

business,” Sun remembered. “Shortly after the meeting, the old lady asked for a marriage proposal with her daughter through a match maker.” On hearing that, Sun was a little shocked since he thought, “I could not marry her daughter because her family was rich. I was too poor to afford the brideprice.” The daughter was also kind of reluctant to marry him because she said, “If I married him, I would have to learn how to make sunhats. But I had no idea how to make them.” Nonetheless, the mother answered, “He is a technician. You will not worry about money if you marry him.” Finally, Sun borrowed 160 *yen*, which was the brideprice, from his friends to marry his wife in 1936. “I was too poor to afford to buy a bed at that time. We were sleeping on a bed made from many boxes on our wedding night,” he recalled.

Sun’s case reveals that families wanted to let their daughter marry a businessman rather than a peasant in the 1930s. For a peasant, as this case shows, having plenty of land did not necessarily ensure a marriage deal. In fact, quite the reverse; owning land could be a negative thing for women and their families, whose major concern was that if a daughter married a farmer, she would undergo hardship since she was supposed to farm in the fields. Pam, a daughter of a big landlord in the 1930s, remembered that match makers had come several times before she was married, but her father refused these marriage proposals. He said, “I will not have my daughter marry a peasant even though he and his family have plenty of land.” Businessmen became one of the top choices of marriage partners for women.

For businessmen, one of the major concerns for marrying was the political and economic exchanges with local elite. Table 4.13 reveals the general trend in partner choice by businessmen.²⁰ Interestingly, families of businessmen themselves seldom chose partners from business, labouring, or other categories, especially between the 1920s and 1940s. Instead, most of the businessmen tended to choose partners from peasants’ families, especially those that owned plenty of land. The father of River, my informant, maintained a very good relationship with Japanese leaders at KSR and was an influential peasant who owned several *chia* of land. River’s father asked him to marry a daughter of a businessman who

²⁰ The data was collected through my interviews with 32 people who opened their businesses in colonial Kio-a-thau.

owned a grocery store in the neighbouring village in 1948, although River had a girl friend at that time (For details, see Chapter 5). River remembered, “I gave my partner’s family \$10,000 as brideprice, but they did not accept it. Rather, they gave \$100,000 in return as a replacement for the dowry.²¹ The interest from this cash outstripped the monthly salary I was earning at KSR at that time.”

Mutual interest, rather than social mobility, could account for the intermarriages between businessmen and peasants. With the socio-economic development in the first decades of the twentieth century, the merchant class, largely composed of migrants, emerged as a major class in Kio-a-thau. Given that they did not own real estate, these migrants preferred to marry daughters from peasant families since they could thereby obtain land. As for the peasants, they were also willing to intermarry with businessmen since businessmen had cash. At the same time, as Sun’s case has shown, business acumen indicated the opportunity and potential to make money. That was the major reason the lady allowed her daughter to marry Sun even though he was very poor.

Table 4.13
Marriage partners for businessmen’s families by decade

Year of marriage	Partners’ family						
	Businessmen	Farmers			Labourers	Others	Total
		Small peasants	Middle peasants	Large peasants			
Before 1920				2			2
1921-30			2	2	1	1	6
1931-40		2	1	4	2	1	10
1941-50	2	3	1	3	1	3	13
1951-60						1	1

²¹ Accepting brideprice and paying dowry by the brides’ families are acceptable in Chinese weddings (Wolf and Huang 1980: 75; Jordan 1999). The canonical “six rites,” including 1) submitting a betrothal, 2) asking the [girl’s] name, 3) accepting felicity, 4) accepting the brideprice, 5) selecting the day, and 6) welcoming the bride, make up a marriage (Jordan 1999: 324-25). In the 1940s, this custom was still followed in Taiwan.

Source: Fieldwork data, Kio-a-thau, 2002-2003. **Notes:** I define small peasants as those that owned one *chia* of land, or tenants; middle peasants as those that owned between one to three *chia* of land; large peasants as those that owned over three *chia* of land. The term of “Others” includes a teacher, a fisherman, and staff at the Kio-a-thau Railroad Station and at KSR.

CONCLUSION: BEYOND “COLONISER” AND “COLONISED”

In this chapter I have explored the occupational differentiation in colonial Kio-a-thau from 1860 to 1945. During my fieldwork in 2002-2003, I found that a particular group, the Taiwanese short-term immigrants, emerged as a result of the interactions of the Japanese people and the locals. I have described the social transformations in the colonial period introduced by the Japanese industrialisation and how these transformations impacted socio-economic dimensions. Firstly, I have indicated that the enclosure movement resulted in the decline in social prestige of the peasant class, in particular the landowners with more real estate. The colonial state as well as the sugar company controlled a vast amount of land and left the remainder for peasants to live on. This not only affected peasant farmers but also landowners. Many landowners were forced to sell their land to the sugar company, while many peasants either lived on their small pieces of land or were forced to sell their labour force in the market.

Secondly, the loss of land transformed the traditional form of social structure, which mainly hinged on land and kinship. As many scholars have described, in the pre-colonial period, the lineage organisation served as both kinship and economic units. The enclosure of land disadvantaged the development of large lineage organisations. Moreover, the introduction of mass-production of sugarcane, which lacked the labour-intensive nature of rice cultivation, advantaged the social arrangements of nuclear families.

In Kio-a-thau, the upsurge of the merchants was not a rupture from tradition but a transformation of the previous stage. In the late Cing era, a “merchant-gentry class” had emerged as a result of merchantism. This trend was further reinforced through the articulation of both the coloniser and the colonised. I have provided

several case studies to illustrate how individuals gradually obtained social power in Kio-a-thau. Their stories reveal that their social influence did not rely on age, wealth, learning or kin-group status as traditionally defined. Rather, friendship with the colonisers became a major source of social power. They could obtain some privileges, such as priority in renting land, by showing loyalty to the colonisers.

As a result, businessmen gradually obtained political authority and a better position in the marriage market through the display of social power. Businessmen, as well as the staff at KSR, were welcomed in the marriage market. I have provided Sun's case study to account for the intermarriage between businessmen and peasants. With the socio-economic development in the first decades of the twentieth century, the merchant class, largely composed of immigrants, emerged as a major class in Kio-a-thau. As time progressed, as Sun's case has shown, business acumen indicated the opportunity and potential to make money when compared to peasants and landowners. Thus, the "negative" view of businessmen according to Confucian tradition, which stigmatised private trade and individual accumulation, was transformed by external historical complexity. To conclude, in Kio-a-thau, immigrants emerged as a third group beyond local people and Japanese colonisers. They, to some extent, mediated the dichotomy of coloniser and colonised. These migrants exercised their agency between these two categories. The increasing importance of immigrants and businessmen in Kio-a-thau not only elucidates the complex nature of colonial era social transformations but also provides a case study of the social role of "the merchant" in colonial encounters.



Plate 4.1 A *geisha* restaurant
Photo: Zensaburou Kaneki

5 MARRIED LIFE

INTRODUCTION

Several anthropologists who have studied Taiwan claim that some women's behaviour in married life such as the manipulation of emotions and involvement in domestic decision making.¹ For example, Margery Wolf (1972: 40) discussing the position of women in the 1960s states: "Taiwanese women can and do make use of their collective power to lose face for their menfolk in order to influence decisions that are ostensibly not theirs to make ... This is precisely where women wield their power." As for the manipulation of emotion, Wolf (1972: 41) further maintains:

The contrast between a terrified young bride and the loud, confident, often lewd old women who has outlived her mother-in-law and her husband reflects the tests met and passed by not strictly following the rules and by making purposeful use of those who must. The Chinese male's conception of women as "narrow-hearted" and socially inept may well be his vague recognition of this facet of women's power and technique.

Margery Wolf provided a universal pattern that Taiwanese women could use certain strategies as mentioned above to deal with men in the 1960s. However, we cannot examine how and to what extent these strategies were adopted throughout different phases in Taiwanese history. In this chapter, by using Kio-a-thau as an example, while recognising the power held by women in domestic life, I argue that the cultural features as mentioned above should not be taken for granted; they should be examined in long-term social contexts.

In the first part of this chapter, I will discuss the concept of uterine family. I will then focus on how the social status of Taiwanese women changed as a result of colonial rule. During the Japanese period, women were given the rights of divorce, remarriage, education, ownership of property, and general civil rights (T. Wang 2000; Takekoshi 1907). Monogamous marriages became legitimatised by law, although polygynous marriages were still allowed. Barrett (1989) argued that the

¹ See Margery Wolf (1972: 24).

colonial rule to the village level affected the power of the family relations within families and the Japanese police sometimes intervened in family disputes among locals. Also, many scholars have pointed out the various changing aspects regarding family characteristics, including divorce and pre-marital sexual relations in colonial Taiwan (Freedman 1966; Thornton and Lin 1994; Pasternak 1983; Barclay 1954). Barclay, for example, estimated that between 8 and 14% of all marriages contracted between 1906 and 1925 in colonial Taiwan ended in divorce within five years after their marriages. Pasternak (1983: 75) indicates that Taiwan's high divorce rate in the early 1900s contrasted sharply with the low levels of divorce reported for other Chinese population. Furthermore, according to Thornton and Lin (1994: 164-165), it was not rare to have sexes with future husbands and premarital pregnancies in the late colonial period. Barrett (1980) further reports that the number of illegitimate children rose from the early twentieth century to 1935, when over four per cent of all births involved unclaimed paternity. In colonial Kio-a-thau, some noticeable changes in marriage took place as a result of such social transformations. For example, the number of minor and uxorilocal marriages distinctly decreased.² Wives no longer took it for granted that their husbands could marry concubines. On the other hand, the number of distant marriages and illegitimate children increased over time. It was not rare to witness cases of premarital pregnancy.

The overall argument of this chapter is that, firstly, according to my survey, both partners in colonial Kio-a-thau, used personal agency through the manipulation of emotions, controlling domestic finance, and developing extra-marital affairs to contest their traditional roles in society. For men, marrying concubines and having affairs became one way to resist arranged marriages. For women, controlling domestic finance, manipulating their emotions, and reconstructing the meaning of sexuality were responses to social transformations over time. Secondly, I argue that the interactions between partners such as the usage of

² Here I define the three major marriage types in this chapter as follows. The virilocal marriage is that the wife leaves her natal family and joins her husband's family to live with her parents-in-law. The uxorilocal marriage is that the husband leaves his natal family and joins his wife's family to live with his parents-in-law. The minor marriage is that a husband married his adopted sister (*simpua*, a little-daughter-in-law) when they were young. For details see Wolf and Huang (1980).

female emotions were not fixed social facts but an outcome of partners' interactions over time. In other words, these features were constructed in history.

