as stated in its constitution.⁶⁷⁶ Moreover, the PRC also had published a series of *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* newspapers and journals, such as *Qiaoxun*, *Fujian qiaoxiangbao*, *Fujian qiaowu gongzuo tongxun*, etc. In other words, the *qiaojuan* discourse had evolved further soon after the founding of the PRC.

It was well-recognized that the *qiaojuan* were accorded much attention by the Communist government because of their close ties with the Overseas Chinese, especially when the PRC faced unusual difficulties in its foreign relations in its first two decades.⁶⁷⁷ However, the *qiaojuan* were both a challenge for the CCP who

⁶⁷³ Wang, “External China as a new Policy area”, pp. 23-43; Peterson, “Socialist China and the *Huaqiao*”, p. 309. Zhuang Guotu, “Zhongguo zhengfu dui *guiqiao qiaojian de yanbian*” 中国政府对归侨、侨眷政策的演变 (1949-1966) (The Changing Policies of the Chinese Government towards the Returned Overseas Chinese and the *Qiaojuan*, 1949-66), *Nanyang wenti yanjiu*, 3 (1992), p. 49.

⁶⁷⁴ The others were *huqiao*, *guiqiao*, and *qiaosheng*.

⁶⁷⁵ The offices on Overseas Chinese affairs were set at the central, provincial, county and town levels in the provinces which had many Overseas Chinese. In October 1956, the All China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese was set up and continued with the establishment of the associations at local levels to take care of the *guiqiao* and *qiaojuan*. Liu Hua 刘华, “Ping Jianguo chuqi de qiaowu gongzuo” 评建国初期的侨务工作 (An Analysis of Overseas Chinese Affairs Work in the Early Years of the People's Republic of China), *Huaqiao huaren lishi yanjiu* 4 (1994), p. 73.

⁶⁷⁶ Zhuang, “The Policies of the Chinese Government towards Overseas Chinese (1949-1966)”, p. 14.

⁶⁷⁷ For example, Fitzgerald, *China and the Overseas Chinese*; Zhuang, “The Policies of the Chinese Government towards Overseas Chinese (1949-1966)”; Xie Dibin 谢迪斌, “Shilun jianguo chuqi de qiaoshu gongzuo jiqi jingyan” 试论建国初期的侨属工作及其经验 (A Discussion on the Work on the Relatives of Overseas Chinese and the Experiences in the Early Years of the People's Republic of China), *Huaqiao huaren lishi yanjiu* 3 (1992), pp. 7-11; Johnson and Woon, “The Response to Rural

intended to build a socialist China and a potential resource for the county's economic development because of the remittances they received from overseas.⁶⁷⁸ The years of 1949-58 saw the implementation of contradictory, problematic and irresolute policies towards the *qiaojuan*, which also brought about a dilemma for the communist cadres who implemented these policies.⁶⁷⁹ Consequently, the cadres often mishandled the *qiaojuan* affairs. In the process, the *qiaojuan* became “the victims of a deep-seated ideological uncertainty and controversy that emerged surrounding their proper role and status in the socialist society”.⁶⁸⁰

In the 1950s, the *qiaojuan* received preferential treatment due to the importance of the remittances they received which played an important role in shaping the policies towards the *qiaojuan*.⁶⁸¹ The PRC “regarded remittances as a principal source of its foreign exchange earnings”.⁶⁸² Zhuang Guotu in his work states that “keeping the channel of remittances unblocked became the key safeguard for the livelihood of the dependants of Chinese abroad and an important source of foreign currency income to the government”.⁶⁸³ In 1954-1957, the *qiaojuan* “enjoyed a greater degree of freedom and privilege than at any other time”.⁶⁸⁴ The State Council decreed in February 1955 that the protection of remittances was a “long-term policy”: it protected “the right of *qiaojuan* not only to receive remittances, but also to rely on

Reform in an Overseas Chinese Area”; Douw, “The Chinese Sojourner Discourse”; ThunØ, “Reaching Out and Incorporating Chinese Overseas”; Cheng Xi 程希, “Wushi niandai zhongguo qiaowu yu waijiao guanxi qianyi” 五十年代中国侨务与外交关系浅议 (A Discussion on the Relationship between the Overseas Chinese Affairs and Foreign Diplomatic Relationships in the 1950s), *Bagui qiaoshi* 3 (2004), pp. 9-11, 18; On the problems that the PRC faced, see the above articles and book.

⁶⁷⁸ Fitzgerald, *China and the Overseas Chinese*; Peterson, “Socialist China and the *Huaqiao*”, pp. 309-335;

⁶⁷⁹ Fitzgerald, *China and the Overseas Chinese*, pp. 54-58; Peterson, “Socialist China and the *Huaqiao*”.

⁶⁸⁰ Peterson, “Socialist China and the *Huaqiao*”, p. 331.

⁶⁸¹ Fitzgerald, *China and the Overseas Chinese*, pp. 52-58; Zhuang, “The Policies of the Chinese Government towards Overseas Chinese (1949-1966)”, pp.16-17; Peterson, “Socialist China and the *Huaqiao*”, pp. 315-317.

⁶⁸² Peterson, “Socialist China and the *Huaqiao*”, p. 316.

⁶⁸³ Zhuang, “The Policies of the Chinese Government towards Overseas Chinese (1949-1966)”, p. 16.

⁶⁸⁴ Fitzgerald, *China and the Overseas Chinese*, p. 59.

them as a sole source of livelihood, and to dispose of them freely, without official interference, even for such avowedly ‘feudal’ purposes as weddings, funerals, and ancestor worship”.⁶⁸⁵ At the same time, the Party “began to provide special facilities so that the *qiaojuan* could more easily use their remittances”.⁶⁸⁶

Subsequently, the PRC provided a clear definition to the term *qiaojuan*. According to the “Explanation of the Identity of *huaqiao*, *guiqiao* and *qiaosheng*” (*guanyu huaqiao, guiqiao, guiguo huaqiao xuesheng shenfen jieshi* 关于华侨、归侨、归国华侨学生身份解释), *qiaojuan* included the following: *huaqiao*’s spouses or immediate relatives; *pangxi qinshu* (旁系亲属 collateral relatives), *yi fumu* (义父母 adopters) and adopted children relying on remittances for a living; and *pangxi qinshu* who did not rely on remittances for a living but cohabited with the *huaqiao*. For the spouses of *guiqiao*, they were delineated as *qiaojuan* if they belonged to the above-mentioned categories, or when the *guiqiao* re-traveled overseas, or if he had immediate relatives living overseas.⁶⁸⁷ A *qiaojuan* would no longer be considered as *qiaojuan* if the *huaqiao* passed away overseas, or if a *huaqiao* had returned home, where his relatives would no longer be considered as *qiaojuan* unless they had other immediate relatives who remained overseas.⁶⁸⁸ This definition was based on the criterion of the *qiaojuan*’s overseas connection. It included not only the migrant family members but also other close relatives of the *huaqiao*. It demonstrates that the state appreciated the value of the close relationship between the *qiaojuan* and the Chinese living abroad in terms of remittances, and that the state tried to include as many people who had overseas connection as possible under the category of *qiaojuan*.

⁶⁸⁵ *Renmin ribao*, March 3 1955, cited in Peterson, “Socialist China and the Huaqiao”, p. 315.

⁶⁸⁶ Fitzgerald, *China and the Overseas Chinese*, p. 61.

⁶⁸⁷ Mao and Lin, *Zhongguo qiaowu zhengce kaishu*, p. 12.

⁶⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

However, as Stephen Fitzgerald explains, the Party did not really intend to create a privileged class. The *qiaojuan* had been defined by the Party as bourgeois, capitalist and even feudal. The preferential treatment was due to the Party's recognition that there was "a direct relationship between its treatment of" the *guiqiao* and *qiaojuan* and the responses of the Chinese living abroad.⁶⁸⁹ From the late 1950s, the guiding principles governing the *guiqiao* and *qiaojuan* were based on "'equal treatment' rather than 'special treatment'".⁶⁹⁰ "The only concession which remained was the right to receive and use remittances, interest on investments and bank deposits".⁶⁹¹ In 1958-1966, the difference between the lives of the *qiaojuan* and the non-*qiaojuan* Chinese were still admitted, but they were to be eliminated.⁶⁹² Before the onset of the Cultural Revolution, the 'key policy' in the Overseas Chinese policies towards the *guiqiao* and *qiaojuan* was "class struggle and the struggle between the two lines of socialism and capitalism".⁶⁹³

During the Cultural Revolution, the rights and interests of the *qiaojuan* were violated totally.⁶⁹⁴ Overseas connections (*haiwai guanxi* 海外关系) were considered as reactionary political relations. Letters and remittances from overseas were suspiciously examined for indications of the presence of spies. The remittances were suspected as "spy fees" and were frozen or confiscated. Recipients even were subjected to intensive criticism and attack by the government. With the severance of remittances from overseas, many *qiaojuan* lost their economic support and lived in penurious conditions. Overseas Chinese houses were unlawfully occupied. All migration, visits, letter communications, remittances, return and settlement of

⁶⁸⁹ Fitzgerald, *China and the Overseas Chinese*, pp. 52-53, 63.

⁶⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 65; also see Douw, "The Chinese Sojourner Discourse", p. 38; Zhuang, "The Policies of the Chinese Government towards Overseas Chinese (1949-1966)", p. 24.

⁶⁹¹ Fitzgerald, *China and the Overseas Chinese*, p. 67.

⁶⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁶⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁶⁹⁴ Zheng, "Wenge shiqi de guonei qiaowu yu guiqiao qiaojuan shenghuo", p. 42.

overseas Chinese were prohibited.⁶⁹⁵ The ill-treatment of *qiaojuan* demonstrated that they were victims of political change in the country.

With the end of the Cultural Revolution, official institutions on Overseas Chinese affairs which were paralysed during the political chaos were restored.⁶⁹⁶ According to Leo Douw, the Chinese sojourner discourse was also gradually restored, although the “Overseas Chinese” identity of the Chinese in Southeast Asia had been negated by their adoption of the nationalities of their host countries.⁶⁹⁷ In order to tap into “Overseas Chinese capital and technological and management expertise to realize the Four Modernizations Programme”, the PRC resumed the preferential treatment of Overseas Chinese and *qiaojuan*.⁶⁹⁸ Remittances, investments and donations from the Chinese living abroad, including *huaqiao* and *huaren* (华人 the Chinese overseas who were foreign citizens), were now encouraged and protected by new policies. As a result, the *qiaojuan* who had been perceived as liabilities were now considered as assets. The new Overseas Chinese policy towards the *qiaojuan*, which aimed to restore their transnational ties, benefited them once more. They were entitled to special treatment and re-claimed a privileged status.⁶⁹⁹ Moreover, since large numbers of Chinese living abroad had become citizens of foreign countries, the PRC could hardly affect the Chinese overseas through direct external policies. Transnational ties between the Chinese living abroad and the *qiaojuan* became more valuable for the state.

⁶⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁶ For example, according to Mette ThunØ, the All China Federation of Retured Overseas Chinese (ACFROC) had been re-established in 1978-89. In early 1990s, “more than 2,000 organs of the ACFPOC were established in 29 provinces, cities and autonomous districts, and a total of 8,000 affiliated organizations were set up at the lower-level administrative unit of the county and village”. ThunØ, “Reaching Out and Incorporating Chinese Overseas”, p. 916.

⁶⁹⁷ Douw, “The Chinese Sojourner Discourse”, pp. 36-40.

⁶⁹⁸ Woon, “International Links and the Socioeconomic Development of Rural China”, p. 143.

⁶⁹⁹ ThunØ, “Reaching Out and Incorporating Chinese Overseas”, pp. 913-17.

Mette ThunØ's study shows that during the early years of the Reform period (1977-84), "most political speeches and policy implementations reflected concern with the relatives of the Chinese overseas".⁷⁰⁰ In 1984, the term *qiaojuan* was re-defined. The PRC modified the 1957 definition and now *qiaojuan* referred to the relatives of *huaqiao*, *guiqiao* and *huaren*, including their spouses, parents, children and children's spouses, siblings, grandparents, grandparents-in-law, grandchildren, grandchildren-in-law, adopted persons or other persons relying on remittances for a living from the *huaqiao* and *huaren*.⁷⁰¹ Although the 1984 definition of *qiaojuan* was consonant with the 1957 definition from the perspective of transnational ties, it highlighted the PRC's ambition to bring as many people as possible into the scope of its definition.

As suggested by ThunØ, in the 1980s, the PRC focused on "Chinese subjects living abroad through the protection of their relatives in the PRC" for economic reforms.⁷⁰² During this period, "the support of relatives was regarded as paramount by the CCP in its endeavour to attract remittances and investments from Chinese overseas".⁷⁰³ This approach achieved its goal to a certain extent. Studies show that the *qiaojuan* had become a significant connection to the Chinese living overseas. The *qiaojuan* also participated in investments and contributed to the building of *qiaoxiang*.⁷⁰⁴ However, "the anticipated investments and remittances from overseas did not materialize".⁷⁰⁵ "By the mid-1980s, it was already clear that both donations and remittances from Chinese overseas were no longer adequate instruments in the

⁷⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 914.

⁷⁰¹ Mao and Lin, *Zhongguo qiaowu zhengce kaishu*, p. 13.

⁷⁰² ThunØ, "Reaching Out and Incorporating Chinese Overseas", p. 928.

⁷⁰³ Ibid., p. 915.

⁷⁰⁴ For example, In Fujian, Shen, "Jinjiang guiqiao, qiaojuan zai qiaoxiang shehui he jingji bianqianzhong de diwei he zuoyong"; In Guangdong, see Johnson and Woon, "The Response to Rural Reform in an Overseas Chinese Area"; Woon, "From Mao to Deng".

⁷⁰⁵ ThunØ, "Reaching Out and Incorporating Chinese Overseas", p. 918.

pursuit of foreign revenue and economic development”.⁷⁰⁶ From 1979 to 1991, “the largest share of investments came from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan, but only US\$ 1.5 billion originated from ethnic Chinese living elsewhere”.⁷⁰⁷ As a result, since the late 1980s, the PRC had shifted the target of its Overseas Chinese policies from *huaqiao* and *huaren* to focus on its “new migrants” (*xin yimin* 新移民), including short-term contract labourers, overseas traders, overseas students and so on by calling upon their cultural and national loyalties to China regardless of citizenship.⁷⁰⁸

Due to the difficulties of gaining resources from the Chinese living overseas, on 7 September 1990, the “Law of People’s Republic of China concerning the Protection of the Rights and Interests of the Returned Overseas Chinese and the Relatives of Overseas Chinese” (*Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo guiqiao quaojuan quanyi baohu fa* 中华人民共和国归侨侨眷权益保护法) was adopted by the National People’s Congress. In this legislation, “*qiaojuan*” was re-defined as the relatives of *huaqiao* and *guiqiao*, including their spouses, parents, children and children’s spouses, siblings, grand-parents, grand-parents-in-law, grandchildren, grandchildren-in-law, as well as other relatives who had depended on *huaqiao* or *guiqiao* for a long time.⁷⁰⁹ The definition reduced *qiaojuan*’s scale, because it did not include the relatives of *huaren*, who made up large numbers of Chinese living abroad.

⁷⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 919.

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 920.

⁷⁰⁸ Ibid., pp. 921-28.