As regards methodology, the main materials I use are the census data from colonial times, and questionnaires submitted to 41 elderly residents now living in Kio-a-thau which were followed by interviews in 2002-2003. Archival data helped me reconstruct the general tendency of marriages in colonial Kio-a-thau, while the ethnographic sources help to explore the everyday interaction between marriage partners in order to examine the resources and strategies both genders used.

THE UTERINE FAMILY

Margery Wolf was the one of the first scholars to highlight the role of women in the social structure of Taiwan. Before and after Margery Wolf, some ethnographic literature in the 1960s and 1970s has focused on the inferior status of women in Taiwanese society, mainly by indicating a patrilineal framework (Ahern 1981; Wolf and Huang 1980; Diamond 1973). Ahern, based upon her study in northern Taiwan, argues that women were considered inferior in Taiwanese families because they were "both ritually unclean and dangerously powerful" (Ahern 1981: 193-214). According to her, these polluting features were reflected in women's bodies, social roles, and rituals. For example, Ahern (1981: 200) states that "[t]he power women have is their capacity to alter a family's form by adding members to it, dividing it, and disturbing male authority; the danger they pose is their capacity to break up what men consider the ideal family." Diamond (1973: 214) points out that Taiwanese women were regarded as an inferior group in intellectual, moral, and economical terms. In marriage, Gates (1996: 195) claims that wives were portrayed as dependent, precariously situated, and unclean. A wife could not be completely accepted as a family number until she had given birth to a son. Diamond (1973: 214) suggests that divorce was a male prerogative and could be invoked for such faults as talkativeness, failure to bear sons, or incurable illness. After marriage, wives would also face a lot of emotional

difficulties particularly with regard to their relationships with sisters-in-law or mothers-in-laws.

Margery Wolf's concept of the uterine family – a concept that highlights women's personal ties and loyalty rather than the exclusiveness of patrilineal kinship – is my starting point. According to Margery Wolf (1972), a uterine family is a social unit composed of a mother, her children, and her daughters-in-law. Margery Wolf argues that the uterine family is a major source of women's power. In contrast to the patrilineal kinship system, a uterine family does not highlight property inheritance or ancestor worship but emphasises “sentiments and loyalties that die with its members [her children and daughters-in-law]....”

Although Wolf herself claims that a uterine family only came into existence out of women's individual needs, which specifically include both “financial and emotional security,” (Wolf 1972: 207) she further maintains that each woman tried to experience power in her own uterine family. In this respect, Wolf offered the case of a prostitute who wanted to “bear illegitimate children or adopt another daughter to form a uterine family” (Wolf 1972: 206) in order to “build her own uterine circle of financial and emotional security” (Wolf 1972: 207). She suggests that even prostitutes hoped to have their own uterine families. Through adoption, these prostitutes could also complete a particular relationship for herself, her [adopted] sons, [adopted] daughters, and her daughter[s]-in-law. Margery Wolf (1972: 159-60) also offered a case of conflict between a daughter-in-law and her mother-in-law when the new couple wanted to move out.

The mother-in-law threatened to kill herself and shouted bitterly, “Then the two of you will be alone and won't have a mother in your way.” This is not an empty threat by women in this age group, and it clearly seemed a dangerous possibility to the woman's son. He was very upset and led his mother to a chair saying, “You are my mother. How can I let such a thing happen? If she is not nice to you, we will send her home. How can I let you kill yourself?” He turned to his wife and shouted at her, “Go home. Go home. Don't you hear me? Go tell your mother what a bad daughter-in-law you are.”

The case indicates how a mother may exert her power over her son and daughter-in-law. The mother-in-law tried to stop the couple from moving out by

manipulating their emotions through “threat[s]” and “shout[ing].” Eventually it worked, and her son decided to stay.

Some scholars further highlight the political and resistance aspects in a uterine family. For example, Wolf and Huang indicate that a uterine family can exert a “powerful impact on decisions concerning marriage and adoption” (Wolf and Huang 1980: 65). Gates points out the resistant aspect of the notion of uterine family. As she (Gates 1996: 197) indicates, “[a]lthough women colluded in strengthening the kinship system that so insidiously re-created their gender oppression, they often resisted more direct forms of control.” She concludes that examples of women’s resistance to male power “are peppered through descriptions of daily life as well as implicit in popular ideology.” She further argues that partners’ interactions at home through quarrels, disputes, and financial management demonstrate female powers. In other words, Gates points out the politics of a uterine family. Regarding this point, some ethnographic literature in Taiwan has discussed how women exert their power in daily life. For example, Huang (2003: 73-86) notes that some emotional expressions – such as crying – are manipulated by Taiwanese women as “a coquettish strategy.” She points out that “crying among men is not valued whereas female crying may be perceived as a strategy.” As she (Huang 2003: 76) states:

Female crying may be perceived as a coquettish strategy, and a proverb holds that a woman has her way by [these stances] first crying, then making a scene, and finally threatening to hang herself (*yikuernao sanshangdiao*)...In sum, crying in Taiwan is not so much a display of a single emotion as it is an expressive activity rendered meaningful in different contexts. Ideology comes into play with adult women’s and men’s weeping, but differs by gender: women’s tears at funerals help to perpetuate the ideology of patrilineal decent, whereas the acceptance of men’s tears is subject to the Confucian ideology that ranks nationalism above personal concerns, while crying is often perceived as a strategy of coquetry in both genders, its effectiveness stems from transformative capacity of crying that allows adults to temporarily manifest childlike characteristics, and hence assume a tacit position of inferiority that fits well in hierarchical culture.

These scholars, including Margery Wolf, fail to examine how women used their emotions throughout history, although they have pointed out the vital role of women in the social structure by highlighting the concept of uterine family. Margery Wolf points out the interaction between the members of a uterine family

by giving detailed ethnographic descriptions of northern Taiwan in the late 1960s. She saw how the mother-in-law prevented her son and daughter-in-law from moving out by manipulating her emotions for example. In general, these scholars provide a universal pattern that women can use certain strategies as mentioned above to deal with men. However, we cannot examine how and to what extent these strategies were adopted throughout different phases in history. In this chapter, I argue that such usage of female emotions is not a fixed social fact but an outcome of interactions between the partners in long-term Taiwanese history. The idea that female feelings may be simply perceived as a strategy and should therefore be examined under different circumstances.

In the following section, I use the discussion of anthropology of emotions to explain how the emotions were affected by various cultural contexts and how they were constructed in history. For example, Lutz and Abu-Lughod (1990: 92) state: “Emotions are one of those taken-for-granted of both specialised knowledge and everyday discourse now becoming part of the domain of anthropological inquiry.” A great deal of comparative work in anthropology exists, such as Rosaldo’s insight (1980) that some concepts of emotions such as the *liget* (anger) in Ilongot and the *ngaltu* (compassions) in Pintupi reflect forms of indigenous social relationships. Lutz (1988) indicates that emotion is often constructed as moral judgement, and has a similar pragmatic force in Ifaluk, Micronesia. Foucault (1980: 5-6) examines how some discourses of emotions were constructed in history. In *The History of Sexuality* he intends to “analyze the practices by which individuals were led to focus their attention on themselves, to decipher, recognize, and acknowledge themselves a certain relationship that allows them to discover, in desire, the truth of their being.”

MARITAL ETHNOGRAPHY IN THE PRE-COLONIAL PERIOD

Marrying concubines (the second or third wife), arranged marriages, and marriage without mutual love between partners were characteristic of pre-colonial marital relationships. The *Fong shan sian cian fang lu* (1894), a gazetteer which was written by Cing officials in southern Taiwan, recorded the following story. Jheng-

jing, a woman who lived in Nan-zih-keng, a site next to Kio-a-thau, found she was infertile after she married. In such a circumstance, the gazetteer records: “She urges her husband to marry a concubine, but he refuses her proposal because he thinks he is poor.” This case suggests that marrying a concubine served a practical need: reproduction. The idea of having children was very widespread in pre-colonial Taiwanese society (Wolf 1972; Johnson 1981). Johnson (1981: 215) states that male children were highly valued in traditional Chinese society because male descendants could continue to worship the ancestors, inherit property, and look after the parents in their old age. Accordingly, the wife who “urged” her husband to marry a concubine did so not because she considered that her husband deserved it. Instead, she did it because she thought she could not fulfil her reproductive duties as a wife. By contrast, her husband’s refusal of the request did not mean that he did not want a concubine. Rather, he could not act on the offer because he thought he was poor.³ The custom of marrying concubines was popular in mid-nineteenth-century southern and eastern China, including Taiwan (Gray 1879). In pre-colonial Taiwan, for instance, a married man sometimes married someone in addition to his wife, either to secure sons or to satisfy his desire for more than one wife (T. Wang 2000: 166). A husband could marry a concubine if his wife would not bear children and if he could afford it. Takekoshi (1907: 313) mentions that the keeping of concubines was “very common” in the early twentieth century in colonial Taiwan, especially among “the higher officials” and “the learned men.” Kataoka (1921: 24) states that some rich people would marry the maidservants in their families as their concubines.

Men’s reasons for marrying concubines were not only for reproduction but also to demonstrate masculinity and display social status. River told me that those who married concubines were rich people because “only they could afford to support more than one wife.” Conversely, those who could support more than one wife were labelled the upper classes. For example he said that “every husband married a concubine” in one top rich family in Shih-long in the early twentieth century. The family had three brothers who were married. Two brothers did not have any baby boys after they married. The other one had only one baby boy. The common

³ Usually a husband should also pay brideprice to marry a concubine.

reasons for them to marry concubines were that they wanted (more) baby boys to maintain their property and accumulate wealth. The legal wives, for their part, could not say anything about their husbands marrying a concubine because a wife's role in the household was subordinate. A wife should generously accept a concubine in order to keep her position in the household.