⁷⁰⁹ “*Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo guiqiao quaojuan quanyi baohu fa*” 中华人民共和国归侨侨眷权益保护法 (The “Law of People’s Republic of China concerning the Protection of the Rights and Interests of the Returned Overseas Chinese and the Relatives of Overseas Chinese”), in *Huaqiao huaren baike quanshu falü tiaoli zhengce juan bianjiweiyuanhui*, ed., *Huaqiao huaren baike quanshu falü tiaoli zhengce juan*, pp. 632-33. ThunØ indicates that the 1990 law “was concerned primarily with protection and privileges in economic matters and rights to maintain contacts with relatives living abroad”, which seemed of little value in the 1990s when “liberal economic reforms already allowed income differences at all levels of Chinese society”. ThunØ, “Reaching Out and Incorporating Chinese Overseas”, pp. 917-18.

In 31 October 2000, the 1990 law was amended and approved. ThunØ argues that the amendments reflected “new ways of appropriating protective and preferential measures for attracting particularly high technological investment to China”.⁷¹⁰ Although “the privileges of dependants and returnees were constrained”, the amendments reflected that “dependants and returnees of older generations of migrants have become an economic liability, rather than an asset, but they would continue to serve the purpose of legitimating a system of extending protection and privileges to new returnees”.⁷¹¹

Although Mette ThunØ indicates the slight changes of the *qiaojuan*'s economic-political status since the late 1980s due to the modest economic success from the favourable treatment of the *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao*, the years from the late 1970s to the 1990s could be seen as an apogee for the *qiaojuan* discourse. Politically, the *qiaojuan* regained their privileged status which had been deprived during the Cultural Revolution. Moreover, the State Council set up and further revised special laws such as “Law of People’s Republic of China concerning the Protection of the Rights and Interests of the Returned Overseas Chinese and the Relatives of Overseas Chinese” in 1990 and 2000.⁷¹² These laws focused on the protection of a range of rights and interests of the *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* and directed the local governments and relevant Overseas Chinese affairs agencies to oversee the implementation of the laws. The *qiaojuan*'s communication with their overseas relatives was also protected. Economically, the *qiaojuan*'s houses, remittances, overseas donations and heritage, and other property at home and abroad were protected by law. Furthermore, they were

⁷¹⁰ ThunØ, “Reaching Out and Incorporating Chinese Overseas”, p. 927.

⁷¹¹ Ibid.

⁷¹² For the law in 1990, see “*Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo guiqiao qiaojuan quanyi baohu fa*”; for the law in 2000, see “*Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo guiqiao qiaojuan quanyi baohu fa*” 中华人民共和国归侨侨眷权益保护法 (The “Law of People’s Republic of China concerning the Protection of the Rights and Interests of the Returned Overseas Chinese and the Relatives of Overseas Chinese”), *General Office of the State Council*, no.2 (January 20, 2001), pp. 24-26.

encouraged and supported by the government to invest in enterprises with its protection. During this period, many *qiaojuan* participated and succeeded in their enterprises. The great improvement of the *qiaojuan* in political and economical fields demonstrates that the state to a great extent had successfully used the potential benefits of the *qiaojuan* who had transnational ties through protecting and benefiting them. On the other hand, this period was a period of rapid growth in economy and a period with social security. As a result, the left-behinds could benefit from the most favourable treatment and live securely in their everyday lives with little racketeering or blackmail faced. They could fulfill their aims through actively welcoming the favourable treatment. Although there was stasis in the development of the *qiaojuan* discourse for the left-behinds of the older generation migrants, the *qiaojuan* discourse remains open to new delineation and development, especially in response to the rise of the “new migrants” in contemporary times.

In sum, the *qiaojuan* discourse was a by-product of the Chinese sojourner discourse. Since the late nineteenth century, a *qiaojuan* discourse has been continuously developing slowly and gradually within the state under different governments. During the process, migrant-exporting provinces like Fujian played a prominent role. After 1949, the *qiaojuan* emerged as one important subject of the state’s Overseas Chinese policies. The process reflected a gradual and increasing realization of the value of this group of people in the state because of their transnational connections with Chinese living abroad, except during the period of the Cultural Revolution. Each new stage was accompanied by gender-blind redefinitions of the *qiaojuan*. During the process, *qiaojuan* experienced complex relations with the state.

On the other hand, through situating the term within different time-periods and contexts, the term *qiaojuan* (refer to footnote 37 of chapter I) can be defined. Generally, *qiaojuan* refers to the left-behind relatives of the Overseas Chinese during the Republican period, but its scope was expanded to cover the relatives of the returned Overseas Chinese during the PRC period. During 1984-July 1990, *qiaojuan* also included the relatives of the Chinese overseas who were foreign citizens (namely *waiji huaren* 外籍华人 or *huaren*). At the same time, the delineation of whom the “relatives” encompassed changed over time. During the Republican era, it mainly referred to “family members” (*jiashu*). In the PRC period, they included not only “family members” but also other relatives and friends who were not *jiashu* but had close relationship with the *huaqiao*, *guiqiao* or *huaren*. These changes in the definition of the term *qiaojuan* reflect the sensitive political position of the *qiaojuan* in the twentieth century, demonstrating the migration was a double edged sword for the *qiaojuan* in politics.

What about the responses of the sojourners and the *qiaojuan* to the series of Overseas Chinese policies? Little was known whether or not the *qiaojuan* sought government protection through their connections to overseas relatives in the Qing period. The ROC period and the early years of the PRC (1950-60s) saw the *qiaojuan* using their identities and the policies to further their own interests. The left-behind kin used their *qiaojuan* identity to directly appeal to the authorities at different levels for protection, relief, or legal or judicial assistance, showing that they were aware of the value of their identity.⁷¹³ For example, after the outbreak of the Pacific War, the left-behind kin in Jinjiang appealed to Jinjiang county government or the Relief

⁷¹³ For example, “Jiuji qiaojuan” 救济侨眷 (Relieving the *Qiaojuan*) [1942], in Jinjiangshi dang’anguan: file 2-4-200, Collection of the ROC; “Lin Ruijuan su jia bei Huang hetu deng xijie” 林瑞娟诉家被黄和兔等洗劫 (Lin Ruijuan Appealed That Huang Hetu and Others Robbed Her Family All of Their Possessions) [1941], in Fujiansheng dang’anguan: file 1-4-1057.

Committee of Jinjiang Government (*Jinjiang zhenjihui* 晋江振济会) for the relief of their hardship caused by the severance of remittances, for reducing the amount of levies and taxes, or for postponing the date of levies and taxes payment. Generally they received 30-50 yuan for relief or were allowed to postpone paying their levies and taxes.⁷¹⁴

Interestingly, in order to protect their family members and property at home, transnational protection networks were set up and used by the bulk of the sojourners and the *qiaojuan*, including kinship relatives. After obtaining home information through a range of channels, Chinese overseas often directly appealed to higher authorities for legal and judicial assistance.⁷¹⁵ This was because appealing to the authorities through the channels of overseas connections would be a more effective way to protect the interests of migrant families in China. Firstly, the Chinese overseas were considered *huaqiao* who had the protection from the government and they knew that the government would be willing to assist them. Secondly, the left-behinds often failed to claim what they wanted from the local authorities.

The transnational protection networks involved various agents and institutions (including the state). During the ROC period, protection networks were developed among some sojourners, their left-behinds, including the *fankeshen*, and different sections of the Chinese government. The networks also involved overseas Chinese communities, chambers of commerce, embassies, associations and the Kuomintang

⁷¹⁴ “Jiuji qiaojuan”.

⁷¹⁵ The flow of information through remittances, *qiaokan* (侨刊 overseas Chinese magazines), the proceedings of socio-economic societies or associations of overseas Chinese communities, and newspapers played important roles in informing the Chinese overseas about the situation of *qiaoxiang* and their relatives. For related discussions, see for example, Hsu, “Migration and Native Place: *Qiaokan* and the Imagined Community of Taishan Country, Guangdong, 1893-1993”; Zhang Huimei 张慧梅 and Liu Hong 刘宏, “20 shiji zhongye xinma huaren shehui yu huanan hudong zhi tantao” 20世纪中叶新马华人社会与华南互动之探讨 (Probe into the Interaction between the Singaporean/Malaysian Ethnic Chinese Communities and South China in the Mid-20th Century), *Nanyang wenti yanjiu* 南洋问题研究 (Southeast Asian Affairs) 2 (June 2006), pp. 53-63.

branches overseas. A telegraph from the Northern Luzon Branch of the Kuomintang in the Philippines to the Fujian provincial government directly stated in February 1946 that the *huaqiao*'s interests would be under threat if the suffering of the *qiaojuan* from the headmen of *baojia* 保甲 and local officials at village and town levels did not cease.⁷¹⁶ This statement reveals the close relationship between *huaqiao*, *qiaojuan* and different levels of administrations. The importance of the protection of *qiaojuan* was recognized by the Central Committee of Overseas Chinese Affairs, that to protect *qiaojuan* was to “increase the ‘centripetal force’ (*xiangxin li* 向心力) of the Overseas Chinese towards the motherland”.⁷¹⁷

Appeals from the overseas institutions and individuals mentioned above could not be ignored by the provincial and local administrations and the local Overseas Chinese Affairs bureaus, and similarly so for central organs such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee. Consequently, they ordered the county government to investigate the cases of complaints or appeals and report on the processes and results. At the same time, relevant information would be communicated to the overseas agents. The county government would investigate the cases after they received the instructions from above. But this could not guarantee the solutions. Sometimes the case was postponed for a long time and the Overseas Chinese had to appeal for a speedier investigation. Sometimes the appeal was found to be unwarranted, but most overseas appeals were duly investigated.⁷¹⁸

⁷¹⁶ “Gaishan qiaojian shenghuo” 改善侨眷生活 (Improving the Lives of *Qiaojuan*) [1946], in *Fujiansheng dang’anguan*: file 1-6-2178.

⁷¹⁷ “Baofu guiqiao qiaojuan” 保护归侨侨眷 (Protection of the Returned Overseas Chinese and the *Qiaojuan* [1947]), in *Fujiansheng dang’anguan*: file 1-6-2050.

⁷¹⁸ This is observed from the official records of the Secretariat of Fujian Provincial Government in the 1940s, deposited in *Fujiansheng dang’anguan*, such as file 1-3-431; 1-3-430; 1-3-432; 1-3-442; 1-3-449; 1-6-1054; 1-6-1057; 1-6-1668; 1-6-1731; 1-6-1787; 1-6-1776; 1-6-1839; 1-6-1840; 1-6-1836; 1-6-1975 etc.

In Quanzhou, the migrant family members used their overseas connections to appeal to the authorities. In September 1947, villagers of Caiqian village, Dongshi town, Jinjiang County, experienced a flood and suffered from a poor harvest. These villagers all depended on agriculture for a living after the cut-off of the flow of remittances from their overseas relatives. The village received assistance from the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration in China to repair the dike. However, the relief materials were appropriated by the headmen Cai Shichao and Cai Shizu, who undertook the project as a strategy to embezzle the relief materials. The villagers were very angry and they self-organized to appeal to the local authorities through a representative, Cai Zhongcheng. In May, Cai Shizu led 30 men and plundered Cai Zhongcheng's house and killed him. However, the Jinjiang county court did not handle the case fairly. Thus Cai Zhongcheng's wife wrote to her husband's uncle Cai Changcong, appealing to him for help. The uncle was a member of Chinese Chamber of Commerce and the Kuomintang Branch in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, and he appealed to the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and the party branch to telegraph the Fujian provincial government in order that the Jinjiang County Government could be instructed to investigate the case. Moreover, in Singapore, 29 members of the Jinjiang Association requested the association to help to appeal for the case which they learnt of from their family members at home. With these appeals, the Fujian provincial government responded by instructing the Jinjiang authorities to investigate.⁷¹⁹

The transnational protection networks continued to play their roles in the PRC period and official institutions also responded actively to their appeals. For example,

⁷¹⁹ “Cai Changcong su jiashu bei huifei xiehen jiesha” 蔡长聪述家属被会匪挟恨劫杀 (Appeal from Cai Changcong on the Murder of His Family and the Robbery of His Property by Vengeful Bandits [1948]), in *Fujiansheng dang'anguan*: file 1-6-3360.

when the migrant families in the Jinjiang district failed to get daily-needed resources with the implementation of Unified Purchase and Marketing Quotas in 1955, the *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* wrote to their overseas relatives and complained about their sufferings. As a result, individual Fujianese *huaqiao* and *huaqiao* associations overseas wrote to the PRC government, requesting the central, the provincial government and the Fujian provincial Committee of Overseas Chinese Affairs to solve the problem.⁷²⁰

The activities of the transnational protection networks demonstrate that both the sojourners and their *qiaojuan* used their overseas Chinese identities to seek protection or privileges for themselves by leveraging on the favourable state policies, especially when transnational communication flowed smoothly. Even when the communication encountered barriers, the Chinese authorities still demonstrated concern for the *qiaojuan* who were facing emergency situations, due to the importance of overseas Chinese. The following section on Fujian province's protection and relief policies and their implementation in the first half of the 1940s will elaborate on this point. However, sometimes the interests of the Overseas Chinese and the *qiaojuan* were in conflict with each other. For instance, the Overseas Chinese and their left-behind wives' interests were at odds with each other during the process of the implementation of the 1950 Marriage Law in the 1950s. The state and its different levels of administration thus needed to take measures to deal with the situation, which will be elaborated in the third section.

⁷²⁰ “Zhonggong Fujianshengwei xuanchuanbu pizhuan shengqiaowei dangzu ‘guanyu dui qiaojuan guiqiao xuanchuan liangshi Sanding zhengce de jidian yijian’”, pp. 29-30.

Fujian Province's Implementation of Protection and Relief Policies

Fujian provincial protection and relief movement lasted from late 1941 to 1946. The topic has received little attention from academic circles until the late 1980s. Scholars tended to provide a general survey of the movement, and comment that it was an effective action of the central and the Fujian provincial governments. In fact, the effect was very limited.⁷²¹ On this issue, the present author has discussed in a published article on how the Overseas Chinese Association in Fuzhou made efforts to help the *guiqiao* and *qiaojuan* during the difficult years, explaining the roles of local associations.⁷²² Very recently, a new research trend on the ROC's protection and relief policies for *guiqiao* has emerged, and a positive evaluation has been endowed on the policies and their implementation. However, these studies focus on the *guiqiao*, touching little on the *qiaojuan*. Moreover, the role of Fujian as a major province which played important roles in the protection and provision of relief for *guiqiao*, *qiaojuan* and *qiaosheng* has been largely ignored.⁷²³ One can push the study further through investigating the Fujian government's protection and relief policies and measures, their implementation at the local level and the responses of the *qiaojuan* to

⁷²¹ Lin Zhen 林真, "Taipingyang zhanzheng baofahou Fujiansheng zhengfu jiuqiao cuoshi jiqi pingjia" 太平洋战争爆发后福建省政府救侨措施及其评价 (The Introduction and Evaluation of the Fujian Provincial Government's Relief Measures for the Returned Overseas Chinese after the Outbreak of the Pacific War), *Dangan yu lishi* 档案与历史 (Archives and History) 3 (1989), pp. 52-55; Huang, Zhao, and Cong, *Haiwai qiaobao yu kangri zhanzheng*, pp. 194-96, 200.

⁷²² Shen Huifen 沈惠芬, "Taipingyang zhanzheng baofahou Fuzhou haiwai huaqiao xiehui jiuqiao shilue" 太平洋战争爆发后福州海外华侨协会救护归侨事略 (The Relief and Protection Provided for the Returned Overseas Chinese by the Overseas Chinese Association in Fuzhou after the Outbreak of the Pacific War), *Fujian luntan* 福建论坛 (Forum of Fujian) supplementary issue (July 2001), pp. 84-85.

⁷²³ For these studies, see for example, Huang, Zhao, and Cong, *Haiwai qiaobao yu kangri zhanzheng*, pp. 192- 200; Mao and Lin, *Zhongguo qiaowu zhengce kaishu*, pp. 61-63; Yuan Ding 袁丁 and Li Yali 李亚丽, "Guomin zhengfu de jiuqiao huodong (1931-1937) – yi Guangdong wei zhongxin" 国民政府的救侨活动 (1931-1937) – 以广东为中心 (The Nationalist Government's Relief Efforts towards the Overseas Chinese Refugees, 1931-1937 – Guangdong Province as the Focus), *Huaqiao huaren lishi yanjiu* 1 (2003), pp. 37-46; Xiong and Zheng, "Kangri zhanzheng shiqi minyue qiaoxiang de qiaojuan shenghuo", p. 40; He Jinlin 贺金林, "Taipingyang zhanshi qianhou guomin zhengfu jiuji nanqiao de huodong" 太平洋战事前后国民政府救济难侨的活动 (On the Relief Provided to the Overseas Chinese Refugees during the Pacific War), *Huaqiao huaren lishi yanjiu* 3 (2005), pp. 34-40.

the policies and implementation, especially the responses of the *fankeshen*, who were an important target of the policies.

The loss of financial resources from overseas after the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941 totally changed the lives of large numbers of the *fankeshen* and other *qiaojuan*. As mentioned above, in order to show their concern and solve the serious survival problems of the *qiaojuan*, the central and the Fujian provincial governments issued decrees and formulated policies to protect and relieve the *qiaojuan*. The Fujian provincial government actively led the protection and relief movement in its territory. In December 1941, the Fujian Overseas Chinese Office telegraphed the Central Committee of Overseas Chinese Affairs on approaches to conduct relief work. On 19 December, the Fujian government sent the vice-head of the Administrative Office of Fujian Provincial Communications and Transport to southern Fujian to investigate the living conditions of the *guiqiao* and *qiaojuan* to see how much relief work was needed. On 29 December, a meeting between the concerned authorities and representatives of *huaqiao* was held to arrange for relief measures for *qiaojuan*. On 9 February 1942, the Committee for the Emergency Relief of the *Guiqiao*, *Qianjuan* and *Qiaosheng* in Fujian was set up as a leading institution for emergency relief work.⁷²⁴

The provincial government worked out a series of immediate and longer-term measures for the *qiaojuan* who qualified under certain criteria. The immediate measures aimed to aid the *qiaojuan*, which included:

⁷²⁴ “Fujiansheng jiuqiao gongzuo baogao - Shengjiuqiaohui chengli qi zhi jieshu zhi (1943 nian 6 yue)” 福建省救侨工作报告—省救侨会成立起至结束止 (1943年6月) (The Report on the Relief Work of Fujian Province from the Date When the Fujian Association of the Relief Work for Overseas Chinese Was Founded to Its Closure in June 1943), Fujiansheng dang’anguan, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang’an shiliao*, p. 1737. In April, its title was changed to *Fujiansheng jiuji jiuqiao weiyuanhui* 福建省紧急救侨委员会.

- a) Presenting relief funds to the *qiaojuan* who were relying on the remittances, without any property and production abilities and suffering from the remittance stoppage in forty counties by June 1943;⁷²⁵
- b) Exempting the registered migrant households which required relief in certain counties from paying casually-imposed levies of money and wartime government bonds and strictly forbidding exorbitant taxes and levies;⁷²⁶
- c) Selling grain stored in granaries at lower prices to the *qiaojuan* in Jinjiang, Nan'an and Hui'an in 1942 and 1943;⁷²⁷
- d) Setting up government mortgage institutions in 13 counties for the *qiaojuan* to mortgage their property at a low rate of interest from January 1943 to April 1946;⁷²⁸
- e) Giving loans to those poor and old *qiaojuan* in Jinjiang, Nan'an and Fuqing;⁷²⁹
- f) Sending officials to Jinjiang County to claim the remittances which were held by the civil Remittances Receiving and Sending Bureaus in 1942.⁷³⁰

The longer-term measures aimed to aid and encourage the *qiaojuan* to take part in the agricultural, industrial, fishing and handicraft production for self-reliance.

⁷²⁵ Ibid., p. 1741.

⁷²⁶ Ibid.

⁷²⁷ Ibid; "Minnan mijia bu zhang pingtiao jiuji qiaojuan" 闽南米价步涨平糶救济侨眷 (The Government's Relief of the *Qiaojuan* through the Sale of Rice at Lower Prices During Periods of Rice Prices Escalation), *Nanfang ribao*, 27 May 1942; "Sheng ling Zhang Cheng Jing Tai jieji jin nan shiliang" 省令漳澄靖泰接济晋南食粮 (The Provincial Government Ordered Zhangzhou, Chenghai, Nanjing, Changtai [to] Help to Provide Grain to Southern Jinjiang) *Zhongyang ribao* (Fujian edition), 29 May 1942; "Hui'an cai de xian mi bochu yibu pingtiao" 惠安采得仙米拨出一部平糶 (The County Government of Hui'an Received Rice and Sold Part of It at a Fair Price) *Fujian xiwan*, 6 June 1942; "Min sheng boliang jieji qiaojuan" 闽省拨粮接济侨眷 (The Fujian Provincial Government Granted Grain to Relieve Its *Qiaojuan*) *Xinhua ribao*, 21 April 1943.

⁷²⁸ Liu, "Jiunian lai gongzuo de huiyi (16)".

⁷²⁹ Xie Nanguang 谢南光, "Minnan qiaoping yu qiaobao de yaoqiu" 闽南侨情与侨胞的要求 (The Situation of Overseas Chinese Affairs and the Request of the Overseas Chinese in Southern Fujian), *Zhongyang ribao* (Fujian edition), 12 May 1942; "Basheng zaxun" 八省杂讯 (News from Eight Provinces), *Xinhua ribao*, 31 July 1942; Liu Shendong 柳升东, "Jiunian lai gongzuo de huiyi (15)" 九年来工作的回忆 (15) (The 15th Recollection of the 9-Year's Work), *Fujian shibao*, 8 September 1947.

⁷³⁰ "Fujiansheng jiuqiao gongzuo baogao - Shengjiuqiaohui chengli qi zhi jieshu zhi", Fujiansheng dang'anguan, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang'an shiliao*, pp. 1741-42.

In order to help the *qiaojuan* with productive work, the Fujian government lent a production fund of 20,000,000 yuan to about 13,000 migrant households, which formed one twentieth of the migrant households in Fujian.⁷³¹ Furthermore, the Fujian Provincial Overseas Chinese Cooperative Society for Industrial Productivity (*Fujiansheng guiqiao chanxiao hezuoshe* 福建省归侨产销合作社, later on *Fujiansheng gongye shengchan hezuoshe* 福建省工业生产合作社) was founded in November 1942 in Yong'an, upon a suggestion by the returned *huaqiao* Yan Zijun from Indo-China. There were 13 branches among the counties with large memberships of *qiaojuan*.⁷³²

The provincial government showed special concern for the counties of Jinjiang and Nan'an which comprised of about half of the population of *qiaojuan* in Fujian. They were the focus of investigations by the officials from the provincial government, such as the vice-executive officer of the Provincial Communications and Transportation Office Huang Chengyuan who investigated the impact of the remittance stoppage on the *guiqiao* and *qiaojuan* in December 1941, the provincial conscript officer Wang Jiyu who investigated the lives of *qiaojuan* in towns within Jinjiang County in February 1942, and the assistant directors of the provincial government Xie Nanguang and Huang Zhezhen who investigated the lives of *qiaojuan*, audited the emergency relief work and oversaw the implementation of Overseas Chinese policies in counties which had many *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* from March to May 1942.⁷³³ Xie and Huang's investigations especially reflected the

⁷³¹ Lin, "Taipingyang zhanzheng baofahuo fujiansheng zhengfu jiuqiao cuoshi jiqi pingjia", p. 55.

⁷³² Ye Can 叶骖, "Jie yuefen fujian shengzheng dongtai" 九月份福建省政动态 (The Report on the Work of the Fujian Provincial Government in September), *Xin Fujian* 6, 3 (October 1944); Lin, "Taipingyang zhanzheng baofahuo fujiansheng zhengfu jiuqiao cuoshi jiqi pingjia", p. 53.

⁷³³ "Shengfu guanyu pai Huang Chengyuan diaocha minnan gexian guiqiao qiaojian zhuangkuang ling" 省府关于派黄澄渊调查闽南各县归侨侨眷状况令 (1942年12月16日) (Mandate from the Provincial Government for Huang Chengyuan to Investigate Returned Overseas Chinese and *Qiaojuan* in Counties in Southern Fujian), *Fujiansheng dang'anguan*, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang'an shiliao*, pp.

attention from the provincial government and its agencies towards the Overseas Chinese affairs. It was reported that they opened forums and talked directly with the representatives of *qiaojuan* in Qingyang, Shishi and Anhai towns. In the forums, they presented the concern of Governor Liu Jianxu and his call for self-reliance among the *qiaojuan*. They reported on the relief and protection projects of the province and discussed the projects with the locals. The representatives also reported their living conditions and made requests for relief, protection and production assistance. In Qingyang, more than 200 representatives attended the forum, of which most of them were women.⁷³⁴ Xie and Huang's investigations not only directly expressed the concerns of the provincial government, but also gathered useful feedback and received requests from the migrant families to be sent to the authorities.

A crucial role was played in this period by the Overseas Chinese Cooperative Society for Industrial Productivity in various counties. The Co-op set up many farms and factories to offer work to the *guiqiao* and *qiaojuan*. Most owners were the Nanyang returnees, who hoped to go through the hardship with their families in their wartime hometowns. The co-op mobilized the *qiaojuan* to take part in agricultural, industrial and handicraft production, and helped some *qiaojuan* pull through the survival difficulties totally or partly.⁷³⁵ In Jinjiang, the Co-op was set up in the towns including Shishi, Anhai, Yinglin and Jinjing where there were many *qiaojuan*.⁷³⁶

Apart from the Co-op, government mortgage institutions were set up in 13 counties where there were large numbers of *qiaojuan* from January 1943 to April

1844-45; "Wang Jiyu shicha qiaojian shenghuo" 王继禹视察侨眷生活 (The Inspection of Wang Yiyu of the Lives of *Qiaojuan*), *Quanzhou ribao*, 27 February 1947; Xie Nanguang, "Minnan qiaoqing yu qiaobao de yaoqiu".

⁷³⁴ "Xie Nanguang Huang Zhezhen shicha nanxiang qiaokuan" 谢南光黄哲真视察南乡侨况 (Xie Nanguang and Huang Zhezhen's Inspection of Southern Towns), *Quanzhou ribao*, 31 March 1942.

⁷³⁵ Lin and Zhuang, *Jindai huaqiao touzi guonei qiye shi ziliao xuanji (Fujian juan)*, p. 216; Wang, "Quanzhou qiaojuan de zhengzha"; "Dong nan xi bei" 东南西北 (The East, South, West and North), *Xinhua ribao* 新华日报, 14 May 1944; Ye, "Jie yuefen fujian shengzheng dongtai".

⁷³⁶ Wu, "Jinjiangxian jianguo qian hezuo yundong shilue", p. 46.

1946. The *qiaojuan* who had once relied on remittances were badly in need of relief. They could now mortgage not only their clothes and jewellery, but also their land and houses for one year with a small amount of interest. A migrant family with more than ten people could not mortgage more than 2,000 yuan's worth of property, while the amount for a family with less than ten would be not more than 200 yuan per person. The mortgage fund came from the 30,000,000 yuan Overseas Chinese Loan and only migrant families could apply for it.⁷³⁷ This assistance was well received by the *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* at a time when money-lenders charged exorbitant rates of interest which would aggravate the burden on the migrant families that borrowed.⁷³⁸

As for other protection and relief policies, they were ineffectively implemented at the local level. The attempt to provide production loans for *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* totally failed because the small amount of money was often used to meet the daily living expenses but not for production purposes. Moreover, in some counties, a certain proportion of the funds was claimed by people who were not *qiaojuan*, while the poor *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* benefited very little.⁷³⁹ In Fuxing town, Jinjiang, the county government found that a *baojia* headman forged the signatures and fingerprints of the heads of *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* households to claim the loans and buy the cheaper rice from the government which were originally intended for these families.⁷⁴⁰ A total of 230,000 yuan was issued to Jinjiang County, from which every migrant household should have been accorded 20 yuan. However, most of the money

⁷³⁷ “Fujiansheng zhenjihui gongdianju dagang yewu xuzhi ji dianfu shenqing dianzhi banfa” 福建省赈济会公典局大纲、业务须知及典户申请典质办法 (1943年1月) (The Working Outline, Guidance, and the Approach to Mortgage Application of the Mortgage Institution of Fujian Provincial Relief Association, January 1943), Fujiansheng dang’anguan, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang’an shiliao*, pp. 1788-1793. According to Lin Zhen, 1,000 yuan could only buy 40-50 *tin* rice at that time; Lin, “Taipingyang zhanzheng baofahou Fujiansheng zhengfu jiuqiao cuoshi jiqi pingjia”, p. 55.

⁷³⁸ Liu, “Jiunian lai gongzuo de huiyi (16)”；on feneration’s impact on migrant families, see Dong, “Kangzhan shiqi Quanzhou de jingji shenghuo”, p. 5.

⁷³⁹ Yu, “Qiaoxiang tanxi sheng”.

⁷⁴⁰ Liao Aiqun 缪爱群, “Jinjiang xunshi xiangzheng dadaotuan gongzuo guilai” 晋江巡视乡政督导团工作归来 (Inspection of Jinjiang Grass-root Politics by a Member of the Inspection Committee), *Dongnan ribao*, 16 February 1945.

was retained as unpaid taxes by local officials in towns. The experience for the Nan'an *qiaojuan* was similar.⁷⁴¹ Moreover, the protection and relief work only reached a limited group of *qiaojuan*, while large numbers of *qiaojuan* and *guiqiao* remained in need of assistance.

Officials at different levels often attributed the failure in providing protection and relief for the migrant families to the inaction or corruption of the *baojia* headmen in towns and villages.⁷⁴² It was true that there were many headmen who ignored the government decrees or circumvented them for their own interests. However, the failure could not be attributed totally to them as the following case of collecting self-governing levies (*zizhi juan* 自治捐) in Jinjiang County in the first half of 1942 tells.

During the years of remittance stoppage, the provincial government ruled that no exorbitant taxes, levies and forced purchase of wartime bonds were to be imposed on the migrant households which were included on the county's relief lists. All levies which were not budgeted by the government were strictly prohibited.⁷⁴³ The provincial government ordered the county-level authorities to collect only approved amounts of levies and bonds peacefully from and prohibited the local government from harassing the *qiaojuan* in the other migrant households which were not included on the relief lists.⁷⁴⁴ However, the relief and protection decree was in conflict with the

⁷⁴¹ "Shengfu zhuanfa zhongtongju guanyu Fuzhou deng jiuxianshi qiaojuan shenghuo zhuangkuang diaocha baogao (1943 nian 6 yue 17 ri)", Fujiansheng dang'anguan, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang'an shiliao*, pp. 1745-1746.

⁷⁴² "Shengfu zhuanfa zhongtongju guanyu Fuzhou deng jiuxianshi qiaojian shenghuo zhuangkuang diaocha baogao", Fujiansheng dang'anguan, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang'an shiliao*, pp. 1745-1746; Zeng Moxiu 曾莫休, "Chuntian laidao qiaoxiang" 春天来到侨乡 (The Spring Comes to the *Qiaoxiang*), *Dongnan ribao*, 18 December 1945; Liao, "Jinjiang xunshi xiangzheng dadaotuan gongzuo guilai"; "Qiaowu weiyuanhui guanyu zengbo qiaojian zhengkuan yu peifang jihuahan ji shengfu daidian (1945 nian 12 yue - 1946 nian 3 yue)" 侨务委员会关于增拨侨眷赈款与配放计划函及省府代电(1945年12月-1946年3月)(The Telegraph between the Committee of the Overseas Chinese Affairs and the Provincial Government on the Issues of the Increase and Distribution of Loan Credit for the *Qiaojuan*), Fujiansheng dang'anguan, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang'an shiliao*, p. 1747.