Marriage arranged by parents was common in the pre-colonial period. Many anthropologists have discussed arranged marriages in Taiwan and China (Wolf 2003; Gates 1996; Diamond 1969; Jordan 1999; Wolf and Huang 1980). Gates (1996: 189) calls this arrangement "forced marriages." Jordan (1999: 331) names them "blind marriages." According to Jordan, arranged marriages were popular in each form of marriage, including major, minor, and uxori-local marriages. Major marriages were the most popular form in the Qing Dynasty. In this type of marriage a woman married into her husband's family and was not regarded as a member of her father's line (see Plate 5.1). Minor marriage was a method used by the parents to purchase a young girl and bring her up in their home in order to become a wife for their son. This has also been called "*simpua* (little-daughters-in-law) marriages" (Wolf and Huang 1980: 113). In the case of uxori-local marriage, a daughter could "call in" a husband (Wolf and Huang 1980: 94-5) and the husband assumed one of the duties of a son with respect to his wife's family although he was not necessarily expected to live in the wife's home. The husband who married into the wife's family could retain his surname and assign some of his children to his own line, but he agreed that other children would take their descent from his wife's father. He could not claim a share of his father-in-law's estate if he retained his own name (Wolf and Huang 1980: 106). This kind of marriage always took place among poor family. Flower's grand grandfather, grandfather, and father all adopted uxori-local marriage. She said: "Locals believed that if the uxori-local marriage happened three times (like my family's case), then the destiny of the family would turn better."

According to my informants, choosing a marriage partner themselves would have been regarded as improper. The authority for arranging marriages was "vested exclusively in the hands of the senior generation" (Wolf and Huang 1980: 71) with the help of matchmakers or go-betweens (Jordan 1999: 319-62). Marriages

were based upon “a parent’s command and a matchmaker’s words” as a Chinese proverb puts it. Jordan (1999: 326) notes: “In purest and most stereotypic form, a traditional Chinese matchmaker arranged a marriage between a girl and a boy in two families of roughly equal social status.” In such a circumstance, the equality of social status became a major concern.

As a result of arranged marriage, true love between partners did not play a crucial role in forming marital relationships in pre-colonial Taiwan. Jordan (1996: 327) states: “In particular, initial ‘love’ was ideally at best a minor consideration in most matches, and was sometimes even regarded as a source of undesirable distortion in the process of mate selection or marital adjustment.” Social interaction between partners before marriage was regarded as “inappropriate” because it referred to sex. One informant told me that one of his relatives got engaged to a lady in a neighbouring village in the 1930s. His relative was too embarrassed to go past the village where his fiancée lived before they married. “He always walked a farther route in order to avoid the gossip from that village,” the informant commented. In pre-colonial Taiwanese society, showing love in public between partners was not allowed. This is not only because it refers to sex. The essence of love was also seen as threatening the basic social order, which focused more on the father-son relationship than the husband-wife relationship. Potter (1988: 199) indicates that love is “the rival and potential enemy of [Chinese social] structure.” He states:

Since the patterns of pre-existent structure have primary importance in Chinese social relations, love is the rival and the potential enemy of structure. Rather than affirming structure, love is understood to endanger it. Thus, in Chinese terms, it is the emotion that most threatens the social order. Even when love is apparently most congruent with the social structure, as in the case of love between a father and a son, the expression of love is understood as being inherently in opposition to valued structural continuity. Villagers believe that when a father is openly affectionate with a son, he is, in effect, inviting his son to flout the formal patterns of respect and obedience that ought to characterize their relationship; a display of affection is dangerous to appropriate behaviour which is optimally maintained when there is due distance between the two. If love is openly expressed, the form and the relationship between the father and the son are thought to be damaged.

The above discussion reveals, first, the custom of marrying concubines, and, second, the nature of marriage in the pre-colonial period. Marrying concubines was socially acceptable and very common among the upper social classes. The custom of marrying concubines was justified as a means of reproduction and as a display of masculinity. With regard to the nature of marriages, parents rather than partners arranged most unions. Marriages were not based upon love between partners but on arrangements between families that emphasised economic and social compatibility. The relationship between partners was mostly male-centred, in which the image of a good wife was always stereotyped as reserved, secondary, submissive, and subordinated. In terms of emotions, she was thought to be silent and submissive, otherwise she would be considered socially inept and narrow-minded. Subsequently, with the impact of colonial rule and associated social transformations, these ideas about marriage were contested by locals.

MARITAL PRACTICES IN COLONIAL TIMES

Colonial Policy and Other Influences

The colonial state held a negative opinion of traditional Taiwanese marriages. One aspect the Japanese criticised was the compulsory paying of bride price (*ping-jin*) and dowries (*jia-jhuang*). Takekoshi (1907: 312) criticised this custom as follows. “It is not surprising, therefore, that the husband, having purchased the girl’s body with money just like any other piece of merchandise, should regard it as such, and consider himself free to resell it whenever it suits his purpose.” He (Takekoshi 1907: 313) concludes that marriages in Taiwan were based on an idea of “two-fold trouble”: “the parents’ all-absorbing love of money, and the fact that they have too much authority over their children.” Initially the Japanese government did not destroy the marriage practices they criticised, but allowed some to continue by maintaining that they were traditional customs, which were not against public order or good morals. For instance, marrying concubines was permitted, although it was not encouraged, since the Japanese government conceded that marrying concubines was a time-bound custom in Taiwan. Even

though concubines were given the right to divorce in 1922, the Japanese government did not ban marrying concubines for the rest of its colonial rule.⁴

Women were given the rights of divorce, remarriage, education, ownership of property, and general civil rights during the Japanese period (Diamond 1973: 215; T. Wang 2000). In the Cing era, widows were supposed to remain single for the rest of their life after their husbands died. But the fact that under colonial rule they were given the right of remarriage undoubtedly broke the previous customary law. Regarding arranged marriages, the colonial courts ruled that a marriage decided by parents was invalid because both partners did not agree (T. Wang 2000: 164). More importantly, under Japanese rule, the custom of selling, giving, pledging, or mortgaging wives was banned (T. Wang 2000: 165). The ban gave women the right to claim for divorce. The concept of divorce by law was introduced and reinforced by the colonial state. In former times, a wife could not actively demand divorce. However, in colonial times, a wife could apply to the courts for a divorce, for example, when her husband committed a “dishonest crime,” refused to reside with her, or married another woman as a wife (not as a concubine) and lived with this woman (T. Wang 2000: 166). Wang reports, “[d]uring the Japanese period suits for divorce in courts were ordinarily brought by the wife because she, as the weaker partner in the marriage, could not gain a divorce agreement from her husband but had to search for help from the state authority.”

In Kio-a-thau and its neighbouring areas, however, the cases of divorces were rarely followed quickly by changes in behaviour (see Table 3.6). For instance, in 1915, only three cases of divorce occurred in 1915, and only one case occurred in Shih-long. In execution, divorce was not mainly adopted by local women to deal with their marital conflicts. Also, intermarriage between Taiwanese and Japanese people was rare. In fact, the colonial government prohibited intermarriage with Japanese until 1932 (Wolf 1972: 5). However, under the political propaganda of

⁴ In 1922, the colonial court changed the old custom and regulated that the concubine should have the same right to release herself from the relationship. Therefore, without any cause for the divorce, a concubine was entitled to end the concubine relationship from 1922.

the assimilation policy (Lamley 1999: 221), and based on the reasoning of biological eugenics (Fujii, Kō, and Tarumi 2002: 268), the government started to recognise intermarriages (and adoptions) between Taiwanese and Japanese people (T. Wang 2000: 247; Wolf 1972: 5). Despite this, in practice, intermarriages faced many difficulties. According to my informant, River, there was one case of intermarriage between Japanese and Taiwanese people in the local area and that took place in Shih-long, the village neighbouring Kio-a-thau. A Taiwanese schoolteacher fell in love with his colleague, a daughter of a local Japanese policeman in Kio-a-thau. It was reported that the policeman vigorously opposed the marriage because he worried that his daughter could not get used to local customs. “In fact he did not want his daughter to marry a Taiwanese person,” River commented. Nevertheless, his daughter insisted on marrying the teacher. As a result, as River reported, “The Japanese policeman was so angry that he cut off the relationship with his daughter by cancelling the household census registration.” River reported that this Japanese wife faced a lot of cultural shocks in the relationship with her mother-in-law.

Besides intermarriage between Taiwanese and Japanese people, other noticeable changes took place in the Japanese period. In Kio-a-thau, migratory experiences impacted on the nature of marriage. For example, the number of long-distance marriages and illegitimate children increased over time, while the number of minor and uxori-local marriages decreased substantially. The following discussion is based on the local household registration records that I examined.

▪ Marriage types

The basic form of marriage in Kio-a-thau was virilocal marriage, the number of which increased steadily from the 1890s to the 1940s (Table 5.1). By contrast, the number of uxori-local marriages decreased. For instance, the percentage of uxori-local marriages fell from 13% in the 1890s to 0% in the 1940s, a striking decrease (see Table 5.1). As for the minor marriage, it is that a husband married his adopted sister (*simpua*, a little-daughter-in-law) when they were young (Wolf and Huang 1980: 82-93). Since minor marriage always occurred at the first marriage, here I exclude all second and later marriages in the household registers

data I use. Although the number of minor marriages reached its peak in the 1920s, the percentage of minor marriages (little-daughter-in-law marriage) fell after that. As a result, the general tendency was therefore that the percentage of minor and uxori-local marriages decreased, and virilocal marriages gradually became the virtually universal common type in the marriage market.

Table 5.1
Marriage type by decade

Year of marriage	Total	Virilocal marriage		Minor marriage		Uxorilocal marriage		Unknown	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Before 1895	15	12	80	1	7	2	13	0	0
1895-1904	28	23	82	1	4	4	14	0	0
1905-1914	38	27	71	1	3	10	26	0	0
1915-1924	72	52	72	13	18	6	8	1	1
1925-1934	81	75	94	3	1	4	5	0	0
1935-1944	92	86	94	5	5	0	0	1	1
1945	6	6	100	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Colonial household registers for Kio-a-thau. **Notes:** The minor marriage is that a husband married his adopted sister (*simpua*, a little-daughter-in-law) when they were young. For details see Wolf and Huang (1980: 82-93). The real number of minor marriages could be more than this figure since many minor marriages were not registered in the census data.