⁷⁴³ "Fujiansheng jiuqiao gongzuo baogao", *Fujian huaqiao dang'an shiliao*, p. 1741.

⁷⁴⁴ "Shengfu guanyu dui guiqiao qiaojuan quanmu zhaiwu wubi gongyun bingdui nanqiao yuyi huomian de xunli" 省府关于对归侨侨眷劝募债务务必公允并对难侨予以豁免的训令(1941年12

financial needs of the local government which demanded extra revenues from taxes and levies to meet administrative expenses. Thus, the *qiaojuan* were forced to pay various taxes and levies when they were leading miserable lives for years. This situation explains one main reason behind the protection and relief policies's failure at the local level.

Soon after remittance stoppage in February 1942, the revenue of the Jinjiang County was reduced and the government was on the brink of bankruptcy with the inability to collect various taxes, among which were the self-governing levies which were one of the important sources of income for the county.⁷⁴⁵ According to the regulation of the self-governing levies of Jinjiang County in 1940, the expected payment was calculated based on the property of the family. Rich family paid more. Those villagers who migrated with all of their family members had to pay the levies with the help of their relatives or friends.⁷⁴⁶ The documents of the Finance Department of Jinjiang County Government show that it was very difficult for the *baojia* headmen in towns and villages to collect the self-governing levies. In order to collect them, local officials and headmen in Shishi town were forced by the county government to demand the payment from migrant households after the Pacific War. They were also forced to warn the *qiaojuan* that if they did not pay, the executive staff from the county would collect levies household by household with the assistance of armed policemen. These migrant families who were unable to pay would be

月 20 日) (The Mandate from the Provincial Government to Collect Collecting Donations and Debts from the Returned Overseas Chinese and *Qiaojuan* Fairly and to Free the Returnees Who Were in Trouble from the Collecting Donations and Debts), in Fujiansheng dang'anguan, ed., *Fujian huaqiao dang'an shiliao*, p. 1812.

⁷⁴⁵ "Jin xianfu mouqiu chongshi xianku jiji diaoli shuishou" 晋县府谋求充实县库 积极调理税收 (Jinjiang County Government Actively Readjusted Taxes to Garner More Income for Its Finances), *Quanzhou ribao*, 26 February 1942; "Zizhijuan zhengshou" 自治捐征收 (Collection of the Self-Governing Levies) [1942], in Jinjiangshi dang'anguan: file 2-4-125(2), Collection of the ROC.

⁷⁴⁶ "Jinjiangxian gexianqu zizhi zhengshou zanxing zhangcheng" 晋江县各区自治征收暂行章程 (The Temporary Regulation on the Collection of the Self-Governing Levies in Jinjiang), in *Jinjiangxian zhengfu gongbao* 晋江县政府公报 (Gazette of the Jinjiang County Government), no. 52&53 (August 1940), pp. 5-8.

arrested and their houses sealed. In early 1942, the executive staff had expressed their willingness to resort to armed coercion in collecting the levies from *qiaojuan* in different villages of Shishi town.⁷⁴⁷

On 27 January 1942, in response to this situation, officials and headmen from the town and nine villages appealed to the county government to postpone the collection of unpaid taxes and levies for 1941 and redistribute the amount of payment for different households for 1942. They were of the view that *qiaojuan* had already contributed significantly for several years after the outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War. They were also suffering emotionally and financially from the break in communication with their relatives. However, the county government replied that it would only consider the case after Shishi officials had collected all the unpaid taxes for 1941.⁷⁴⁸

In February 1942, the county government increased the pressure on town officials and village headmen to collect the local self-governing levies and the tax on houses and stalls (*fangpu shui* 房铺税). The government perceived that it was not just the cut-off of remittances but also the inactivity of local officials and headmen that caused the failure of the tax collection. On 24 February 1942, the Finance Department, with the permission of the county chief, ordered a large-scale forceful collection of two rounds of unpaid taxes amounting to 400,000 yuan.⁷⁴⁹ *Quanzhou ribao* reported that the taxes to be collected included the self-governing levies of three months for the first half of 1942. Those town officials who could not fulfill their tasks in two weeks would be punished severely.⁷⁵⁰ The Yongning town government failed to collect most

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁸ “Zizhi juan zhengshou”.

⁷⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁰ “Jinxianfu mouqiu chongshi xianku jiji tiaoli shuishou”.

of the taxes by June however, and the county government thus sent more staff and policemen to do the job.⁷⁵¹

After the outbreak of the Pacific War, Jinjiang County had made efforts to protect and relieve *qiaojuan* when they fell into poverty.⁷⁵² However, the county administration, which was on the brink of bankruptcy, did not seem to have an alternative to the collection of taxes and temporary levies. As a county with large numbers of migrant families, the relief and protection of these migrant families conflicted with the interests of the administration. It was thus a Catch-22 situation, in that the county authorities had to exact taxes from the very people whom they were tasked to protect.

This period of forced tax collection caused a lot of misery for the *qiaojuan*, including the *fankeshen*. In 1942, Lü Weisheng, a committee member of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee who came from Quanzhou received several letters from his friends from Fujian describing the oppressive tax claims on the *qiaojuan*. According to the letters, the *qiaojuan* in southern Fujian lived without remittances, sold their clothes and children and mortgaged their houses to survive. Some even committed suicide. But local officials never showed any sympathy to the *qiaojuan* when they were collecting the self-governing levies and they often extorted as much as five or six times more. If they postponed the payment, officials would send law enforcers to arrest people or to take away their belongings, including their chickens and ducks. Some *qiaojuan* from the towns where most *qiaojuan* lived, such as Shishi

⁷⁵¹ Ibid.

⁷⁵² For example, in order to aid poor *qiaojuan* in surviving the difficulties, in April 1942, the county government succeeded in appealing to the provincial government to allow *qiaojuan* in the coastal area to repair disused salt pits and produce salt for survival, which had great effects on the survival of many *qiaojuan* and *fankeshen*, which has been discussed in chapter V. “Tezhun yanhai qiaojuan kaichang shaiyan weisheng” 特准沿海侨眷开场晒盐维生 (Special Approval for the *Qiaojuan* to Produce Salt for Survival), *Quanzhou ribao*, 11 April 1942; “Xiufu feikan shaiyan zhunyu qiaojuan daikuan” 修复废坎晒盐 准予侨眷贷款 (Repair the Abolished Salt Yard and Allow Loans to the *Qiaojuan*), *Quanzhou ribao*, 14 July 1942.

in Jinjiang, Shishan, Jintao and Matou in Nan'an, were driven to commit suicide or to become prostitutes or thieves. Lü reported the situation in the 189th committee meeting of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee, which in turn appealed to the Executive Yuan to order Fujian province to strictly prohibit the *baojia* headmen from oppressing the *guiqiao*. The Fujian provincial government was confused by the so-called self-governing levies since it was against the regulations set by them, and instructed its counties that any autonomy taxes should not be demanded from the *qiaojuan* without property.⁷⁵³

Within the tumultuous situation, the experience was much more painful for the *fankeshen* who lost communication with and economic support from their husbands. Due to the fact that these *baojia* headmen pressed her family for tax and levy payment, the interviewee Hong Q considered them as villains.⁷⁵⁴ In Jinjiang, a popular ballad depicted as below the pain of having to pay the self-governing levies when the *qiaojuan* were already struggling for their survival:

There had been three days that we did not have money to buy rice;
Glad to make money today;
The money was for buying rice;
However, the village official again came and forced us to pay the self-governing levies.⁷⁵⁵

Under the oppression of the local authorities' demands, some *fankeshen* organized or took part in passive resistance such as postponing payment with the help of higher officials, escaping payment by leaving their residence, or organizing or participating in protests. As Georgina Waylen defines, the term "politics" is used "more widely to include activities often undertaken by women which fall outside the

⁷⁵³ "Shengfu guanyu xingzhengyuan yanjin baojiazhang feifa yapo guiqiao de xunling (1942 nian 8 yue 12 ri)" 省府关于行政院严禁保甲长非法压迫归侨的训令 (1942年8月12日) (Mandate from the Provincial Government on the Mandate from the Executive Yuan on Strictly Prohibiting the Headmen of *Baojia* from Oppressing the Returned Overseas Chinese, 12 August 1942), Fujiansheng dang'anguan, *Fujian huaqiao dang'an shiliao*, pp. 1815-16.

⁷⁵⁴ Interview with Hong Q.

⁷⁵⁵ Ye, "Kangri geyao xuanlu", p. 108.

boundaries of conventional politics and therefore not usually deemed to be ‘political’.”⁷⁵⁶ In this sense, the *fankeshen* obviously had become involved at this point in the politics of survival.

One of the interviewees in the present study was Chen XL. She lived in the village of Shizhen, Jinjing town. On one occasion, she succeeded in seeking the help of an official who came to assist in tax collection. At that time, the headman Li Hanhui came to collect the tax on houses and stalls four times every month.⁷⁵⁷ In that month Chen’s father-in-law died and she appealed to him to postpone the collection because there was no money at home, but Li rejected her appeal. Later a more accommodating and understanding officer came to the village. Chen sought his help in certifying the dire straits her family were in following her father-in-law’s death and permitting her to settle the debt only two months later, when communication with the Nanyang would reopen. The officer acceded to her request and she was allowed to postpone the payment. When the official returned finally to collect the tax, Chen told him that she had not been able to contact her husband in the Philippines. The official again helped her by providing official certification that she was allowed to pay the money later. As a result, the headman did not come any more for the money.⁷⁵⁸

Not all *fankeshen* had such luck as Chen XL. Most of the time, there was no way to postpone or escape the tax payment, and fleeing was a tactic to deal with the headmen as shown by the experience of another interviewee Hong Q. During the war, Hong lived with her mother-in-law in Huazhou village. They were requested to pay

⁷⁵⁶ Georgina Waylen, “Gender, Feminism and the State: An Overview”, in *Gender, Politics and the State*, eds. Vicky Randall and Georgina Waylen (New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 1.

⁷⁵⁷ On the headman, see “Duzhe toushu zhi'er: baozhang hengxing wuji” 读者投书之二: 保长横行无忌 (Letters from Readers: The Tyranny of the Headmen of *baojia*), *Quanzhou ribao*, 25 September 1946.

⁷⁵⁸ Interview with Chen XL. Chen did not have an idea of who the officer was and mistakenly thought that he was sent by the *baojia* headman. According to the way to collect the taxes and levies in Jinjiang County, the officer was one of the staff members from the county government who came to assist the tax collection in the village. Chen said that the officer “was really a good man” and considered that she was very lucky to have such a kind person to help her family.

taxes for two *huaqiao* overseas - her husband and father-in-law. But the family was too poor to comply. Hong thus used a ruse on with the headman. She lied to him that she would be going to Cuotou'an village and would settle the debt by selling the bed her father-in-law brought from the Nanyang. However she eventually absconded from her village to Dongshan village instead. The livid headman retaliated by throwing excrement and urine at the gate of her house in frustration.⁷⁵⁹

Life was tough for the migrant families due to heavy taxes and levies. According to Zhou Haiyu's writing, the migrant families in the villages of Qingmeng, Yanta, Xianian, Licuo and Yuci in the south of Quanzhou city were under serious oppression from the town officials and headmen who came with village policemen to enforce tax collection almost every day. Those who could not pay had items such as cotton-woven quilts or cooking pans confiscated. Those who did not have any property were arrested and put in the public townhouse. Arrested *fankeshen* often escaped the punishment by seeking guarantors for their postponement of the payments. There were three households in Yuci village that had to sell their children to pay the money when the deadline was due. One household for example sold one daughter and two sons.⁷⁶⁰

It was amid these difficult circumstances that villagers protected themselves by collectively appealing to the county government in 1944. As Zhou Haiyu's work shows, the town administration levied a tax on those who were exempted from or allowed to postpone military service (*mian huanyi shui* 免缓役税) in mid-1944. The *baojia* headmen made use of the law to demand that when a person who had reached certain age needed to pay 6,000 yuan (which could purchase about 300 *jin* of rice), while an overseas migrant and a person who was not old enough would be subject to a

⁷⁵⁹ Interview with Hong Q.

⁷⁶⁰ Zhou, "Guanbi minfan, qiaojuan qingyuan", pp. 31-33.

payment of 3,000 yuan. To protest against this unreasonable tax, many *fankeshen* attended the protest led by a student Zheng Yuzhen from Qingmeng village who had withdrawn from the Quanzhou Middle School because of the lack of money to pay the education fees. Zheng's 15-year-old brother had been forced to pay 3,000 yuan. She was angry that the demand conflicted with the campaign to "build a new Jinjiang" conducted by the county chief Xu Jiyuan who announced that his administration would bring about ample food and clothing for the Jinjiang people. She sought to escape the tax by organizing other *qiaojuan* to appeal to the county government.

Zheng's idea was immediately approved by several well-known female *qiaojuan* in the village, such as Guo Chuniang, Tang Ainiang, Wu Yangniang and Lin Xianniang. They immediately received the support of other female *qiaojuan* in the village and secretly organized the protest at night. These women requested Zheng to be their representative because she could speak Mandarin, and promised to stand by her if she was arrested. The protest broke out promptly the next morning.

On the way to the city, more *qiaojuan* in other villages Yanta, Xianian, Licuo and Yuci joined them when they learnt about the aim of the protest.⁷⁶¹ When they arrived at Xinqiao, the headmen and policemen of Qingmeng village attempted to stop them. These angry *qiaojuan* surrounded and repulsed them. Zhou's oral interview with Zheng shows that Zheng had been hesitant to advance at that time, but the participants insisted on going ahead and encouraged her by pledging solidarity

⁷⁶¹ It is not clear how many people, including the *fankeshen*, participated in the protest. According to Lai Baolin, there were about one hundred women *qiaojuan* who participated. See Lai Baolin 赖宝林, "Wangri qiaoxiang de 'zhua zhuang din' 往日侨乡的 '抓壮丁' ('Arresting Conscripted Men' in Emigrant Communities in the Old Days), *Jinjiang wenshi ziliao* 5 (October 1984), p. 100. However, Lai's account is not as detailed as Zhou Haiyu's. Moreover, there were some conflicting descriptions between two authors. According to Zhou Haiyu's writing, he had conducted interviews with the participants and he himself was one of the leading organizers of the second protest in the villages which happened in 1946. Thus Zhou's account would seem to be the more credible one. However, more investigations on the two protests for more details and the experience of the participants need to be collected and studied in the future. Nevertheless, because there were many *fankeshen* in the villages and this protest was organized by women *qiaojuan*, the *fankeshen* should have become the bulk of the participants in the protest.

with her. Thus the protest march kept advancing. In the city, the residents empathized with them and they also aroused media attention.

At the Overseas Chinese Bureau of Xiamen which had shifted to Quanzhou city after the Japanese occupation, the representatives Zheng, Guo and Tan met the bureau head, Jiang Yaxing, and spoke of their sufferings after the disruption of communication with the Nanyang. Facing the *qiaojuan*'s demands in front of the journalists, Jiang agreed to help them to appeal to the county chief Xu. They succeeded in canceling the tax after the meeting with Xu.⁷⁶² This collective protest was the first time in the *qiaojuan* and *fankeshen*'s history where they organized collective resistance against ill-treatment of the headmen of the town and villages. They also staged a second protest when they faced another similar situation in 1945.⁷⁶³

In short, the relief and protection work could not be effectively implemented due to the financial needs of the government and the corruption of many officials at the grassroots level. Though many efforts had been made by the provincial government, the *fankeshen* (or *qiaojuan*) benefited little from the work and suffered immensely from ill-treatment by the bureaucracy. The failure of the implementation indicates that the provincial government had difficulties in giving benefits to the *qiaojuan* on the basis that they were victims of hardship. On some occasions, the *qiaojuan* did receive some support from headmen, officials and the media. The *qiaojuan*, especially the *fankeshen*, also used their "privileged" *qiaojuan* identity to support their request for tax and levy reduction. In order to survive, the *fankeshen* were forced to mobilize for political action and take part in various forms of resistance.

⁷⁶² Zhou, "Guanbi minfan, qiaojuan qingyuan".

⁷⁶³ For the second protest, see Zhou, "Guanbi minfan, qiaojuan qingyuan".

Implementation of the 1950 Marriage Law⁷⁶⁴

The 1950 Marriage Law was intended to change the prevailing marriage patterns and family and gender relations in “traditional” China. The first article of the law declared the abolition of the “feudal marriage system based on arbitrary and compulsory arrangements and the supremacy of man over women”, and established a “new democratic marriage system, which is based on the free choice of partners, on monogamy, on equal rights for both sexes, and the protection of the lawful interests of women and children”.⁷⁶⁵ This was the fundamental principle of the law.⁷⁶⁶ The law also asserted the rights of adults to divorce at will.⁷⁶⁷ Studies have argued that young women were encouraged and empowered by the law.⁷⁶⁸

However, the law did not directly address the issue of migrant marriages (*huaqiao hunyin* 华侨婚姻) although it had other articles pertaining to the

⁷⁶⁴ After the present author submitted this dissertation in August 2006 for examination, in September 2006, Qiao Suling published her article on the implementation of the law in *qiaoxiang* in the initial stage of the PRC, using archival documents in Guangdong Provincial Archives. Through providing a general picture of the implementation of the law in *qiaoxiang*, especially in Guangdong, Qiao argues that “the policy of safeguarding overseas Chinese’s interests conflicted with the marriage law, which established the doctrines of marriage freedom and equality of men and women. The government carefully explored the possible way[s] to benefit the overseas Chinese’ and their spouses’ interestes, in order to stabilize the new regime. However, it had to face some trouble owing to the limitation of diplomatic channels, the imperfection of the related laws and rules, and the political consideration regarding both the overseas Chinese and their spouses”. See Qiao Suling 乔素玲, “Liangnan de xuanze: jianguo chuqi de huaqiao hunyin zhengce” 两难的选择: 建国初期的华侨婚姻政策 (Difficult Choice: The Marriage Policy to Overseas Chinese in the Initial Stage of the People’s Republic), *Huaqiao huaren lishi yanjiu* 华侨华人历史研究 (Overseas Chinese History Studies) 3 (September 2006), p. 35. In some sense, the present discussion on the implementation of the law in Quanzhou shares similar findings with Qiao. Nevertheless, the present author traces the whole process of implementation of the law in Quanzhou, Fujian and reveals changing attitudes toward a range of factors which affected the implementation among different levels of officialdom. She also explores the impact of the law and its implementation on the left-behind wives. In other words, two discussions are important in understanding the implementation and situation of the law in emigrant communities in the earlier years of the PRC from different perspectives. For Qiao’s article, see Qiao, “Liangnan de xuanze: jianguo chuqi de huaqiao hunyin zhengce”, pp. 35-41.

⁷⁶⁵ Neil J. Diamant, *Revolutionizing the Family: Politics, Love, and Divorce in Urban and Rural China, 1949-1968* (Berkeley: University of California Press, c2000), p. 342.

⁷⁶⁶ For example, Hershatler, “State of the Field: Women in China’s Long Twentieth Century”, p. 999; Wu Changzhen 巫昌祯, ed., *Zhongguo hunyin fa* 中国婚姻法 (Marriage Laws in China) (Beijing: Zhongguo zhengfa daxue chubanshe, 1991).

⁷⁶⁷ Hershatler, “State of the Field”, p. 999.

⁷⁶⁸ *Ibid.* For the studies, see Yan Yunxiang, *Private Life under Socialism: Love, Intimacy, and Family Change in a Chinese Village, 1949-1999* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, c2003); Diamant, *Revolutionizing the Family*.

revolutionary army and minority nationalities. The *huaqiao* were considered as PRC citizens and subjected to the law. In reality, *huaqiao* marriages were termed as “feudal marriages” and the left-behind wives were found to have led oppressed and restricted lives within such marriages, although being a *fankeshen* also brought along privileges.⁷⁶⁹ The state issued and implemented the law in *qiaoxiang*, aiming to raise women’s status, to re-shape family relations and to contribute to nation building. Thus the left-behind wives were theoretically “liberated”.⁷⁷⁰ However, the *huaqiao* were one part of the Patriotic United Front of the Chinese People whom the PRC was trying to include. To protect *huaqiao*’s interests was the principle behind the Common Guidelines of the People’s Republic of China prior to the institution of the preliminary constitution of the PRC (*Gongtong gangling* 共同纲领) and the constitution, which sought to safeguard the political and economic needs of the country as well. The PRC government’s lack of consideration of the complexity of the migrant marriages caused problems in the implementation of the law in the *qiaoxiang* where migrant marriages prevailed. It was difficult for officials to resolve the already-present incongruities in the government’s policies towards the *fankeshen* and their *huaqiao* husbands in the implementation of the new marriage law, which would definitely affect the migrant couples’ relationships. Different levels of administration faced serious challenges in the implementation of the legislation, especially when they faced divorce requests from either the *huaqiao* husbands or *qiaojuan* women.

The implementation of the law in the *qiaoxiang* provides a window for us to look into the core of the politics of *qiaojuan* and differentiation in the conception of

⁷⁶⁹ “Dui Fujiansheng huaqiao diqu nannü hunyin jiating wenti de qingkuang yanjiu” 对福建省华侨地区男女婚姻家庭问题的情况研究 (Research on the Problems within Marriages and Families in Emigrant Communities in Fujian Province) [29 January 1953], in Fujiansheng dang’anguan: file 148-2-463.

⁷⁷⁰ On a discussion on the state’s aims on the law, see Diamant, *Revolutionizing the Family*.

huaqiao and *qiaojuan* in the PRC. Moreover, academic discussions on the 1950 Marriage Law have touched little on the issues surrounding the implementation of the law in emigrant communities and its impacts on migrant marriages, left-behind wives and overseas husbands.⁷⁷¹ For these reasons, this section focuses on the responses of different agents and institutions to the law and how the agencies and institutions involved dealt with divorce requests from migrant couples.

The 1950 Marriage Law was promulgated on 1 May 1950. Official investigations conducted in the *qiaoxiang* – villages and towns in Jinjiang and Nan’an counties, show that the law itself and its early implementation (May 1950 – March 1953) had profound effects on migrant marriages. The nature of *huaqiao* marriage and the circumstances faced by the *fankeshen* had been investigated and found that it was anathema to the principle of the new democratic marriage system. Most *huaqiao* marriages were arranged marriages where the women were forced upon and arranged with the marriage. A certain percentage of women in the migrant families depended on remittances and some of them seldom laboured. They were separated from their husbands, and they were restricted and placed under strict surveillance in daily life. Since the situation of wives in migrant marriages was obviously in opposition to the fundamental principle of the new marriage law, the wives were seen as needing liberation. With the marriage law, the investigating officials and the courts were willing to support the divorce requests of those women who suffered from the so-called “feudal marriages” if their husbands did not fulfill their responsibilities in terms of remitting money, providing letter communication and conducting return visits. A

⁷⁷¹ For a brief introduction on the implementation of the 1950s Marriage Law in emigrant communities, see Pei, “Huaqiao hunyin jiating xingtai chutan”, p. 44. Pei speculates that the number of divorce requests of *qiaojuan* possibly increased with the implementation of the law.

husband's constant lack of provision of financial support and remarriage overseas were considered sufficient reasons for divorce.⁷⁷²

The *fankeshen*'s responses to the law could be analyzed as being determined by their level of remittance income, age and personal considerations. For the *fankeshen*, be it those who received frequent correspondence and mail and those who did not, the older ones preferred to stay married while the younger ones tended to look for divorce or remarriage. Based on their responses, the *fankeshen* could be categorized into three groups: the first group who received remittances and correspondence frequently had three reactions, namely the young *fankeshen* who had emotional needs requested to remarry, especially those who were independent economically; the *fankeshen* who depended on remittances did not seek divorce or remarriage urgently because of their financial consideration; and the *fankeshen* who were satisfied with their living conditions, especially the older ones, did not want divorce. Those who received remittances and mail infrequently formed the second group of *fankeshen*. For this group, the older *fankeshen* were reluctant to alter their marital status while *some* of the younger ones hoped for remarriage. For the third group without any remittance, the older *fankeshen* did not want to change their marital relations. But there were more younger *fankeshen* in this group who wanted to remarry. However, they worried that they might not have a second chance to find a spouse or their parents would not agree to the request. They also found divorce disgraceful.⁷⁷³

The responses of the *fankeshen* showed that the new marriage law had led them to re-think their marital situation and seek solutions by turning to the new law that was drafted to assist them. In Nan'an County, the court received 43 divorce

⁷⁷² “Dui Fujiansheng huaqiao diqu nannü hunyin jiating wenti de qingkuang yanjiu”.

⁷⁷³ Ibid.

applications by February 1953, among which 39 cases were presented by the *fankeshen*.⁷⁷⁴ In the year of 1952, the Court of Jinjiang County approved 72 divorce requests put up by the *fankeshen*, taking little consideration of their overseas husbands' opinions.⁷⁷⁵ The justifications for most of the divorce requests were the loss of remittance income, the husbands' remarriages or the *fankeshen*'s extra-marital affairs.

In the *qiaoxiang*, the law generated fear among mothers-in-law and local cadres who refused the *fankeshen*'s divorce requests.⁷⁷⁶ These two groups became big barriers to the implementation of the law. The mothers-in-law attempted to resist the implementation of the new legislation due to the following concerns – that the daughters-in-law who were *fankeshen* would participate in social activities and commit adultery, causing the loss of remittance income; that daughters-in-law would request for divorce after they had learnt about the law; and that the property would be taken away by the daughters-in-law if they divorced.⁷⁷⁷ As mentioned in Chapter IV, mothers-in-law prevented daughters-in-law from attending social activities, including the publicity meeting for the marriage law. They feared that the law would motivate the *fankeshen* to leave their families. As the key connection to their sons overseas, the

⁷⁷⁴ “Shouli huaqiao hunyin qingkuang” 受理华侨婚姻情况 (Report on the Conducting of Migrant Marriage Cases) [1 March 1953], in Fujiansheng dang’anguan, file 148-2-463.

⁷⁷⁵ “Jinjiang xian huaqiao hunyin qingkuang ji chuli yijian (caogao)” 晋江县华侨婚姻情况及处理意见 (草稿) (The Situation of Migrant Marriage in Jinjiang County and Suggestions on the Handling of the Problems Concerning Marriage (draft)) [23 September 1953], in Fujiansheng dang’anguan, file 148-2-463. This caused many *huaqiao* husbands to complain and forced Fujian government to change the approach later.

⁷⁷⁶ The mothers-in-law and cadres in the other parts in China were affected similarly. Hershatter, “State of the Field”, pp. 999-1000. However, as mentioned in Chapter IV, some local cadres had affairs with left-behind wives; they were warned by higher officialdom. See for example, “Guanyu zai qiaoku guanche hunyinfa yundong de buchong zhishi (caogao)” 关于在侨区贯彻婚姻法运动的补充指示 (草稿) (The Supplementary Guideline on How to Conduct the Movement of Carrying out the Marriage Law in the Emigrant Communities (draft)) [before March 1953], in Fujiansheng dang’anguan: file 148-2-463.

⁷⁷⁷ “Jinjiangxian dishi’er qu Sanwu qiaoxiang guanche hunyinfa yundong de gongzuo qingkuang” 晋江县第十二区三吴侨乡贯彻婚姻法运动的工作情况 (The Process of the Movement for the Implementation of the Marriage Law in the 12th area of the *Qiaoxiang* of Sanwu Town, Jinjiang County) [April 1953], in Fujiansheng dang’anguan, file 148-2-463.

daughters-in-law provided a safeguard for the parents-in-law. To keep them within the families was to ensure the flow of remittances, especially when more and more *huaqiao* tended to have dual marriages in the early 1950s.

Local cadres constituted the other group who obstructed the implementation of the law. Many male cadres were previously peasants in villages and towns who had close relations to the *huaqiao*. They were supposedly the executors and enforcers of the law. However, until the intensified publicity of the law in March 1953, they did not quite understand the real nature and purpose of the law. An investigation in Huamei town in Nan'an and Sanwu town in Jinjiang County found that most of the cadres knew little about the law earlier.⁷⁷⁸ In Jinjiang, the law was labelled as the “law of divorce”, the “law of women” and the “law of the youth”. Some cadres especially considered that the freedom of divorce was not suitable for the *huaqiao* marriages.⁷⁷⁹ In Sanwu town, they resisted the new law. Those cadres who had relations to the *huaqiao* considered that the wives of *huaqiao* should not divorce even though the *fankeshen* had adequate justification.⁷⁸⁰

The difficulties in the implementation of the law show that there was little experience among the officials who handled with the divorce request in dealing with the matter of *huaqiao* marriages. The complexity of *huaqiao* marriages and the lack of a specific article on migrant marriages in the new law reduced the new policy's ability to satisfy the parties involved in the migrant marriages. According to the law, every divorce case should not go against the principle of reconciliation between the two parties involved. The order from the central government also maintained that the

⁷⁷⁸ “Huameixiang huaqiao hunyin qingkuang”; “Jinjiangxian dishi'er qu Sanwuxiang (qiaoxiang) guanchede hunyinfayundong zhong jige wenti de zongjie” and “Jinjiang xian dishi'er qu Sanwu qiaoxiang guanchede huuyinfayundong de gongzuo qingkuang”.

⁷⁷⁹ “Jinjiang xian dishi'er qu Sanwu qiaoxiang guanchede hunyinfayundong de gongzuo qingkuang”.

⁷⁸⁰ “Jinjiang xian dishi'er qu Sanwuxiang (qiaoxiang) guanchede hunyinfayundong zhong jige wenti de zongjie”.

courts should consider the *huaqiao*'s position when they processed the divorce cases. But the *huaqiao* lived in foreign countries and the PRC did not have diplomatic relations with countries such as the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand. Moreover, most divorce requests were from the *fankeshen* who lost communication with their husbands for several years or decades. Thus it was often impossible for the officials to bring the two parties together for reconciliation, to get proof of the *huaqiao*'s remarriages, or summon the *huaqiao* to testify during their wives' requests for divorce. At the same time, some *huaqiao* did not reply to the courts' correspondence. Some who had replied had their replies intercepted and blocked by their parents. In the first half of 1953, Jinjiang County court received 56 divorce requests, among which 51.7% were due to loss of communication, and the lack of knowledge of whether the husbands were dead or alive. And 12.4% of the *huaqiao* did not reply at all to the letters from the court or had their replies hidden by the in-law families. Some 26.7% of remarriages were proven and 8.9% were not able to proceed due to the lack of proof.⁷⁸¹ In Nan'an, there were 20 divorce cases among a total of 43 which could not be resolved because most of the *huaqiao* husbands did not respond to the letters from courts, or some replied but did not agree to the divorce even though they had remarried overseas.⁷⁸² It was difficult for the court to bring about reconciliation or mediation between the two parties given the geographical distance and lack of resource in another country. Consequently, the *fankeshen* had difficulties in getting a divorce even though some of them were brave enough to fight for it.