▪ Long Distance marriages

In Kio-a-thau, the number of long-distance marriages increased over time. This illustrates the changing circumstances of the village. Before 1895, forty per cent of the residents in Kio-a-thau chose their marriage partners from within a 10 kilometre radius of Kio-a-thau. This tendency increased slightly by 1904. However, from 1905 onwards, the major area for choosing marriage partners was the same county (*jyun*), which was about eleven to thirty kilometres from Kio-a-thau (see Table 5.2). From then on, the percentage of distant marriages grew steadily. In the 1910s and 20s, marriage partners from over 50 kilometres away

made up about 19% of all marriages and increased to 21% and 29% in the 1930s and 40s, indicating that Kio-a-thau and the other distant areas had been forming a closer social network (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2
Locational origins of marriage partners by decade

Year of marriage	Total	Village (<i>cun</i>) <5 km		Township (<i>jhuang</i>) <10 km		County (<i>jyun</i>) <30 km		State (<i>jyun</i>) <50 km		Others > 50 km		Un-known	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Before 1895	15	0	0	6	40	5	33	1	7	2	13	1	7
1895-1904	28	3	11	14	50	7	25	2	7	2	7	0	0
1905-1914	38	3	8	12	32	17	45	4	11	2	5	0	0
1915-1924	72	5	7	21	29	22	31	8	11	14	19	2	3
1925-1934	80	3	4	25	31	28	35	8	10	17	21	0	0
1935-1944	92	3	3	13	14	38	41	10	11	27	29	1	1
1945	6	0	0	4	67	1	17	0	0	1	17	0	0

Source: Colonial household registers for Kio-a-thau. **Notes:** 1) I based this on data recording marriages between partners from the same village (*cun*) – Kio-a-thau (less than five km); marriages between partners from the same township (*jhuang*) – Nanzihkeng Jhuang (less than 10 km); marriages between partners from the same county (*jyun*) – Gangshan Jyun (11-30 km); marriages between partners from the same state (*jhou*) – Kaohsiung Jhou (31-50 km). 2) The year of 1945 defies the trends probably because the mobility slowed down with an end to the war in 1945 and it is a very small sample.

▪ Marriage Ages

Average marriage ages changed over time. The average age for men was only seventeen in the pre-colonial period, while the average was about twenty-two in the 1940s. For women, the average ranged from seventeen to twenty over the same period (see Table 5.3). Before 1904, the average age for women was slightly

older than men. Generally speaking, the figures provide three observations. Firstly, in pre-colonial and early colonial times, locals accepted the idea that a wife could be older than her husband. Minor marriages are a good example which illustrate this. Secondly, the idea of appropriate age changed from the turn of the twentieth century. Both partners accepted the idea that a husband was supposed to be older than his wife. In other words, a wife being older than her husband became unusual. Thirdly, the average age of marriage fell for men from the 1910s onwards.

Table 5.3
Average marriage age by gender by decade

Year of marriage	Women	Men
Before 1895	17.36	17.10
1895-1904	20.49	19.71
1905-1914	20.01	25.28
1915-1924	20.59	23.53
1925-1934	19.74	22.72
1935-1944	20.22	21.96

Source: Colonial household registers for Kio-a-thau

▪ Divorce

The number of divorces was small in Kio-a-thau, although it was still more than in the neighbouring village (see Chapter 3). In 1915, the second general census survey showed that eight cases of divorce were recorded in Kio-a-thau (four brought by women and four by men). In the middle and late colonial period, according to my census data, 26 cases of divorce were reported. Eight out of 26 were instigated by males. The others were by females.

Although the number of recorded divorces was quite small, the real number was more than that. In Taiwanese culture, a husband could “divorce” his wife by separation (*li*) and marrying a concubine. However, the concept of “divorce” by

law rather than private agreements emerged as a result of colonial rule, which brought a set of western legal ideas (T. Wang 2000: 36). Also, the Japanese colonial state recorded the occurrence of divorce through the census registration to clarify the legal relationships between the people involved.

▪ **Marrying concubines**

The number of cases of marrying concubines registered on the household registration was small. Only five cases were cited for long-term residents of Kio-a-thau. As for short-term residents, 10 were reported to have married concubines. Of these 10, two were doctors, three were businessmen, two worked as staff at KSR, one was a real estate agent, one was a government officer as well as a big farmer, and one was unknown. The real estate agent later became the first village head of Kio-a-thau in 1946. Generally speaking, these marriages to concubines occurred in the upper class and among that section of this class who migrated for work during the colonial period. However, the real number of concubines was more than that. My informants reported that some concubines were registered as “family members who are living together” on the census registration in order to avoid investigation by the Japanese policeman in charge of the census registration.

▪ **Illegitimate children**

The census data defines illegitimate children as those born without knowing one of their parents. Many such cases were recorded on the household registrations in this category. The staff at the census agency wrote “unknown” in the column of either parent. In practice such children were born under various circumstances, such as unexpected birth by prostitutes or by affairs outside marriage. The number of illegitimate children increased steadily from the 1900s to the 1940s (see Table 5.4). Illegitimate girls were more common than boys, probably because baby boys were easier to adopt out as sons to close relatives and friends who did not have a son. Meanwhile, Dragon, my informant, reported that some illegitimate daughters were sent to brothels when they became older. Illegitimate children were, to some extent, stigmatised by the locals and were subject to a lot of gossip. I discovered in the census data that one teacher I interviewed in 2003 was an illegitimate child.

We did not talk about it when I interviewed him. However, River later informed me that the teacher was indeed an illegitimate son of his sister, but on the census data he was not registered as her son but as her younger brother.

Table 5.4
Illegitimate children by decade

Year when babies were born	Total number of baby girls	Total number of illegitimate daughters		Total number of baby boys	Total number of illegitimate sons	
		No.	%		No.	%
Before 1895	78	3	4	39	0	0
1895-1904	45	1	2	31	0	0
1905-1914	84	5	6	47	4	9
1915-1924	109	4	3	60	2	3
1925-1934	96	5	5	83	1	1
1935-1944	107	8	8	106	8	8
1945-	5	0	0	15	0	0

Source: Colonial household registers for Kio-a-thau. **Notes:** The number of baby girls and baby boys is different in each decade. This is probably because quite a few baby boys were adopted out before they were registered in the census data.

▪ Premarital pregnancy⁵

Table 5.5 suggests that premarital pregnancy was not rare, especially at the end of colonial rule. According to the census data, before 1895, only three out of 117 new-born babies were premarital pregnancies. However, between 1905-1914, five out of 84 new-born baby girls and four out of 47 new-born baby boys were premarital pregnancies (six percent and nine percent respectively). A significantly higher rate occurred between 1935 and 1944 (both eight percent respectively). The number of premarital pregnancies is a crucial index of premarital sexual behaviour. However, it would be bold to infer that premarital sex was popular at

⁵ My data on premarital pregnancy is based on census figures showing babies born less than seven months after the date of the partners' marriage.

that time. Instead, the data may simply reveal that partners were allowed to have sex if they wanted after they got engaged, which occurred a couple of months earlier than the marriages. Nevertheless, the figure was significant enough to cause a tension between practice and the cultural norm. These arguments challenged the fixed ideas of marriage in the moral and cultural domains, which were designed around the premarital virginity of women.

Table 5.5
Premarital pregnancies by decade

Year of marriage	Total number of marriages	The number of premarital pregnancies	The percentage of premarital pregnancies (%)
Before 1895	15	1	7
1895-1904	28	3	11
1905-1914	38	1	3
1915-1924	72	19	26
1925-1934	81	8	10
1935-1944	92	12	13
1945	6	0	0

Source: Colonial household registers for Kio-a-thau

Discussion

In pre-colonial times and the early colonial period, locals would accept the idea that a wife was older than her husband. Locals thought that she could look after her husband in these circumstances. A popular Taiwanese proverb said, “If a man marries a wife who is older than him, he is the man sitting in a golden chair,” indicating that he would be quite comfortable since his wife would complete all the household chores for him. The little-daughter-in-law marriages reinforced this idea since the wife was usually older than her husband. However, we found that the average age of a husband exceeded his wife from 1905 onwards, and the age differences between them became clear from then on (see Table 5.3). This can be linked to the focus on masculinity in the Japanese era, when most men thought

that husbands should be older than their wives. Water, who had studied abroad in Japan in the 1930s, for instance, had a talk with me on this matter.⁶

I: What do you think of the idea that wives are older than their husbands?

W: In my opinion, a man is supposed to be strong enough to take care of the whole family. As for a woman, I think that she just needs to stay home and manage household chores.

I: So you object to the notion?

W: That's right. The traditional idea [of an older wife] thought that if a wife were older than a husband, then she could look after her husband. A husband as such is like an emperor and he can thus have many maidservants to take care of him.

The increasing number of illegitimate children and premarital pregnancies is also strong evidence that the pre-colonial moral and cultural norms regarding marriage were being challenged. Both figures started to increase from the turn of the twentieth century and reached their peak in the 1920s and 30s (see Tables 5.4 and 5.5). This was certainly related to social transformations taking place in the local area. In Kio-a-thau, for instance, with the opening of KSR and *geisha* restaurants on the street (see the previous chapter), social interaction between genders became more frequent. River told me that he had heard about several cases of adultery on the sugarcane fields in the 1940s. These cases often ended with private agreements. In one case, a married man and a married woman committed adultery because they felt mutual attraction. Eventually the woman's husband found out and forced the man to compensate him for being a cuckold. River said: "Many things such as betel nuts, cigarettes, as well as some cash were given as compensation. The man also paid money to have folk opera played in front of the Mazu Temple for three days to announce his mistake in public." The story reveals that an increasing number of illegitimate children and premarital pregnancies would be anticipated as a result of more frequent contact between men and women.

Women's rights were more pronounced in Japanese colonial times than they were in the Cing era. Although many women still remained ignorant of their new liberties, this emergence of women's rights provided room for both partners to negotiate. For example, monogamous marriages were confirmed by colonial laws,

⁶ Basically we can infer that Water was deeply influenced by the Japanese from his personal background. The Japanese director adopted him as a son and he had studied abroad in Tokyo.

which protected the legal rights of wives in terms of marital status. A wife would no longer take it for granted that her husband could have affairs with other women outside the marriage, and vice versa. As a result, it was not easy for a man to marry a concubine since it would not only cause tension between partners but also between the man and the state. However, the former was more serious than the latter, since the colonial state did not completely ban marrying concubines. The state simply enforced the concubines' personal legal rights rather than condemning husbands for marrying concubines.

In my interviews, the respondents reported that the percentage of marriages to concubines by male short-term residents after they settled in Kio-a-thau was higher than that before they settled in. This reveals the wider network of interactions defined by migration. It was reported that one man had moved to Kio-a-thau with his concubine in order to avoid possible conflicts between his wife, concubine and family members. Mobility created a sense of freedom, through which a man could start his new life, exclude the tensions between his wife and concubine, and become the subject of idle gossip in his original place.

CONFLICTS, NEGOTIATIONS, AND COMPROMISE WITHIN A HOUSEHOLD: POWER RELATIONS BETWEEN PARTNERS ON THE MOVE

The above data, mainly drawn from household registrations in Kio-a-thau, reveals general marital characteristics in colonial Kio-a-thau. However, it does not allow us to examine the specific interactions between couples. Thus, I would like to explore daily interactions and changing ideas of marriage through a questionnaire and interviews with my informants. In the following section, these two approaches, which both highlight general processes and local personal agency, will be used to examine some issues such as emotional strategies. I submitted questionnaires to 41 people (11 of whom were females) in Kio-a-thau, who were married between 1903 and 1951, in order to explore the detailed interaction between partners within households (see Table 5.6). Most of the interviewees were married in the *Shōwa* period after 1926, and lived in Kio-a-thau at that time.

My questions focused on domestic power relationships between partners. I included several questions about respondents' and their partners' social backgrounds, marital details (dowries, brideprice, marriage types, and ways to seek partners), and the daily interactions between partners. During the interviews I also explored contested aspects of marriage. Here I will present the major results in terms of who was the main income earner and who was in charge of domestic finance, who chose the names of children and who arranged the marriage.

Table 5.6
Domestic power relations by household

Res-pondent	Year of marri-age	Age at marri-age	Major income earner	Manager of domestic finance	Naming of new-born babies	Marriage arrange-ments	Marriage arrange-ments for children
1■	1903	23	Husband/wife	Wife	Husband/brother	Self	Wife
2■	1910	22	Husband	Husband	Husband	Father	Husband
3★■	1911	21	Husband	Wife	Husband	Father	Husband/wife
4■	1915	21	Husband	Wife	Husband	Father	Husband/wife
5■	1921	16	Husband	Wife	Husband	Father/mother	Husband/wife
6★■	1922	20	Husband	Husband/wife	Husband	Father	Husband/wife
7■	1922	27	Husband	Husband	Husband	Father/mother	Husband
8■	1922	22	Husband/wife	Wife	Husband	Father	Husband/wife
9■	1926	26	Husband	Husband	Husband	Father	Husband
10★■	1927	19	Husband	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
11■	1927	23	Husband	Mother	Husband	Mother	Husband/wife
12	1930	16	Husband	Husband	Husband	Father/mother	Husband
13■	1930	22	Husband	Husband	Husband	Father	Husband/wife
14■	1930	21	Husband	Husband	Husband	Father	Husband
15★■	1932	20	Husband	Wife	Husband	Father	Husband
16■	1932	20	Husband	Wife	Husband	Father	Husband
17■	1933	23	Husband	Wife	Husband	Father/mother	Husband

18 ★	1936	17	Husband	Husband	Husband	Father	Husband
19	1936	24	Husband	Husband	Husband/ wife	Self	Husband/ wife
20	1937	19	Husband	Wife	Father	Mother	Husband
21 ★■	1937	22	Husband	Mother- in-law	Father-in- law	Father/ mother	Parents- in-law
22	1937	18	Husband	Wife	Husband	Self	Husband
23	1940	24	Husband	Husband/ wife	Husband	Father	Children
24★■	1942	20	Husband	Husband/ wife	Husband	Father/ mother	Husband/ wife
25■	1942	23	Husband/ wife	Wife	Wife	Father	Husband/ wife
26	1943	25	Husband	Brother	Husband/ wife	Brother/ mother	Wife
27	1945	24	Husband/ wife	Mother	Father/ husband	Father/ mother	Children
28	1946	23	Husband/ wife	Husband	Husband	Self	Husband
29	1946 1948	26 28	Husband	Brother	Husband	Brother/ mother	Husband/ wife
30	1946	22	Husband	Husband	Husband	Father	Husband
31	1947	22	Husband	Husband	Husband	Adopted mother/ Grand- mother	Husband
32★■	1947	21	Husband/ wife	Husband/ wife	Wife	Father	Wife
33	1947	23	Husband	Husband	Husband	Self	Husband/ wife
34★ ■	1948	21	Husband/ wife	Wife	Wife	Mother	Wife
35	1948	21	Husband/ wife	Husband	Husband	Self	Father
36	1949	22	Husband	Wife	Father	Father	Husband
37★	1949	20	Husband	Wife	Fortune teller	Father	Children
38	1949	21	Husband/ wife	Wife	Husband	Father/ mother	Husband
39	1949	20	Husband	Wife	Husband	Grand- mother	Husband/ wife
40	1950	22	Husband	Wife	Father/ mother	Father/ mother	Husband/ wife
41★	1951	22	Husband/ Wife	Wife	Husband	Self	Husband/ wife

Source: Fieldwork data, 2002-2003. **Notes:** 1) The respondents marked with a star (★) are females. The respondents marked with a square (■) indicate that the data were given by his or her family since they were dead. Two respondents

married after 1950 (Respondent 40 and 41). However, these two cases are significant in my discussion. See the following section for further discussion. 2) Respondent 29 married twice after his first wife died.

General results of the questionnaires

A. Major income earners

Husbands were the major income earners. 31 out of 41 responded that husbands were responsible for the household income, while 10 responded that both the wives and husbands were responsible. Most of these 10 respondents married after 1940.

B. Managers of domestic finance

The number of women who were managers of domestic finance exceeded that of men. 21 out of 41 responded that the managers were the females, including wives and mothers [-in-law], while 15 responded that managers were males, including husbands and brothers.

Four responded that both wives and husbands were managers. One was unknown.

C. Naming of new-born babies

Most cases (28 cases) responded that it was husbands who named their new-born babies. Only two were named by wives. Two were named by both partners, one was by a fortune teller and five were named by the previous generation. One was unknown.

D. Marriage arrangements

Seventeen responded that it was their fathers who had arranged their marriages, nine were arranged by both parents, three were by mothers, and seven out of 41 revealed that they arranged marriages for themselves. Others were arranged by kin including an adopted mother, grandmothers, and brothers. One was unknown.

E. Marriage arrangements for their children

Most of them responded that it was the husband who arranged marriages for their children (16 out of 40). The next most common was arranged by both husbands

and wives (15 out of 40). Four were by wives. Three were by the child himself or herself. Others include the father and parent-in-law.

F. Girl or boyfriends before marriage

According to the questionnaire, 11 out of 41 revealed that they had girlfriends/a boyfriend before they got married. Only one of the 11 was a female, who was a working woman. Of the 10 men, nine worked as employees at KSR and one was a businessman.

G. Others

According to the questionnaire, 14 out of 41 indicated that they had never seen their partners before their marriage. Ten reported that they had seen each other less than five times. Only three marriages were based on mutual love.

Discussion of the results

Some ethnographic literature indicates that Chinese women were good at managing their households (Gates 1996: 198-9; Pruitt 1967; Menpes 1909: 77). In Shandong, China, women were known as strict household managers in marital disputes. Also, businessmen often consulted their wives before finalising a deal. Nevertheless, in this section, I argue that a woman's managing ability in the household was not an outcome of social structure but was (re)constructed in different social contexts and history.

In terms of financial management, for instance, the questionnaires revealed that the wives or mothers managed domestic finance in about 50% of cases (21 out of 41). In another four cases, wives managed the finances together with their husbands. Ten out of 41 stated that the wives were also major wage earners, and in seven of these, women were the main managers of domestic finances. Respondent 1 is a typical case to illustrate this point. Respondent 1's eldest son told me that both his parents were casual sugarcane workers and they fell in love. They got married in 1903, when a marriage without arrangement was rare. After marriage his father acted as an itinerant casual worker to making a living. His son remembered: "My father was always absent, so my mother was responsible for

the domestic finances and household chores. I seldom saw my father. As a consequence, I even named my younger brother, although my name was given by my father, because my father was always away from home.”

A general tendency was found from these questionnaires: the later the date of marriage, the more likely the women were to be managers. From 1949 onwards, all the managers were the wives. This indicates that women gradually became the distributors of domestic finance within households. Respondent 40, a staff member at KSR, stated that he gave most of his money to his wife each month. “She would give back some money for my daily necessities,” he said. The major way for his wife to manage money was by *huei* (*hue-a*), an informal mutual loan association among friends (Wolf 1972: 223).⁷ In the late 1950s, respondent 40 decided to build a new house by using their savings mainly from the *huei*. Respondent 36 also worked at KSR and commented, “I observed that most of my [male] colleagues [at KSR] did not manage their money. Rather, the domestic finance was managed by their wives.”

Of the 11 female respondents, five responded that the wives were the major managers, three cases involved both husband and wife, one was a mother-in-law, one was husband, and one was unknown.⁸ This proportion was not much higher than the male respondents (13 out of 30 males responded that their wives were the major managers). Furthermore, I have the impression that male respondents did not feel it was “shameful” to admit their wives’ financial management. On the contrary, it seemed to be a positive thing for the husbands to admit. One of my informants told me that this kind of attitude was probably influenced by the Japanese, who thought that women should stay at home, taking care of the household chores and managing finances.

⁷ According to Wolf’s (1972: 223) description, *huei* are “short-term loan associations that meet well the borrowing needs of a community in which everyone knows everyone else and always has.”

⁸ I make this point in response to a statement by Dr. Philip Taylor (The Australian National University), who said: ‘The results – more power attributed to women – may indicate that the gender of your respondents substantially influenced the answers given’ (personal communication).

However, the survey suggests that different social groups had different strategies to deal with domestic finance. Both respondents 3 and Respondent 24's father-in-law opened Chinese-medicine stores in Kio-a-thau in the late 1930s. Respondent 24 stated that her father-in-law was in charge of the money, "My mother-in-law and I just watched the store sometimes," she said. However, respondent 3 revealed that his wife was in charge of the finance of the store. There is a story behind this. Respondent 3 had previously opened a store in Ci-shan and earned a lot of money. Unfortunately he was involved in an affair with a prostitute, and spent all the money. He thus moved to Kio-a-thau for a new start. In Kio-a-thau, his wife started to manage his money because she thought this could stop her husband from marrying another concubine.

Also, according to my survey and interviews, different social classes and marriage types also played crucial roles in shaping power interaction between spouses in terms of financial management. The wife of respondent 20 took control of domestic finances because she came from a rich family. She was good at accounting although she was illiterate. Respondent 20 studied abroad in Japan in the 1920s and got a bachelor degree there. In contrast, his wife was illiterate, yet she came from quite a rich family in You-chang. Her family, as she described, "were the richest family in the area. The land of my family was so extensive that you could not reach the end even though you rode a horse for a day," she stated with a bit of exaggeration. Occasionally, the local men would tease respondent 20 in public like this, "You are henpecked." For example, respondent 36 commented in this way: "Because your wife came from a rich family. That was why she could 'speak more loudly'."