The lack of clear guidelines on the *huaqiao* marriages posed difficulties for the officials too. They were ordered by the central and provincial governments to protect the interest of the *huaqiao* to solidify and extend the Patriotic United Front with the

⁷⁸¹ "Jinjiang xian huaqiao hunyin qingkuang ji chuli yijian (caogao)"

⁷⁸² "Shouli huaqiao hunyin qingkuang".

Overseas Chinese.⁷⁸³ Yet, at the same time, the marriage law compelled them to protect the lawful interests of the women. As a result, the officials were at a loss as to whom they should protect more, and how to be consistent with the protection of both *huaqiao* and women by law. Officials were also often confused about the necessary conditions for the approval of a divorce request made by a *fankeshen*. For instance, officials were not sure how many years of prior separation were necessary for approval of a divorce request made by a *fankeshen*. If the divorce case was approved, it was possible that the state would be censured by the *huaqiao* for not taking care of their interests. If it was refused, it could indicate that the law failed to protect women's interests. Thus, the absence of articles on migrant marriages in the law became a problematic factor that prevented divorce cases from proceeding smoothly. It was a mission impossible for the officials. The law simply could not satisfy both parties.⁷⁸⁴

In February 1953, the Committee for Politics and Law of the Fujian People's Government (*Fujiansheng renmin zhengfu zhengzhi fanlü weiyuanhui* 福建省人民政府政治法律委员会) investigated and concluded that both parties could be satisfied if the court could implement the following measures:

- 1) Guarantee that widows be allowed to remarry freely;
- 2) Approve the wives' request to remarry if there was a long-term loss of communication which continued after 1949;

⁷⁸³ "Dui Fujiansheng huaqiao diqu nannü hunyin jiating wenti de qingkuang yanjiu".

⁷⁸⁴ "Fujian Jinjiang qu guanyu jinjiangxian huaqiao hunyin qingkuang baogao". In a forum on how to deal with the problems of migrant marriages hosted by the Association of Returned Overseas Chinese in Fuzhou, participants had a heated discussion on the conditions for a divorce. Remarriage, years of separation and adultery were suggested as the conditions. A similar forum was also hosted by Xiamen Women Federation in Xiamen. The participants also had different opinions on the criteria for the approval of a divorce request. "Fuzhou shi qiaolian jijienzi guanyu huaqiao hunyin wenti zuotanhui jilu" 福州市侨联积极分子关于华侨婚姻问题座谈会记录 (Records of the Active Members' Forum on Migrant Marriages in the Association of the Returned Overseas Chinese in Fuzhou) [4 May 1953], in *Fujiansheng dang'anguan*, file 148-2-463; "Dui Fujiansheng huaqiao diqu nan nü hun yin jiating wenti de qingkuang yanjiu".

- 3) Approve the wife's request to remarry if the *huaqiao* husband formally remarried overseas; and
- 4) Handle the divorce requests of the wives in accordance with the regulations on the problems of *huaqiao* marriages by the Department of Legal and Law (*sifa bu* 司法部).⁷⁸⁵ This would entail: a) solving the *huaqiao* marriage problem with reference to the spirit of Common Guidelines of the People's Republic of China prior to the institution of the preliminary constitution of the PRC and the Marriage Law; and b) solving the problem of the geographical separation of the *huaqiao* marriages, except those *huaqiao* who had cut off their communication with their home families or who lived in foreign countries with no diplomatic relations with the PRC, through the general approach, which was to seek the assistance of the *huaqiao*'s families, foreign legations, embassies, or Overseas Chinese affairs institutions regarding divorce requests. If the court failed to acquire the relevant testimonies before the deadline, the court can bring in a verdict despite the absence of the *huaqiao* party.⁷⁸⁶

Even after two years of the law's implementation, the "feudal marriage" based on arbitrary and compulsory arrangements prevailed as before.⁷⁸⁷ It was difficult for the *fankeshen* to request for divorce in the *qiaoxiang* when people laughed at them because they were no longer young enough for remarriage. They also needed to suppress the feeling of shame and to consider what life they could lead after the divorce. Thus, even for widows who were allowed to remarry freely by law, few

⁷⁸⁵ The present author did not find this decree. It seems that the approach of conducting of migrant marriages in Fujian province had been modified with the decree according to the reality of the migrant marriage in the province. This is reflected by the following clauses. Qiao Suling reveals that the regulations were established in 1951 by the department after it received the appeal of the People's Court of Fujian Province on how to handle the *huaqiao hunyin* which was issued in 1950. Qiao, "Liangnan de xuanze: jianguo chuqi de huaqiao hunyin zhengce", p. 37.

⁷⁸⁶ "Dui Fujiansheng huaqiao diqu nannü hunyin jiating wenti de qingkuang yanjiu".

⁷⁸⁷ "Huameixiang huaqiao hunyin qingkuang".

managed to divorce and remarry.⁷⁸⁸ The difficulties of getting away from an unhappy marriage in reality contributed to the general saying of the *fankeshen* that “the people’s government could solve any problem except for that of our marriage”.⁷⁸⁹

The *huaqiao* living abroad were not subjected to the publicity and education efforts to increase awareness about the law. They continued to remarry overseas. In the town of Huamei, Nan’an County, 30 more migrants remarried in the Philippines and reduced their remittances after 1949, which worried their wives at home.⁷⁹⁰ For the *huaqiao*, to divorce their wives meant the incurrence of a loss because wives were considered as part of their personal property. As discussed in the preceding chapters, wives contributed to the migrant families greatly in terms of taking care of the parents-in-law, families and property in China. Furthermore, the wives could demand property from the in-law families if they had divorced legally. Thus for the *huaqiao*, to divorce was not only a loss of a family member, but also a loss of property. The conflict between the interests of the *huaqiao* and the law forced the *huaqiao* to take measures in order to prevent their wives from divorcing them. Many *huaqiao* thus prohibited their wives from participating in social activities and threatened to sever remittances if they did so.⁷⁹¹

Moreover, the danger of losses increased with the *huaqiao*’s political environment overseas since the end of the Second World War, as mentioned earlier. The connection of the Chinese with China was a sensitive matter for the host nations which feared Communist influence. Moreover, the *huaqiao* in the Philippines, Malaya

⁷⁸⁸ “Dui Fujiansheng huaqiao diqu nannü hunyin jiating wenti de qingkuang yanjiu”.

⁷⁸⁹ “Jinjiang xian huaqiao hunyin qingkuang ji chuli yijian (caogao)”.

⁷⁹⁰ “Huamei xiang huaqiao hunyin qingkuang”.

⁷⁹¹ For example, “Fujiansheng huaqiao shiwu weiyuanhui Fujiansheng jiayuting Zhongguo renmin yinhang Fujiansheng fenheng guanyu dali lingdao zuohao qiaoxin huiwen gongzuo, xiang guowai huaqiao jinxin guanyu nongye hezuohua yundong de zhengque xuanchuan lianhe zhishi”, p. 16.

and Thailand would lose their entry rights if they returned to China.⁷⁹² As a result, the issue of the marriage law in this period added pressure and fear upon them. It was hard for most *huaqiao* to accept the law. Many divorced *huaqiao* stopped sending remittances and even cut off their connection with China, thus reducing remittance income.⁷⁹³ The law in this sense hurt the relationship between *huaqiao* and Mainland China.

The complaints from the *huaqiao* concerning the law and the increasing number of divorces received much concern from the provincial and the central governments. In March 1953, one could identify a new conceptualization of the law in the government's publicity efforts. In effect, the government had reconsidered the relations among the state, the *huaqiao* and their wives, shifting the law's emphasis to offer more protection for the *huaqiao*, and to modify the solutions to the problem of *huaqiao* marriages.⁷⁹⁴

A new approach to the implementation of the marriage law in the *qiaoxiang* had been apparent before the intensified publicity of the law which occurred in March 1953, when the Fujian provincial government issued a supplementary guideline to further publicize the law. This new guideline emphasized the need to protect *huaqiao* marriages. The provincial guideline set the basic principle for solving the problem of *huaqiao* marriages – “not only should it take care of the interests of *qiaojuan* women,

⁷⁹² “Zhongyang renmin zhengfu guanyu chuli huaqiao hunyin jiufen wenti de zhishi” 中央人民政府关于处理华侨婚姻纠纷问题的指示 (The Guideline from the Central Government on How to Deal with the Dissension and Problems of Migrant Marriages) [8 April 1954]”, in *Fujiansheng dang'anguan*: file 148-2-494; Wen, ed., *Er zhan hou DongnanYa Huaqiao Huaren shi*.

⁷⁹³ Before the intensified publicity of the law, the Hong Kong Branch of the People's Bank of China secretly sent a report back to China and warned that the approval of divorce requests due to long-term separation and the inadvertent cut-off of remittances, as well as any investigation on remarriage of *huaqiao* before 1949 would cause the blight on the political lives of the large numbers of middle-lower-class *huaqiao* and affect the flow of the remittances negatively. “Guanyu qiaojuan qu ji haiwai ruhe xuanchuan xin hunyinfafa wenti” 关于侨眷区及海外如何宣传新婚姻法问题 (On the Problems of How to Publicize the New Marriage Law in the Emigrant Communities and Overseas Territories) [about May 1953], in *Fujiansheng dang'anguan*: file 148-2-463.

⁷⁹⁴ See, for example, “Fujian Jinjiang qu guanyu Jinjiang xian huaqiao hunyin qingkuang baogao”.

it should also take care of the special situation of the *huaqiao*".⁷⁹⁵ In the publicity of the marriage law in the Fujian *qiaoxiang* in March 1953, the "feudal marriage" practice of arbitrary and compulsory arrangements and the interference in the freedom of widows to remarry were prohibited, and the free choice of partners among singles was promoted and protected. At the same time, the propaganda effort was careful not to emphasize too much on the suffering of the wives and the irresponsibility of *huaqiao*. The dismal situation of separatedness was attributed to the historical socio-economic conditions of "old China and *qiaoxiang*" and the "exploitation" of the "imperialists". The *huaqiao* were not criticized too much for their inability to discharge their responsibilities as husbands. In contrast, the wives were called upon to be patriotic and the sufferings of the *qiaojuan* were blamed on the "imperialists" and the Jiang "bandits" in Taiwan. The migration and long-term settlement overseas of the *huaqiao* were seen as the result of the exploitation by the feudal landlords, the "Jiang bandits" and the "imperialist invasion", which also caused the disruption in the flow of remittances and hindered the return of the *huaqiao*. For the *fankeshen*, as wives, they were taught that they should understand the difficulties and challenges faced by their husbands overseas. The women were also educated to participate in productive labour, study, do housework well, maintain a harmonious family, have good relations with family members overseas and strive for more remittances and return visits.⁷⁹⁶

The awareness efforts were directly carried out in Sanwu, Jinjiang, which boasted of a high number of migrants in the Philippines. Through the one-month long publicity campaign in Sanwu town, the tensions between the *fankeshen* and the resistant groups including mothers-in-law, *huaqiao* and cadres were reported as having been reduced. The Work Team observed that the wives seemed to be less

⁷⁹⁵ "Guanyu zai qiaoqu guanche hunyinfa yundong de buchong zhishi (caogao)".

⁷⁹⁶ Ibid.

stressful than before, and that of the 148 *fankeshen* in the town with 144 husbands living abroad, among whom 33 husbands remarried, only one *fankeshen* requested for divorce, due to the second marriage of her husband, the lack of remittances and her survival problems. In reality, some *fankeshen* who met the conditions for divorce delineated by the provincial government did not initiate any divorce proceedings because of the earlier discussed socio-political pressures they faced. Thus the Work Team fallaciously concluded that the *qiaoxiang* was not seriously affected by the problem of divorce.⁷⁹⁷

It was obvious that after March 1953, the *fankeshen* were not encouraged to seek divorces. They were called upon to forgive their husbands and be liberated from economic dependence through the solution of participating in labour.⁷⁹⁸ At the same time, the government also gradually set clearer rules for approving divorce cases. The remarriage of husbands remained as a standard criterion for approval of divorce requests made by the *fankeshen*. Considering the possibilities of the discontinuation of communication between the *huaqiao* and the *fankeshen* after years of separation, the divorce cases from the *fankeshen* would be approved if the lack of contact lasted for more than three years. For those divorce requests made by the *fankeshen* whose overseas husbands did not remarry and kept up communication, the county and district governments were required to persuade the wives not to divorce. If their persuasion failed, the government was to obtain the *huaqiao* husbands' agreement. In

⁷⁹⁷ “Jinjiangxian dishi'er qu Sanwuxiang (qiaoxiang) guanche hunyinfā yundong zhong jige wenti de zongjie”; “Jinjiangxian dishi'er qu Sanwu qiaoxiang guanche huoyinfā yundong de gongzuo qingkuang”; “Qiaoxiang guanche hunyinfā gongzuo zu shitian gongzuo baogao” 侨乡贯彻婚姻法工作组十天工作报告 (Report from the Work Team of the the Implementation of Marriage Law in Emigrant Communities on its Ten-day's Work) [12 April 1953], in Fujiansheng dang'anguan: file 148-2-463.

⁷⁹⁸ The basis of the Marxist position on women's emancipation was set out by Engels in these words: “The emancipation of women will only be possible when women can take part in production on a large, social scale, and domestic work no longer claims anything but an insignificant part of her time”; F. Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, p. 221, cited in Delia Davin, *Women-Work: Women and the party in Revolutionary China* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), p. 191.

addition, if their wives were proven to have committed adultery, the *huaqiao* were to be granted their divorce requests.⁷⁹⁹

In April 1954, the Ministry of Government Affairs (*Zhengwu yuan* 政务院) issued the central guidelines on *huaqiao* marriages. Compared with the earlier guidelines issued by the Fujian provincial government, the central government was now not so concerned about protecting the two parties in a divorce case than about its emphasis on the maintenance of the marital relationship. The guidelines saw the maintenance of the family unit and the spousal relationship as a primary need for most *huaqiao* and that the family and the spousal relationship provided the most important link between the *huaqiao* and their homeland. The central principle of handling a *huaqiao* marriage was “taking care of the *huaqiao* and the *qiaojuan* women properly at the same time”.⁸⁰⁰

Unlike the period before March 1953 when there was more consideration of the *fankeshen*'s suffering, the years after March 1953 headed in the opposite direction. The guidelines reduced the so-called “imprudently approved divorce”.⁸⁰¹ In Hui'an County, 32 cases out of 51 divorce cases from the *fankeshen* were dismissed due to the court's persuasion and mediation from February 1955 to June 1956. In Jinjiang and Fuqing counties in the year of 1954, 38 out of 169 divorce cases had the same results. The *huaqiao* were generally reported that they satisfied with the implementation, which had a significant effort on soliciting the *huaqiao* support for the United Patriotic Front and enticing them into sending remittances regularly.⁸⁰²

⁷⁹⁹ “Guanyu zai qiaoqu guanche hunyinfa yundong de buchong zhishi (caogao)”.

⁸⁰⁰ “Zhongyang renmin zhengfu guanyu chuli huaqiao hunyin jiufen wenti de zhishi”.

⁸⁰¹ “Guanyu chuli huaqiao hunyin anjian de jidian yijian” 关于处理华侨婚姻案件的几点意见 (Several Suggestions on How to Conduct the Cases of Migrant marriages) [25 September 1956], in Fujiansheng dang'anguan, file 148-2-685.

⁸⁰² Ibid.