Regarding marriage types, I found from the interviews that wives of uxori-local marriages seemed to have more power compared with those of major and minor marriages. Respondent 34, for example, who was the eldest daughter in her family, had an uxori-local marriage since she had seven sisters and no brothers. Her daughter, Flower, remembered her mother in this way:

I found my mother was so busy, and my father was pretty silent all the time. My father would give her most of the salary he made per month. And my

mother was responsible for most of the things in the household, which included the expenditure, household chores, naming of the children, and marriage arrangements for the three children. She even arranged her own funeral. For instance, she asked me to prepare earrings, a bracelet, a beautiful dress with pearls, and a flower on her head....

There is evidence from the survey that there was a tendency to transfer the power of domestic finance to the wives after family division. According to respondent 36, disputes over minor things in daily life were typically the major reason for dividing a family. Respondent 36 has four brothers, who originally lived together as a big family with their respective wives, who were allocated household chores by the parents-in-law. Each daughter-in-law was supposed to take turns cooking for the whole family. The dispute started with the allocation of household chores among daughters-in-law. "Every time the youngest daughter-in-law cooked," respondent 36 continued, "she always complained about why she had to cook. Therefore, nobody liked her and would gossip about her." As a result, the father decided to divide the family in the early 1960s. Margery Wolf (1972: 163-4) indicates that "mother-in-law" and "daughter-in-law" conflicts were the main reason for family division and could result in suicides in the most serious circumstances. According to respondent 36, quarrels between daughters-in-law as well as mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law became another source of conflict. He added, "Sons could get along well with each other, but the women, no way."

Respondent 36 reported that the father and, later on, the eldest brother were responsible for the management of domestic finance prior to the division. However, his wife took over this job after the division. This is not a unique case. Of the 26 respondents who said that their families had been divided (see Table 5.7), five out of 10 originally controlled by the fathers-in-law transferred control to the wives after division, while 10 out of 12 controlled by mothers-in-laws transferred to the wives. All four of the other categories transferred financial control to daughters-in-laws (wives). Accordingly, the data shows that daughters-in-law (wives) played a crucial role in terms of domestic finance in changing times. Also, this could indicate that most women would like to divide their family as soon as possible since they could then control domestic finance.

Table 5.7
The changing context of the management of domestic finance after family division

Shift to whom?	Original manager		
	Father-in-law	Mother-in-law	Others
Husband	3	1	0
Daughters-in-law (wives)	5	10	4
Husband/wife	2	1	0
Total number	10	12	4

Source: Fieldwork data, 2002-2003. **Notes:** The term of “Others” includes parents-in-law and brothers.

Men’s responses

According to my survey, parents arranged most of the marriages. Respondent 36 commented on the rarity of “freedom of choice for his or her partner” in the colonial period: “Those who could choose their own partners were considered more ‘superior’,” he said. Generally, most people could not choose their partners. Respondent 33 commented: “such a marriage [the type of marriage that parents arranged] was called ‘marriage of filial piety’ by us. We were forced to accept it because of filial piety.” However, the questionnaire responses show an inconsistency. On the one hand, arranged marriages were popular. On the other hand, 11 respondents revealed that they had girlfriends/boyfriends before they got married. In practice, the real number could be greater than this. This inconsistency suggests that an idealised view of the past in terms of marriage could no longer describe the period under study. However, the number of marriages based on mutual attraction and love was only three: 1, 28, and 41, which usually took place among casual workers. Respondents 1 and 28 revealed that both partners were working as casual sugarcane workers. Respondent 28 stated that he even had three “competitors” when he was courting his prospective wife.

One of the cases from the survey suggests that this challenge to the traditional notion of arranged marriage was only available to a person who could exercise his

or her freedom of choice. Respondent 36, an employee at KSR, had a girlfriend before he got married. His girlfriend was a casual worker at the refinery too. They loved each other, but he remembered that he did not even ask for his father's consent since he could predict the final answer:

It was impossible for him to say yes. We were a peasant family. My parents thought we needed someone who could help with farming. They did not think that a daughter-in-law who worked as an employee [at KSR] would do for farming.

A typical case whose parents arranged a marriage was respondent 20, who showed his resistance until the last minute of his wedding. He was forced to marry by his parents, but he confessed that he had a Japanese girlfriend before marriage when he was studying abroad in Tokyo. Accordingly, he did not want to accept his parents' arrangement and took several measures to resist. He maintained:

I was a man who had a kind of "Japanese spirit." I did not want my marriage to be arranged by my parents but I couldn't say a word about it. My parents' ideas were very traditional [in terms of marriage]. I was arguing with them but it did not work. As a result, I ran to the railroad [in Kio-a-thau] and was prepared to be hit by a train.

Fortunately, his father stopped him on the rails. However, he continued to resist the marriage by missing the wedding ceremony. "I hid myself on the wedding day in 1937," he said. "As a result, everybody was looking everywhere for me." When I interviewed him in winter, 2002, his wife, an eighty-two-year lady, sat right across from him. "I did not want to marry him at that time, either," she added.

Certainly they did not get along with each other after the marriage. But in the end they did not divorce. His wife told me: "It was shameful to be 'kicked out' from this marriage." Nevertheless, the husband had several affairs with other lovers outside the marriage after he got married. In early 2003, several months after I interviewed her, the wife had a stroke and could not speak or recognise anyone. Once I saw her husband washing her face carefully and murmuring something. A contradictory image came to me as I recalled the wife had told me three months ago, "We have been arguing for centuries."

Given his personal background and influenced by the colonial ideas about marrying concubines, respondent 20 did not marry a concubine.⁹ In contrast, respondent 36 told me a story about marriage to a concubine in colonial Kio-a-thau. Wave, one of the local elite, who had received a high education at that time, was arranged to marry his wife when he was about twenty. However, Wave did not love her at all. It was reported that his wife, whose personality was said to be quite similar to respondent 20's wife, was illiterate and shrewish. This man was so romantic that he had several affairs, which often irritated his wife.

During the Second World War, the Japanese government sent Wave to Hong Kong as an interpreter. He had an affair with a Cantonese woman there, and finally married her as a concubine. They had two children in Hong Kong. In 1945, he brought his concubine and two children back to Kio-a-thau, where his wife would not allow any of them into her house. Wave explained that he had married the concubine because she had saved his life in the war, but his wife shouted to him with great anger: "You do not care about your six children [in Taiwan] and me. You care about that woman." The husband could find no alternative but to send the concubine and the two children somewhere else. Based on the idea of monogamy, his wife did not want him to live with his concubine. Instead, she simply let him send some money to her and the two children.

According to these two stories, the notion of marrying concubines was not both accepted by both partners under study. Marrying a concubine in the pre-colonial period was largely in response to a practical need, reproduction. However, my survey indicates that marrying a concubine was not just for reproduction in the colonial period. The case of respondent 20 suggests that a "marriage based on mutual love" really mattered for a man who thought he was well-educated, while the second case suggests that marrying a concubine was used as a strategy to deal with an arranged marriage to a woman considered to be shrewish. These two cases have something in common in that having affairs outside marriage or marrying a concubine was used as a means to resist their arranged marriages,

⁹ Respondent 20 (Water as discussed previously) studied abroad in Japan and was adopted by the general manager of the Sugar Refinery. Japanese views about marrying concubines have been discussed earlier in this chapter.

which were based on interest exchanges and class benefits rather than mutual love between partners.

Women's voices

My survey and interviews reveal that resistance to tradition occurred not only among men but also among women, although the number of the latter was less significant. Nevertheless, one of the cases shows that the form of resistance to an arranged marriage proposal was quite different between genders. The common excuse for sons to refuse an arranged marriage was, as respondent 36 stated, "I told my father I was too young to marry." As for daughters, a common excuse to refuse such marriage proposals was filial piety. Respondent 36 reported that an 80-year-old lady in the neighbouring village had remained single all her life. When asked why she was single, she replied, "If I had married out, I could not have taken care of my parents." However, respondent 36 reported that the true reason for her staying single was that her boyfriend had been married by arrangement with another woman. In these circumstances, she was too sad to marry.

Several people I spoke to claimed agency in terms of marriage, especially between the end of the colonial period and the initial stage of the post-colonial Nationalist regime. In September, 2002, Flower invited me to visit her aunt, respondent 41, born in 1929. Her aunt looked younger than her real age and told us her story. Respondent 41 was somewhat unusual. Her story began in the late 1940s, when Taiwan was freed from Japanese rule and taken over by the Nationalist regime. At that time, when she was just a teenager, she went to Kaohsiung city to make a living. Her parents arranged a marriage for her and eventually she got engaged to her intended husband. Respondent 41 claimed she earned \$500 per month by doing two jobs – as a receptionist and a part-time household maidservant – at the same time. "I earned even more than most men at that time," she commented. "Initially, my fiancé looked humble and honest, but after the engagement he began to borrow money from me," she said, "so I decided to leave him since I found that all he wanted was money. I broke off the engagement, which irritated my parents." She wept tears as she continued to say:

“so since then I haven’t gone back home for a long time.” Later on, she got acquainted with a Chinese “mainlander” who was a soldier. His occupation and ethnic background were regarded a somewhat inferior by most Taiwanese at that time. Eventually they got married. “I arranged the marriage for myself. I did not ask for any money and dowry. However, I did not receive any blessings from my parents or close relatives.” She concluded, “I felt I was very brave at that time.”

Another case suggests that her notion of sexuality was contradictory to the commonly-accepted value at that time. Love was born in 1913 and was adopted by Yamamoto in the same way as Water. She was a nearly ninety-year-old lady when I interviewed her in 2002. She lived alone in a three-storey house in Kaohsiung city. She rented the ground floor to a photocopy shop. Her husband studied in Tokyo and got his doctoral degree in the 1930s. She also got her diploma of education in Japan. In the living room of her house, she showed me the certificate she received in 1931 with pride. “It was a remarkable achievement among girls, especially among Taiwanese girls,” she said. In 1932, Love and her husband returned to Kio-a-thau and then her husband opened a private clinic on Kio-a-thau Street. Unfortunately both her husband and mother-in-law died only one year after they returned. She was very sad. They had two children, including one son and one daughter, at the time of the husband’s death. She was still in her twenties and famous for her beauty. Then she had several love affairs with other men, including her two brothers-in-law – the husband of her sister-in-law and then the husband of her sister – and a local politician. She and her first brother-in-law had an illegitimate daughter. She was afraid that the event would bring about gossip, so she adopted out this daughter to a friend. I told my mother this news after I completed this interview. My mother was surprised to find that this illegitimate daughter was her classmate in primary school. My mother told me, “She did not tell me the whole story. She just mentioned that she was adopted when she was young.”

These two stories suggest that these two women also sought to find agency in marriage. The experience of respondent 41 suggests that, first, women as well as men tried to choose their own partners without arrangement. Secondly, the ability to be economically independent was a prerequisite to achieving a marriage based

on a woman's own choice. Love's story could be interpreted as an episode where a widow survived after she lost her husband. Also, Love's case suggests that a well-educated woman challenged the boundaries of sexuality allowed in the pre-colonial period. Adopting out her illegitimate daughter did not imply a biased attitude towards daughters. Rather, it reveals a strategy to escape from the gossip of villagers and Confucian moral standards.

Furthermore, my survey indicates that these two wives' attitudes towards their husbands' concubines also changed quite dramatically in the colonial period. For example, I was told that respondent 20's wife could not forgive her husband's "disloyalty," namely his affairs outside the marital relationship. Generally women could not previously recognise the concept of "loyalty" since the notion was based on the idea of a monogamous marriage. By contrast, in colonial times, through schooling, political propaganda, and religious ideas, the concept of monogamous marriage was accepted by most women. Accordingly, although some husbands from rich families still wanted to marry concubines, wives did not take it for granted at all, and attempted to prevent their husbands from marrying concubines. The daughter of Respondent 6, for instance, told me a story about how her mother had asked her to "inspect" her father. Respondent 6 worked in KSR, and colleagues would invite him out after work to have a drink in the brothels on the street.

My mother asked me to accompany my father. I acted somewhat as a spy in order to watch over my father. I remember that he often brought me to the places where many men and women drank together. After returning, my mother asked me questions like: "Where have you been with your father?" "Who did you go with?"

Respondent 6's daughter's classmate had another story about preventing her father from having affairs. Her mother came up with an idea to leave several footprints on the window sill. Once when her father returned extremely drunk at midnight, she heard her mother shouting and pointing to the footprints on the window sill, "Why are you coming so late? I am so afraid. You see," she continued, "a burglar just broke into our house." Having said this, the wife burst out crying.

One of the cases shows that religious ideas probably also influenced men's attitudes towards marrying concubines. Prize was a member of the elite in Kio-a-thau and got along well with Japanese officials. He built the first modern two-storey house on the street (Plate 3.2). A matchmaker once proposed that he marry a concubine, but his family members rejected the proposal. Respondent 36 described the process of the negotiation:

His daughters objected to the idea very much. At that time a matchmaker came to John, saying, "You have a high social status now. You should be matched with a concubine." On hearing this, both his five daughters and the wife protested by holding that it would be a mistake for the father to marry a concubine. The eldest daughter, who was a religious high school student at that time, objected to concubines.

The eldest daughter was educated at Chung Jung Girls' Senior High School, which was established by the missionaries in Tainan in 1887. Richardson (1972: 139) describes the history of this school:

Two young women [Joan Stuart and Annie E. Butler] opened the Girls' School with eighteen pupils on February 14, 1887. The fee for tuition was four dollars a year and the only condition for entrance was that the girls did not bind their feet. Thus, Christianity was in the forefront of social change long before the Japanese arrived.

Christianity was first introduced to Taiwan during the Dutch occupation (Takekoshi 1907: 302). There were two major Churches: the Scottish Presbyterian Mission and the Canadian Presbyterian Church in the early twentieth century. According to Takekoshi (1907: 303), the total number of converts, including Roman Catholics, in colonial Taiwan was 15,068 in 1907. Although the number was not significant, the above case indicates that these Christian ideas influenced everyday meaning through schooling. Jean and John Comaroff (1986) mention how Christian ideas affected the everyday worldview of the people in Tswana, South Africa. For example, the Protestant missionaries taught the locals to "fashion their lives by exercising free choice; personal achievement would be rewarded by the accumulation of goods and moral worth...Most notably among these was the monogamous (nuclear) family, the unit of production and consumption basic to the division of labour in industrial capitalist society" (Comaroff and Comaroff 1986: 16). Similarly, Christian marital ideas, which

highlighted monogamy, probably influenced Prize's eldest daughter and the other people who were Christians. For instance, in Kio-a-thau, five male doctors opened their clinics in colonial times. Two of them married concubines, while the other three did not. Of these three, two were Christians.

In my interviews with locals, I got the impression that men thought that women's manipulation of emotions were powerful, although men did not respect it. The men I spoke to thought women over-reacted to the issue of concubines, even though the men themselves did not necessarily take marrying concubines for granted. Generally speaking, local men commented that an emotional reaction such as that of Wave's wife was extremely negative: jealous, irrational and sensitive. In their view, wives were supposed to be shrewd but should maintain the face of their husbands. Based on this, they thought that both Wave's wife and respondent 20's wife were "tough women in Kio-a-thau" since they had something in common: they were bad-tempered, and liked to take control of everything, which included their husbands' options with concubines. Such stigmatisation indicates that patriarchal ideas were still firmly held by men. Women's manipulations of their emotions do, however, seem to have had an effect.

According to my survey in Kio-a-thau, I conclude that women's emotional reactions towards marrying concubines were an outcome of their interactions with their husbands. I heard the following story. A rich man in Shih-long, the neighbouring village, had three sons with his first wife, but unfortunately his wife suddenly died. He married again and they had six daughters without any sons. Then he married a concubine, who was a prostitute in Tainan. His second wife became quite angry. "She was crying and threatened to kill herself," respondent 40 commented. As a result, she decided to send their daughters to the brothel in Tainan as revenge for the decision of her husband. Respondent 36 reported, "She did so because she wanted to ruin her husband's reputation." The case shows how a woman could use her emotions to deal with a husband's decision to marry a concubine. Similarly, most of the stories I heard suggest that wives would get angry, cry, and, worst of all, commit suicide on hearing of their husbands' affairs. Seldom did I find that a wife had divorced her husband, even if he married a

concubine. A wife would either choose to tolerate the second wife, or adopt measures to stop their husbands from marrying concubines.

Several cases from my survey and interviews show that emotions were used by a wife to prevent their husbands from marrying concubines or having affairs. In Wave's case, the wife's fury had an effect. The wife stopped her husband from living with the concubine, so they lived separately. In the story from Shih-long, hatred was used to take revenge on the husband. As a result, the wife sent the daughters to brothels. I can see that women's emotions were a tool to resist their husbands' affairs. I heard many examples like these in Kio-a-thau. These women exercised their power by openly revealing their feelings towards concubines and love affairs, which were not taken for granted as they had been in their mothers' generation. These case studies show that, first, local women started to take monogamous marriage for granted, and, second, they began to consider their marriages not only for reproduction but also for love and responsibility.

CONCLUSION: BEYOND HISTORY?

In this chapter, I have explored both the general transformations over time and local personal agency in marriages. My interviews and the survey indicate that an idealised view of the past could not describe the colonial period, although a lot of new ideas and values were being introduced. Features such as the changing ideas, impact of colonial laws, migratory experience, and socioeconomic power influenced these trends, although in contradictory ways. For example, the first two factors led to a reduction in concubinage, while the latter two factors acted to sustain and transform the meaning of concubinage over the fifty-year period of colonialism. No one factor was supreme. Each influenced the context through which personal agency was expressed. I have found that the framework of historical sociologists is unilineal and evolutionary in some senses, failing to adequately account for such personal agency. In Kio-a-thau, I found that both men and women utilised personal agency through the manipulation of emotions, controlling domestic finance, and developing affairs outside the marriage to contest their traditional roles in society.

From my survey and interviews, I find out that the daily negotiating process for both genders was diverse. For several men in my interviews, marrying concubines and having affairs were re-interpreted in the colonial period. Traditionally, arranged marriages were based on interest exchanges or class benefits rather than love. Men could not say a word about them. However, in colonial times, several cases show that marrying concubines and affairs outside marriage became a means of resistance towards arranged marriages rather than simply a way to show one's masculinity and produce children. Respondent 20 indicated that a free choice of marriage really mattered for a man who thought he was well-educated, while several cases in this chapter showed how marrying a concubine was used as a strategy to deal with an arranged marriage to a wife considered undesirable.

For several women in my survey, the liberties given by the colonial state might not have had an immediate effect on behaviour. The figures show that many local women did not actively exploit their new rights to divorce as a response to marital problems. However, the idea of monogamy brought about by the colonial state became a backup for interacting with their husbands. By examining the detailed interactions of daily practices between partners, I pointed out that wives used either their management of domestic finance or emotions as strategies to deal with their marital relationships. More specifically, the high possibility of a husband marrying a concubine and having an affair triggered a series of responses by a wife. As a result, she tried to use her power in the household by controlling the money and manipulating her emotions. Women expressed their agency by deploying cultural idioms such as weeping.

On the other hand, I suggest that historical impacts should be highlighted as well as personal agency. In this chapter, I have pointed out that female emotions were constructed over time. According my interviews and survey in Kio-a-thau, I conclude that, with an acceptance of monogamous marriage in colonial times, women used their resources to manipulate their emotions and the control of domestic finance to deal with their husbands' affairs outside marriage. The social expressions that Margery Wolf explored in the 1960s were an outcome of long-term social and cultural transformations. These social facts were not eternal

features in Taiwanese society and could not be separated in history. To conclude, cultural features are constructed in history and they are only meaningful when put into historical context.



Plate 5.1 Wedding ceremony of a Taiwanese family
Photo: Zensaburou Kaneki

6 SEXUAL DIVISION OF LABOUR

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I examine the gendered division of labour. Many anthropologists have discussed women's roles in relation to the process of industrialisation in Taiwan (for example, Wolf 1972; Diamond 1979; Olson 1975). Greenhalgh (1994), Diamond (1979), and Gallin (1989) are in agreement about the inferiority of women's role both in households and society (see Introduction). However, they differ on whether or how the role of women changed transform through the process of economic transformation. For example, Diamond (1979) argues that Taiwanese women's involvement in the factories in the 1970s remained under the control of the household head, typically a male. Furthermore, women's work, no matter whether in the household or in the workplace, is defined as an "extension of their family duties" (Diamond 1979: 318). Olson (1975) points out that women in different social classes changed their mores about themselves as a result of industrialisation. Olson (1975: 674) argues that high status urban women place more emphasis on self-reliance, and less emphasis on conformity to authority than do low status urbanities. Kung (1981) explores the perceptions of work by women who were engaged in an electronics factory. He argues that the involvement into factory work impacted on their understanding of women's own social status and personal relationships. Kung (1981: 209) states:

Women in factories certainly share enough of the same disabilities to permit the development of class consciousness; but rather than developing class consciousness, women direct their resentments at group leaders, supervisors, co-workers, or office staff. Women are more concerned about opportunism in social relations and fine graduations in rank than with the union and how it actually might be made to serve them.