However, there were still many problems with the implementation of the Marriage Law. Some divorce cases were postponed for two or three years because the court received no replies to its letters to the *huaqiao* involved. At the same time, it was difficult for the local authorities to handle the *huaqiao* marriage problems. Sometimes the divorce request was rejected in favour of the *huaqiao*, ignoring the legitimate demands of the women; sometimes it was approved because of the suffering of women with little consideration for the *huaqiao*. Moreover, in the process of conducting divorce cases, different institutions in the province, such as the Provincial Supreme Court, local courts and the Office of Overseas Chinese Affairs at different levels, sometimes conflicted with one another.⁸⁰³ Disagreement may also have existed between the central and the provincial governments. For instance, the Fujian Provincial Supreme Court argued that divorce requests should be approved in the event that the *huaqiao* did not remit money to support the family for a long time, did not send any word for more than two years and without any resolution from the court's investigation in one year. These parameters were not demonstrated in the central government's decrees and guidelines, and it was possible that they were specifically only for Fujian.⁸⁰⁴ This indicates the inconsistent implementation of the marriage law by different courts. It also indicates the resistance of the state itself to the law when it encountered the needs of *huaqiao* support. The *fankeshen* as *qiaojuan* were considered inferior in status to the *huaqiao*, and they were forced to play their state-sanctioned roles within the families and the marriages.

The implementation of the 1950 Marriage Law until 1958 could have inevitably affected the stability of *huaqiao* marriages with its new concept of gender

⁸⁰³ “Guanyu chuli huaqiao hunyin wenti de jidian yijian”; “Geji fayuan zai chuli huaqiao hunyin anjian cunzai de yixie wenti” 各级法院在处理华侨婚姻案件存在的一些问题 (Some Problems Encountered in Dealing with the Cases of Migrant Marriages of the Courts at Different Levels) [1956], in *Fujiansheng dang'anguan*: file 148-2-685.

⁸⁰⁴ “Guanyu chuli huaqiao anjian de jidian yijian”.

equality, were it not for the many modifications being adopted resulting from the complexity of *huaqiao* marriages and the needs of the state in these years of its founding. Scholars who study the law have questioned the assertions that the state had liberated women and suggested that “the state was inconsistent in its efforts and that society was full of resisters, particularly local cadres and mothers-in-law”.⁸⁰⁵ The present discussion of the Marriage Law in Quanzhou is consistent with the above finding. Furthermore, the above proposition is in line with what Neil J. Diamant has found in his research on the 1950 Marriage Law and its impact on the Chinese family. Diamant says that, in dealing with the Marriage Law, “even when the central directives were clear, officials, many of whom could not even read them and had little time to work with them, interpreted them in different ways, ensuring that their implementation would be distorted in many ways”.⁸⁰⁶ Thus he suggests adopting “a disaggregated, sociological perspective on the state”, rather than speaking of the “party” and “state” as unitary, monolithic entities. This “allows us to appreciate just how politics and administration during the Maoist years ... were characterized by outright bumbling, mismanagement, and improvisation”.⁸⁰⁷ The present study of the Marriage Law in the emigrant communities strengthens Diamant’s suggestion on the more complex conceptualization of the state. It also suggests that in the Maoist years, the high officialdom within the state institutions shared a common direction which was to implement the law rather than to stop it, conducting all sorts of strategies to cope with the conflicts that arose, although the efforts were often for the sake of the

⁸⁰⁵ Hershatter, “State of the Field”, p. 1000. For the studies which hold the view, see Kay Ann Johnson, *Women, the Family, and Peasant Revolution in China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983); Judith Stacey, *Patriarchy and Socialist Revolution in China* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983); Margery Wolf, *Revolution Postponed: Women in Contemporary China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985). For the views of state as “official in action” and the party-state as a “structure” in other studies on the state, but not on Marriage Law, see Diamant, *Revolutionizing the Family*, pp. 316, 400, notes 4 and 5.

⁸⁰⁶ Diamant, *Revolutionizing the Family*, p. 316.

⁸⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 316-317.

state rather than the masses, and a certain percentage of officials at lower levels could obstruct the implementation at times for various reasons.

This discussion is, therefore, consistent with Diamant's argument that the law had a variety of outcomes for different areas and people that "the Marriage Law meant different things, and had different sorts of implications, for a variety of people in China; the results of Marriage Law clearly were a mixed bag".⁸⁰⁸ However, it could not agree to Diamant's finding that the rural women and high officials were those best able to take advantage of the law.⁸⁰⁹ It is obvious that not all the rural women benefited from the law. Although some *fankeshen* succeeded in gaining their rights in its implementation under some circumstances, or through their fight for such privileges, others would mostly likely have been unable to discard their status as migrants' wives. On the whole, the *fankeshen* had to deal with the resistance of their in-laws, local cadres and the state which had ironically prevented the full implementation of the law in the emigrant communities. This study further demonstrates that the law sought to emancipate women, but the degree of liberation was limited. The outcome of the policy implementation was determined by what the state considered to be its major concerns.

To summarize, this chapter has shown that the left-behinds, including the *fankeshen*, were closely involved in and affected by politics, mediated through their overseas relatives. The intricate relationship had brought about new factors in the left-behinds' lives and the formulation of relevant policies by the central, the provincial and the county governments. This three-tiered relationship further indicates that overseas migration had inevitably caused the need for, and further influenced

⁸⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 326.

⁸⁰⁹ Ibid.

government management and execution of domestic and external Overseas Chinese policies at three levels.

The implementation of the protection and relief policies and the 1950 Marriage Law in Quanzhou had shown the gaps between the central government, provincial and county governments during the process of implementation. Usually, they were consistent with one another. At times, the provincial government made more efforts to handle the matters, reflecting their better knowledge of local conditions and their concern over local or self-interests. However, to what extent that a policy was fully implemented depended on the state's main interests.

Under such circumstances, the *fankeshen* had been greatly affected in every aspect of their lives. Most of the time, their position as women had been ignored in the male-dominated politics. However, being wives of migrants, they undoubtedly played a crucial role as the connection between the state and the overseas migrants. On the other hand, the *fankeshen* had to conform to laws and policies politically imposed on them. Even when the policy was intended for their benefit, they could not benefit from it if they did not actively pursue its application. Some of them indeed used the policy to protect the interests of their families and seek new opportunities with their overseas connection.

Chapter VII

Conclusion: Engendering Chinese Migration History

The current scholarship on the history of Chinese migration often focuses on the Chinese Diaspora and their connections and contributions to their hometowns from socio-economic and political perspectives. Little attention has been given to the left-behind wives — part of the *qiaojuan* who had close connection to migration because of their spousal relationship with the migrants. Moreover, one often encounters the stereotyping that the women were dependent on the migrants who were seen as the “heroes” who provided wealth and improved the social status of their home families. Consequently, the vital role played by these women was not awarded due recognition in those works.

This dissertation approaches Chinese migration history with the understanding that Chinese left-behind wives were active agents of their own history, whose lives were affected by their husbands’ transnational migration and who took steps to deal with the special circumstances generated by migration. It shows that the left-behind wives of the Nanyang migrants were important participants in, and contributors to, Chinese migration history. At the same time, migration was an important variable in the women’s lives, complicated by the changing environment of a turbulent China, Southeast Asia and the wider world, especially during the Pacific War and the period shortly after. The migration of the husbands had inevitably affected the lives of their left-behind wives and the impact was multi-layered and complex. During the migration process, the women responded to their husbands’ migration by developing their autonomy, independence, knowledge and skills.

In the realm of marriage, the women's marital lives were strongly affected by the long distance separation, external factors such as political, social and economic changes in both China and Southeast Asia, as well as the wider world, and internal factors, such as their migrant husbands' economic situation, and remarriages, the flow of remittances and transnational communication as well as their physical and emotional needs. A marriage for example, could easily be fragmented by any or a combination of those factors. Nevertheless, while many marriages and families were torn apart by migration, a surprising number of marriages and families survived the hardships and frustrations through joint efforts of the couples.

The women had many ways of dealing with the physical separation. Many women seemingly accepted their fate and lived a life which was not different from that of widows even though their husbands were alive. They found consolation in the receipt of remittances and letters from their husbands and possibly adopted sons, while trying to escape their loneliness through leisure and religious rituals, seeking comfort and care from their natal families, or having an affair with another man. Due to the difficulties faced by them especially during the years after the outbreak of the Pacific War, some women chose to end their painful marriages. The experiences of these women testify that migration was a variable in their lives.

Migration also re-shaped gender roles in China, affecting the Chinese women in complex ways. Traditional gender roles profoundly affected the choice of who migrated and who remained at home, contributing to gender difference within migration, with the majority of migrants from China being men. Gender roles were one of the important reasons why the women were left-behind. However, during the migration process, the existing gender roles and relationships between husband and

wife had been re-constructed and modified according to the needs of migration and the new challenges which the couples faced.

With migration occurring generation after generation, gender roles and relationships within the household changed greatly. Successful male migrants supported the livelihood of their families, while their wives maintained the family unit and continued the family line. A certain percentage of the women relied on remittances and developed financial dependency on men, while others had to depend on themselves for survival and lived an even harder life due to the loss of their husbands as the primary source of manpower. Even women who received substantial remittances could no longer depend on overseas financial support when they needed to cope with the severance of remittances during either times of peace or of war, not to say those poorer women who received insufficient or little remittances, and had to bear their burden as breadwinners by participating in a variety of economic activities. Consequently, both rich and poor women became actively involved in wider social and economic spaces and were more independent than they were prior to their husbands' migration. They played significant roles in the domestic sphere by maintaining the families, bringing up their children, caring for parents-in-law and contributing to the socio-economic development of their hometowns. Taking on these roles made it possible for their husbands to stay overseas to make their fortunes. This also contributed to the fulfilment of the objectives of migration as a family strategy. Indeed, the women possessed their independent and indispensable role in the history of Chinese international migration and displayed their adamancy and moral merits. They were not insignificant participants and dependants of their husbands in migration processes and their roles should not be underestimated in the history of Chinese migration.

Furthermore, the changing gender roles and relationship between the left-behind wife and her husband who migrated, and detailed discussions on the internal dynamics of the relationship between the *fankeshen* and other family members in the migrant family provide new observations on Chinese migrant families. Firstly, wife-husband relationships in the migration process were multifaceted. It is obvious that the left-behind wife and her husband overseas did not mutually support each other all the time. The wife often made greater contributions to maintain the family. In addition, it happened at times that the home family was maintained with the efforts of the wife even long after the male migrant had abandoned it or stopped sending remittances. Secondly, within the migrant family, the relationships between the left-behind wife and other family members were multifaceted and flexible in the migration process. Mothers-in-law and siblings-in-law played multiple roles in the *fankeshen*'s life. They could be the beneficiary of the *fankeshen*'s care and socio-economic activities or the supervisor of her everyday life, and especially her chastity. Thirdly, although transnational flows played important roles in maintaining a connection between the migrant and his home family, the connection was often fragmented. Thus the transnational connection could hardly fulfill its function all the time. One needs to consider the converse situation of the impact of migration on the family when the migrant could not contact with his home family. In short, the migrant family can hardly seem as a steady unit over different time periods and contexts. It should be studied with great care when one examines it as a subject in the transnational migration.

With respect to women's political lives, the migration had brought about an intricate relationship between migration, left-behind wives and politics. Due to the increasing contribution of the migrants (namely the Overseas Chinese) in the nation-

building of China, the women were caught in the web of politics vis-à-vis the state at both the local and central levels during the ROC and PRC periods because of their transnational connections. Being wives of the *huaqiao*, the *fankeshen* were also correspondingly raised in status as part of the *qiaojuan*, a category in the policy of the state. A *qiaojuan* discourse was created gradually when the state and local governments, such as the Fujian provincial government, sought to use the resources of the Overseas Chinese through the government control over, and care for the *qiaojuan*. The state and local governments formulated a series of Overseas Chinese policies towards the *qiaojuan* during different periods according to the different political, economic and social needs of the country or the locality. As a result, the *fankeshen* who received little attention from the gender-blind state and the local governments were now moved into the corridor of politics by the state and the local governments and attained a different position in the complex political environments in the twentieth century because of the migration of their husbands.

Being the *qiaojuan*, the women were provided with protection and relief, especially from the Fujian provincial government, when they suffered from the severance of remittances and loss of communication with their husbands during the Pacific War. However, the women had an inferior status compared to the *huaqiao* before the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution. Their interests were protected only when they coincided with the interests of the Overseas Chinese and the state. As a result, only a small number of the *fankeshen* benefited from the 1950 Marriage Law which had benefited generally other rural women. The continuous and deliberate state intervention in a whole range of private concerns was seemingly peculiar to China.

This shift in their standing in politics in turn changed their lives dramatically, especially after the founding of the PRC. They had to face the brunt of changing

policies directly and were involved in a series of socio-political and economic movements, which changed the way they lived. However, the women were not passive and inactive in their multi-faceted interactions with the political processes. Some of them sought aid from their husbands overseas, who used their status to protect the interests of their families in China. At the same time, with the help of their husbands or the various policies which were issued by the state to protect or benefit the *qiaojuan*, many women transcended the boundaries of territory and society by migrating to Hong Kong or the host countries of their husbands. They sought to find new opportunities, escape the oppression of politics and poverty and earn money for their families. This indicates that migration had largely changed the socio-political lives of ordinary women. It also demonstrates that, facing different political environments, the women also showed their wisdom and adopted workable strategies to defend their interests and those of their families.

Barbara B Brown asserts that women's social and economic position became less secure and more isolated in the migration process, because their ties to the migrant men became more tenuous. In the case of the *fankeshen*, their ties with their husbands on the other side of the South China Sea also became more and more tenuous in the migration process, especially during the war years and after. The migration of their husbands did not necessarily bring about wealth and increased social status for them. In fact, the migration forced them to suffer much more than women in non-migrant families in a similar environment. The *fankeshen* had to face a lot of problems caused by migration: unstable marriages, lonely everyday lives, the fluctuation in, or lack of, remittance support, the difficulties arising from the lack of able-bodied men in productive spheres and family affairs, the stress from the impact of government policies at different levels and even at the risk of suffering the fate of

being abandoned because of a variety of reasons. The experiences of many *fankeshen* were similar to that of the left-behind women in contemporary Botswana. They were isolated and had to feed themselves and their children with little resources during the absence of their husbands.

However, the *fankeshen* from different remittance-income groups generally managed the separation and survival problems well. Moreover, the *fankeshen* took the opportunities which were created by migration and empowered themselves when they struggled for survival and a better future, gaining autonomy and independence through their efforts. In other words, the women were active and autonomous agents and not inactive, dependent and passive.

Consequently, the *fankeshen* were among the outstanding groups of Chinese women.⁸¹⁰ Firstly, as discussed, they were active participants in the migration process of their husbands, who contributed greatly to the migration. In addition, during the migration process, they provided linkages between the migrants overseas and their hometowns. They were the ones whom the migrants had the responsibility to send remittances to, to care for and to love if they did remember them. It was well known that remittances played various roles in the societal building of Quanzhou and contributed greatly to the national economy of China. Secondly, the *fankeshen* contributed to their hometowns through their efforts in maintaining their families and building better hometowns. For example, the *fankeshen* who migrated to Hong Kong between the 1950s and the 1970s contributed to the development of both Quanzhou

⁸¹⁰ *Fankeshen's* history resonates with that of other Chinese women in some other research studies and Chinese women's autobiographies. See for example, Tamara Jacka, *Women's Work in Rural China: Change and Continuity in An Era of Reform* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Li Yu-ning, ed., *Chinese Women through Chinese Eyes*, (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, c1992); Ning Lao T'ai-t'ai, *A Daughter of Han*; Wolf, *Women and the Family in Rural Taiwan*. This suggests that Chinese women suffered from a lot of pain, anxiety, and loss in the unfavorable environments of a patriarchal society. However, they responded positively to the unfavorable environments with their wisdom and strategies, adjusting themselves to survival or a better life.

and Hong Kong. Many of them worked as labour workers during the industrializing process of Hong Kong. While they worked and saved money, supporting a few dependants who accompanied them to Hong Kong, they also sent remittances to their family members and relatives in Quanzhou for their living expenses and for building houses and public works. In other words, like the male migrants, they contributed greatly to their families, Quanzhou society and the larger greater China economy.