The process of industrialisation in Taiwan did not start from the 1970s onwards. In fact, a large scale of this process could be traced back to the Japanese colonial period. The sugar economy was a good example. Sugarcane companies should recruit many labourers, including males and females, to be involved into sugar production. At the moment we are not aware how this process of industrialisation

in colonial Taiwan impacted on the locals. Furthermore, the role of women in Taiwan was significantly transformed in the last century. During my review of the literature, I wondered, first, how did women as well as men, respond to the same circumstances of industrialisation through time? Did the historical discontinuity affect women's roles? Secondly, how did women of different social classes respond to that discontinuity?

The colonial situation provides us with an opportunity to explore my questions. With the intervention of the Japanese colonial state in Taiwan, a new kind of division of labour aimed at capitalist accumulation was created. This intervention involved the reshaping of local gender roles by, for example, trying to abolish footbinding and encouraging girls to receive education. Women who received education were encouraged to enter into social networks by doing jobs such as factory workers, clerks, midwives, and school teachers. During my fieldwork in Kio-a-thau, I found that this new division of labour changed the original gendered configuration of labour usage in the pre-colonial period. Also, I discovered that intervention had a differential impact on women of different classes. Thus, I focused on the dimension of how these rearrangements in the Japanese colonial period occurred and how the women dealt with these new circumstances according to their different classes. The overall argument of this chapter is that this kind of colonial reshaping created a new cultural configuration, through which women of different classes developed various strategies to deal with these contradictory outcomes. These strategies involved adjustments in household tasks, changes in identity, and the struggle between genders.

The first section of this chapter describes economic patterns and labour demands in the pre-colonial period. What were the differing roles of the genders and what were the household dynamics at that time? In the second section I explore the new division of labour brought about by Japanese colonialism. What were the views held by the colonial state about the gendered division of labour? How did the changes that they instigated evolve? In the third section I provide several case studies to examine how women of different social classes dealt with the changes and how their agency manifested itself.

HOUSEHOLD DYNAMICS OF THE CING ERA AND EARLY COLONIAL PERIOD

In the late Cing period, most of the agricultural production remained at the stage of subsistence economy.¹ Ho (1968: 313) describes the agricultural pattern in Taiwan as follows. “When Japan acquired Taiwan in 1895, its agriculture was stagnant and its peasants were engaged almost exclusively in subsistence farming.” The subsistence agriculture was composed of wet-rice and other dry-field crops such as wheat and millet. The cultivation of these crops could be complementary because of their “capital, labour, and land requirements” (Isett 1995: 238). For example, in southern Taiwan in the nineteenth century, as Isett (1995: 238-9) indicates, “The tripartite combination of wet-rice, sugarcane, and sugar refining was possible because their respective production schedules did not compete for capital, labour, or land.” Farmers planted wet-rice in February or March, while they grew sugarcane in July and harvested it after about 16 months. After that, the old-style sugar mill (see Chapter 2) started to operate through the winter and into early spring. During the intervals of cultivation, peasants could mobilise their labour into “non-agricultural lines of production” (Isett 1995: 237), which varied according to the agricultural calendar, and “often manifest[ed] itself in sideline or handicraft commodity production” (Isett 1995: 237).

In the pre-colonial period, women played a limited role in agriculture. Major fieldwork tasks were done by men (Takekoshi 1907: 202; Shepherd 1993: 386).² Instead, women were more involved in the domestic household economy and “non-agricultural lines of production” as mentioned above. Guess, one of my informants, told me how her mother and paternal grandmother were involved in household economy. Her paternal grandmother was born in 1877. Her mother was born in 1902. Both of them had their feet bound when they were small children. Her paternal grandfather owned two or three *chia* of wet-rice fields. He had no children, so he adopted Guess’s father as a son [on 30 August 1902]. Guess remembered:

¹ The Cing Dynasty took over Taiwan in 1684 after defeating the Jheng Cheng-gong’s army.

² For example, Shepherd (1993: 386) states, in the Cing era “a Chinese husband would expect less field work from his wife” [compared with an aboriginal husband].

I was told that my grandmother would help my grandfather with some field chores such as drying rice husks, and do some agricultural jobs such as shelling peanuts at home even though she bound her feet. She was a very hard-working woman. My mother was born in the early Japanese period and was asked to bind her feet when she was young. At that time, my grandmother lived with us because she had no other son except my father. She helped my parents to take care of us. My father worked at KSR. My mother was a housewife and she was responsible for most of the household chores such as cooking, laundry, and cleaning. My grandmother also helped to raise two or three pigs as a side job for the family. I always saw my mother and grandmother, both of whom had bound feet, collecting leftovers together to feed the pigs when I was young. I had to help my mother with household chores because I was the oldest daughter in my family.

The other story came from Flower's paternal grandmother, who was born in 1890 and also had their feet bound. She continued this for the rest of her life, although the Japanese encouraged her to abandon foot-binding. Although the grandmother bound her feet, she could stay at home doing some household chores and some field chores such as digging sweet potatoes and shelling peanuts. "She could do most of the field chores except some laborious tasks such as ploughing fields and driving ox-carts," Flower commented. Her grandmother had two children with her first husband. One was a girl and the other was a boy. She remarried when both children were teenagers because her first husband died. Her second husband, Flower's paternal grandfather, came to live in his wife's house. Flower stated, "Her first husband left several *chia* of land. My grandmother could not manage them herself. Her son was too small to labour in their fields, so she needed someone who could take care of the fields."

The usage of labour between genders was closely connected with the differing role of both genders. Several anthropologists have indicated that these differing roles in the system of intrafamilial exchange were reflected in a gendered division of labour and activity sphere in Taiwanese society (Greenhalgh 1994; Diamond 1979; Gallin 1989; Gates 1987). Greenhalgh (1994: 759) indicates, "[Taiwanese] women were expected to contribute to productive undertakings when their labour and skills were needed, their activities were appropriately confined to the 'inside' or domestic sphere, where they would not come into contact with unrelated men." Gallin (1989: 377) states that female children in Taiwan were not valued because

they were household members “who drained family resources as children and who withdrew their assets (domestic labour and earning power) when they married.” Most of the women were often used as domestic labour. An unmarried daughter had to do the household tasks and was rarely educated. Gates (1987: 106) indicates, “a girl-child was raised very different from a boy. Girls began to work at chores, tend babies, or do elaborate needlework while boys were still playing freely or in school.” In contrast a son obviously had some “privileges” in terms of household chores. River, one informant, recalled a memorable event when he wanted to meet his classmate, Jon, one morning in the early 1930s. Jon’s eldest brother had died before he was born, so his parents were quite happy about Jon because he was the only boy in his family. River noted that Jon was treated like an emperor in the family:

I saw everybody doing everything for him. His sister-in-law was preparing a lunch box for him. His two eldest [unmarried] sisters were busy. One was helping him to get dressed. The other was fastening his shoelaces. Meanwhile, his mother was yelling aloud: hurry up! He’s going to be late for school....

Footbinding was a crucial factor that affected the gendered division of labour at that time as it confined women’s major activities within households. Furthermore, this confinement substantially reduced the opportunities for women to develop their economic potentiality in other sectors. Although I was told that some women with bound feet also did some side jobs at home such as sewing “three-inch-long shoes” [for women with bound feet] to make extra money to support family expenditure, these cases were rare. The above accounts from Guess and Flower both show that the popularity of footbinding regulated the movement of women, thus further reinforcing the subordinate status of women. Women’s footbinding was one of the “Chinese customs” carried out deliberately by early Han-settlers in Taiwan (Shepherd 1993; Lamley 1999: 218). Fan (1997: 45-50) indicates that footbinding was a site of “erotic imagination” for husbands since the wiggling gait of the women who bound their feet would raise men’s imagination about sexuality. Also, footbinding was a “restraining device which highlighted the concept of female chastity” (Fan 1997: 45) since it physically prevented women from moving about freely. This prevented them from coming into contact with other men except their husbands and families. However, Blake (1994: 708) argues

that footbinding was a way that women in China “supported, participated in, and reflected on the Neo-Confucian way of being civilised.” The discourse of footbinding was described as “natural” and women thus believed that they could overcome these intense physical pains in order to fulfill their social roles. In the labouring sense, Hill Gates (2001: 147) thought that footbinding “permitted an extraordinary degree of control over young female labourers” and was embedded in a Chinese kinship/gender system which differed from western capitalism. Under such a system, “The bodies and labour-power of unmarried daughters were allocated absolutely to their parents to use for the good of the patricorporation” (Gates 2001: 146). She further argues that although footbinding prevented women from heavy labour, footbound women provided a major source of “light labour” in the household such as spinning and weaving for sale before the advent the industrial period.

How popular was it for women to bind their feet in Taiwan? In 1905, when the first general census survey was conducted, the rate of footbinding for women on the whole island was 66.6 percent (Takenaka 1995: 261; Wu 1996: 220), although the figure varied sharply among different ethnic groups such as Fujian, Hakka, and Plains aborigines’ women (Shepherd 1993: 526). Shepherd (1993: 526) reveals that only 0.5 percent of plains aborigine women had bound feet according to the 1905 census reports, as compared to 1.5 percent of Hakka women and 68 percent of Fujian women. Plains aborigine women in contact primarily with Hakka rather than Fujian were exposed to a different set of expectations with respect to female footbinding and related roles.³ Hakka women’s low footbinding rate also accounted for the cultural difference from Fujian women in terms of division of labour (Wolf and Chuang 1994). In a local sense, According to my

³ Initially Han-settlers used footbinding as a “strategic tool” to claim “moral superiority” when they contacted non-Han people in the seventeenth and eighteenth century in Taiwan. Han women who bound their feet were considered to be more “civilised” than the Other – the aborigines, although the latter did not necessarily accept this. As Shepherd (1993: 386) states: “two of the three practices that most appalled the aborigines and seriously undermined Chinese claims to moral superiority in aborigine eyes were female infanticide and footbinding (the third was the Chinese use of nightsoil). Plains aborigines [in Taiwan] almost never adopted footbinding, despite its prevalence among their Hokien (Fujian) neighbors.”