However, migration did not necessarily emancipate the women, despite the new societal roles they gained. In contrast, they had sacrificed their personal happiness for that of their families', although sometimes they found meaning in their efforts made for their families and gained respect from family members and their fellow villagers or townsfolk. Thus migration also strengthened the concept and behaviour of Chinese familism. Women were still subordinate to men in general, although they had more authority within the family in the passage of time. These various experiences of the *fankeshen* in the international migration process indicate the complexity of the experiences of the left-behind wives and the complex history of Chinese women.

Overall, besides engendering Chinese migration history, this study adds a history of the left-behind wives to the larger study of Chinese women/gender studies through illustrating the experiences of left-behind wives who sought autonomy and even achieved a degree of empowerment. As demonstrated in this study, the gendered approach allows one to look into the impact of migration on women specifically and the migration history through women's lenses. This approach broadens the historical context, complicates the picture of migration and offers possibilities of re-conceptualizing the history of Chinese migration.

Moreover, the history of the left-behind wives should be studied in their broad context. The history of the *fankeshen* shows that their lives were affected by migration, as well as other cultural, socio-economic and political factors in China, Southeast Asia and the wider world. They were their own agents, actively getting involved in the migration process and complicating the environment around them. Consequently, their experiences were a result of the unpredictable interactions among the various factors, coupling with the strong impact of their husbands' migration. Clearly, the history of the left-behind wives is never an appendix to the male-dominated migration history, but as a subject of study in its own right and an integral part of the history of women, history of migration and history of China.

Glossary

- Aiguo tongyi zhanxian* 爱国统一战线
 Anhai 安海
anhai dan 安海担
 Anping 安平
 Anxi 安溪
bao-jia 保甲
Baoshang ju 保商局
Beiyang zhengfu 北洋政府
Beiyang zhengfu qiaogong shiwuju 北洋政府侨工事务局
Beiyang zhengfu qiaogong hetong gangyao 北洋政府侨工合同纲要
 Bingzhou 炳洲
bushou fudao 不守妇道
 Cai Jingsi 蔡景思
 Caiqian 蔡前
 Cai Qiongxia 蔡琼霞
 Cai Zhoufu 蔡周夫
 Cai Wupei 蔡乌佩
 Cendou 岑兜
 Chen Yi 陈仪
 Chen Yongzai 陈永栽
 Chen Zhongjin 陈仲瑾
Chenxi bao 晨曦报
 Chidian 池店
 Chongqing 重庆
Dacheng ribao 大成日报
daishu 代书
 Daitou 埭头
daixi 带戏
 Dalun 大仑
dan 担
daqian 搭钱
 Datong 大同
 Daxiamei 大下美
 Dehua 德化
 Dongbei 东北
Dongnan shibao 东南时报
 Dongshi 东石
dongyang hanglu 东洋航路
duli jingying zhe 独立经营者
duli laodongzhe 独立劳动者
fan 番
fanbang 番邦

fanke 番客
fanke niang 番客娘
fankeshen 番客婶
fanqian 番钱
fanpo 番婆
fanyin 番银
fangpu shui 房铺税
 Fashi 法石
 Fengze 丰泽
Fujian funü 福建妇女
 Fuqing 福清
Funü gongming 妇女共鸣
Fujian Jinan Ju 福建暨南局
Fujian qiaowu gongzuo tongxun 福建侨务工作通讯
Fujian qiaoxiangbao 福建侨乡报
Fujian quansheng qiaogongju 福建全省侨工局
Fujian ribao 福建日报
Fujian yu Huaqiao 福建与华侨
Fujian xinwen 福建新闻
Fujiansheng gongye shengchan hezuoshe 福建省工业生产合作社
Fujiansheng guiqiao chanxiao hezuoshe 福建省归侨产销合作社
Fujiansheng jinji jiuqiao weiyuanhui 福建省紧急救侨委员会
Fujiansheng qiaomin jinji jiuji weiyuanhui 福建省侨民紧急救济委员会
Fujiansheng qiaowu bangongshi cujin weiyuanhui 福建省侨务办公室促进委员会
Fujiansheng qiaowu weiyuanhui 福建省侨务委员会
Fujiansheng renmin zhengfu zhengzhi fanlü weiyuanhui 福建省人民政府政治法律委员会
fumu zhi ming, meizhuo zhi yan 父母之命, 媒灼之言
 Fuxing 复兴
 Fuzhou 福州
gaoji zhiyuan 高级职员
gang'ao tongbao 港澳同胞
 Gangqian 港前
 Gongren 工人
gongshangye jia 工商业家
Gongtong gangling 共同纲领
 Guanshan 观山
guanyu huaqiao guiqiao guiguo huaqiao xuesheng shenfen jieshi 关于华侨、归侨、
 归国华侨学生身份解释
guiqiao 归侨
 Guo Chuniang 郭出娘
guonei jiashu 国内家属
 Guanghua 光华
guanxi 关系

Guo Yin 郭银
 Gushao ta 姑嫂塔
 guyi tan 故衣摊
 Haicheng 海澄
 haiwai guanxi 海外关系
 Hongku 洪窟
 Hongzhuan 红专
 huali 华里
 Huamei 华美
 huaqiao 华侨
 huaqiao dizhu 华侨地主
 huaqiao gongshang hu 华侨工商业户
 huaqiao hunyin 华侨婚姻
 huaqiao juanshu 华侨眷属
 huaqiao juanshu funü 华侨眷属妇女
 huaren 华人
 huaqiao shen 华侨婶
 Huang Chengyuan 黄澄渊
 Huang Xue'e 黄雪娥
 Huang Yizhu 黄奕住
 Huang Zhezhen 黄哲真
 Hui'an 惠安
 Huoshan 后山
 Ji fanying 寄番银
 jiaosheng guanyang cun 娇生惯养村
 Jiaji 夹济
 Jianhua 建华
 jiajuan 家眷
 Jiang Yaxing 江亚醒
 jiashu 家属
 jia ji sui ji, jia gou sui gou 嫁鸡随鸡 嫁狗随狗
 jia qiao chi qiao 嫁侨吃侨
 Jiang Shuduan 蒋淑端
 jiao fanpo 交番婆
 jin 斤
 Jinban 锦板
 Jinji jiuji banfa dagang 紧急救济办法大纲
 Jinjiang 晋江
 Jinjiang zhenjihui 晋江振济会
 Jinjiang zhuanshu qiaowuke 晋江专署侨务科
 Jinjing 金井
 Jinmen 金门
 Jinrong ribao 金融日报
 Jintao 金淘

Jinrong ribao 金融日报
jinyi yexing 锦衣夜行
juankuan 捐款
 Kangle 康乐
 Kengkou 坑头
laodong mofan 劳动模范
 Liankeng 莲坑
 Liantang 莲塘
 Licheng 鲤城
 Licuo 里厝
 Lin Guipan 林贵攀
 Lin Juzhen 林居真
 Lin Qingshan 林青山
 Lin Xianniang 林先娘
 Liu Jianxu 刘建绪
 Longhai 龙海
 Longhu 龙湖
 Longxi 龙溪
 Luojiang 洛江
 Luoyang 洛阳
Lusongqian 吕宋钱
lǚsong bo, wu yiqian ye you babai 吕宋伯, 无一千也有八百
 Lü Weisheng 吕渭生
mai guyi 卖故衣
maizidianfuqian 卖子典夫钱
mei liangxin de ren 没良心的人
 Maoxia 茂霞
 Matou 码头
mian huanyi shui 免缓役税
minnan po 闽南婆
Minqiao 闽侨
Minsheng bao 民声报
minxin ju 民信局
Minzheng yuekan 闽政月刊
 mu 亩
 Nan'an 南安
 Nancheng 南埕
Nanfang ribao 南方日报
Nanguang ribao 南光日报
 Nanshagang 南沙岗
 Neikeng 内坑
Neiwubu qiaowuju baohu qiaomin zhuanzhang 内务部侨务局保护侨民专章
 Niangjia 娘家
 Panjing 潘径

pangxi qinshu 旁系亲属
 Pengtian 彭田
 Putian 莆田
 Putouxin 埔头心
 Qiangang 前港
qiaobao 侨胞
qiaobao guonei zhi jiashu 侨胞国内之家属
qiaofu 侨妇
qiaohuiqian 侨汇钱
qiaojuan 侨眷
qiaojuan funü 侨眷妇女
qiaokan 侨刊
qiaomin 侨民
qiaomin yuanji jiashu 侨民原籍家属
qiaopi 侨批
qiaosheng 侨生
Qiaowu ke 侨务科
qiaoxiang 侨乡
Qiaoxiang bao 侨乡报
Qiaoxun 侨讯
Quanzhou ribao 泉州日报
 Qingfeng 青峰
 Qingmeng 清蒙
qinshu 亲属
 Qinmin 亲民
qingming 清明
 Qingyang 青阳
 Qiu Yushuang 邱玉霜
qixi 七夕
quji 秋祭
 Quangang 泉港
 Quanzhou 泉州
Quanzhou huaqiaozhi 泉州华侨志
Quanzhou ribao 泉州日报
 Qunli 群力
sanding 三定
 Sanwu 三吴
sanzi qiye 三资企业
 Shenhu 深沪
 Shijing 石井
 Shishan 诗山
 Shishi 石狮
 Shizhen 石圳
sifa bu 司法部

Siwei 四维
 Siyi 四邑
shou huo gua 守活寡
shou sigua 守死寡
shu 叔
sui daliu 随大流
 Shuitou 水头
 Tatou 踏头
 Tang Ainiang 唐爱娘
 Tong'an 同安
tongyangxi 童养媳
 Tangbian 塘边
 Tangdong 塘东
tangshanmou 唐山某
tongxiang guanxi 同乡关系
 Wanhui 挽回
waijia 外家
waiji huaren 外籍华人
wairen 外人
 Wang Jiyu 王继禹
wanban jie xiapin, wei you fanke gao 万般皆下品, 唯有番客高
 Weitou 围头
 Wenling 温陵
wenshi ziliao 文史资料
 Wubao 伍堡
 Wu Yangniang 吴样娘
 Xiabing 下炳
Xiamen qiaogong shiwuju 厦门侨工事务分局
Xiamen qiaowuju 厦门侨务局
 Xianian 下辇
xiao shangfan 小商贩
 Xiapo 霞坡
xiangxin li 向心力
 Xianyou 仙游
 Xie Nanguang 谢南光
xixiang 戏箱
Xin Fujian 新福建
 Xinxi 新溪
xin yimin 新移民
 Xunjiang 荀江
 Xu Jiyuan 徐季元
 Xu Suhua 许素华
 Yakou 衙口
yanghuo 洋货

yanglou 洋楼
Yanta 雁塔
yi fumu 义父母
yinhu 殷户
yin shuihun 引水魂
Yinglin 英林
Yong'an 永安
Yongchun 永春
Yongning 永宁
Yuci 御赐
Yang Bangzhen 杨邦针
you jia fu ming, wu fu ming 有嫁夫名，无夫命
yu fanpo zuo shengyi, jiefa qizi ku dao si 与番婆做生意，结发妻子苦到死
Zhang Xiantou 张线头
Zhangzhou 漳州
zhao fanbo 找番婆
Zhengwu yuan 政务院
Zheng Yuzhen 郑玉珍
Zhishan 至善
Zhonghua quanguo guiguo huaqiao lianhehui 中华全国归国华侨联合会
Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo guiqiao quaojuan quanyi baohu fa 中华人民共和国归
 侨侨眷权益保护法
Zhongyang ribao 中央日报
Zhongguo geyao jicheng 中国歌谣集成
zijiren 自己人
ziyou zhiye zhe 自由职业者
zizhi juan 自治捐

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7. Interviews

* For the sake of some interviewees whose lives might be affected if their names are known, I have not published their full names and Chinese characters.

1. A cadre of the office of Zishi village branch of the Party, Zishi village, Chidian town, Jinjiang city, 21 December 2004
2. Ms Cai CL, Jinjiang town, Jinjiang city, 13 & 17 December 2004
3. Mr. Cai Shijia 蔡世佳, Officer of the Association of the Returned Overseas Chinese in Shishi city, Shishi city, 12 December 2004
4. Ms Cai XX, Puzhai village, Jinjing town, Jinjiang city, 13 December 2004
5. Ms Chen LD, Chenzhou village, Quanzhou city, 1 December 2004
6. Mr. Chen Ronglong 陈荣龙, Mr. Xu Jiazong 许加种, and Ms Zeng Lina 曾丽娜, the Association of Returned Overseas Chinese in Jinjing town, Jinjiang city, 13 December 2004
7. Ms Chen SM, Qingyang town, Jinjiang city, 21 December 2004
8. Ms Chen XL, Shizhen village, Jinjing town, Jinjiang city, 17 December 2004
9. Ms Chen XX, Puzhai village, Jinjing town, Jinjiang city, 13 December 2004
10. Ms Chen ZN, Jiangnan town, Quanzhou city, 26 November 2004
11. Ms Hong Q, Huazhou village, Chidian town, Jinjiang city, 22 November 2004.
12. Mr. Hong Zuliang 洪祖良, Shishi city, 20 December 2004
13. Ms Huang Yali 黄雅莉, Qingyang town, Jinjiang city, 4 December 2004

14. Mr. Lin, Office of the Returned Overseas Chinese Association of Jiangnan town, Quanzhou, 26 November 2004.
15. Ms Lin D, Huazhou village, Chidian town, Jinjiang city, 22 November & 18 December 2004
16. Ms Lin Meiyu 林美玉, Association of Returned Overseas Chinese from the Philippines in Quanzhou city, Quanzhou city, 16 December 2004
17. MS Lu Y, Zhangzhou city, 16 November 2004
18. Ms Lü SH, Puzhai village, Jinjing town, Jinjiang city, 13 December 2004
19. Ms Wu ?, Jinjing town, Jinjiang city, 13 December 2004
20. Ms Wu F, Huazhou village, Chidian town, Jinjiang city, 21 November 2004
21. Mr. Wu QC, Jinjing town, Jinjiang city, 17 December 2004
22. Ms Wu SM, Guanlan village, Jiangnan town, Quanzhou city, 26 November 2004
23. Ms Wu YQ, Guanlan village, Jiangnan town, Quanzhou city, 26 November 2004
24. Ms Wu Z, Huazhou village, Chidian town, Jinjiang city, 20 November 2004
25. Ms Xu LD, Huazhou village, Chidian town, Jinjiang city, 18 December 2004
26. Mr. Xu Tianzeng 许天增, Library of Shishi City, Shishi city, 14 &15 December 2004
27. Ms Xu WQ, Pengtian village, Shishi city, 9 December 2004
28. Ms Xu XC, Qingyang town, Jinjiang city, 18 November & 8 December 2004
29. Ms Yang LQ, Qingyang town, Jinjiang city, 9 & 22 December 2004
30. Ms Yang SH, Qingyang town, Jinjiang city, 9 December 2004
31. Mr. Zeng Kunluo 曾昆洛, Chief of the Association of Returned Overseas Chinese in Chidian town, Jinjiang city, 21 December 2004
32. Mr. Zheng Bingshan 郑炳山, Quanzhou city, 30 November &1 December 2004

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