"CONSERVATIVE SOCIAL ATTITUDES IN MODERN CHINA: A STUDY EXEMPLIFIED BY CASES IN SHANGHAI, TIENTSIN, AND HONG KONG, 1917-1932"

by

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A Thesis
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In Memory

of

My Father, Steve

1911-1978
Declaration

This thesis represents my own original work.

Herbert Huey
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Mr. T.Y. Yong of the History Department, University of Hong Kong, typed the manuscript. Mr. K.C. Chau, a fellow student in the Department of Forestry, A.N.U., drew the maps.

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Abstract

The modernization of China is a perpetual problem confronting Chinese politicians and intellectuals alike. This problem involves the question of defining and implementing changes in Chinese politics, economy and society. Because of the diversity and disparity of these changes, modernization is not easily achieved. This further raises the important issue of the acceptance of changes in Chinese society.

The 1920s was a period which held much promise for modernization. However, Chinese political and economic developments were limited in success. By focusing attention on Shanghai, Tientsin and Hong Kong -- the three Chinese cities at the forefront of modernization -- this thesis shows that the conservative social attitudes at that time increased the difficulty of social modernization. For that matter, political and social institutions went against some programmes of modernization by supporting these attitudes.

Urban Chinese society was still heavily impregnated with the idea of running itself according to family and moral values. The stress on these values was reflected by the attitudes towards sex and law, which in turn affected the organization, stability and control of private and public lives. An analysis of some relevant cases, which are gathered from several contemporary newspapers, indicates that social attitudes towards marriage, divorce, the use of law, and crime were expressive of these two dominant values. Family and moral values also subjected Chinese individuals
to the larger concern with social harmony and moral order. As a result, much inequity and irrationality were perpetuated against some individuals. This contradicted one of the basic tenets of social modernization -- a progressive outlook of the status of an individual vis-à-vis society.

As a conclusion, this thesis argues that unless there is a fundamental change in Chinese social attitudes, modernization will be confined to the more tangible aspects of political and economic changes. Moreover, the basic response of Chinese society to any form of change is conditioned by an adherence to traditions. The realization of this attitudinal factor will enhance the chance for modernization to succeed by lessening the iconoclastic elements.
**Conventions**

All Chinese proper names are romanized according to the Wade-Giles system, except for common ones such as Shanghai, Tientsin and Hong Kong.

The numerals in the citations of newspaper source should be read in the following way: for example, 1/1/1917 (1) means 1st January, 1917 (page 1). It may be noted that Chinese news publishers sometimes enumerate the pages of a newspaper in terms of a sheet; that is, there are four pages to every sheet.
List of Abbreviations

CCP  Chinese Communist Party  中國共產黨
KMT  Kuomintang (Nationalist Party)  國民黨
Y.M.C.A.  Young Men Christian Association

Primary Sources

HJ  Hua-tzu jih-pao  华字日报
SH  Shen Pao  申報
SP  Shih Pao  時報
ST  Shun-t'ien Shih-pao  順天時報
TK  Ta-kung Pao  大公报

Journals

AAAG  Annals, American Association of Geographers
CSPSR  Chinese Social and Political Science Review
CSSH  Comparative Studies in Society and History
JAS  Journal of Asian Studies
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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: The Study of Conservative Social Attitudes in Modern Chinese Cities

Modernization is a paradigm commonly used by some historians to understand and explain the historical changes of China after 1840. There are, however, several problems in the application of this model to historical study.

First of all, we are confronted with the difficulty of defining the term. Invariably, modernization is defined as either an ideal, or a process, or a phase in the development of human societies. Whatever the definition, the underlying assumption is the inevitability of human progress. In this connection, societies of different cultural backgrounds are arbitrarily compared.

Secondly, human activities assume many forms: broadly speaking, they can be political, social, economic, intellectual, and psychological in nature. Thus, we must be careful in differentiating the form of modernization.

Thirdly, different aspects of a culture are related to and have influence on each other. Therefore, modernization works in a dynamic situation. A change in one aspect may require or bring about a change in another. Significantly, these changes do not necessarily occur at the same time and at the same rate. Therefore, some aspects appear more "modern" than others; and the less "progressive" elements seem to frustrate the attempt at complete modernization. In this sense, modernization must not be seen as an agent of level changes.
Finally, as some scholars have pointed out, tradition and modernity are not two mutually exclusive and antithetical systems. Whatever changes are proposed and implemented, there still exists certain degree of historical consciousness and continuity of the past in the new forms of politics, society, economy, and thought. To borrow an analogy from the natural sciences, modernization effects physical changes rather than concocts chemical changes.

Bearing in mind the four critiques of modernization, we may ask ourselves how they affect our interpretations of modern Chinese history? We may even ask whether there is a modern China?

As a matter of historiography, most historians trace the development of modern China to the First Opium War (1839-42). The rationale is that this historical event set the stage for the confrontation between Chinese and Western cultures. One inherent problem of this approach is that China's willingness and ability to adopt western ideas and institutions are made the criteria of the country's extent and success of modernization. Many scholars, therefore, draw parallels between China's self-strengthening efforts (tsu-oh'iang) and Japan's Meiji era, and compare the two oriental societies within the framework of westernization.

Historical analyses of modern China tend to be heavily impregnated with references to contemporaneous political issues. Political modernization -- of an ailing dynasty, or an unsuccessful republic, or a communist state -- becomes a significant theme in many studies. Others, which are
ostensibly social, economic, or intellectual history, are interpreted within the same framework of political development.

We are aware of the differences in ideas on change which were expounded by Chinese politicians and intellectuals alike. Many studies on these, however, convey the false impression that once the differences were resolved or the opposition was defeated, modernization as a process of change could be put to test in China as an entity. As such, it fails to describe and differentiate Chinese society's response to change. Modern Chinese urban and rural society provide different settings for modernization.

Some historians assess the "failure" of modernization in China in terms of a strong and resilient tradition. They postulate that a "modern" China should contain none of the old elements. But, as one recent revisionist historian points out, political and cultural conservatism existed in modern China. These phenomena were not negative forces of change, but in fact helped to stabilize and adjust the tempo of modernization. Therefore, in the analysis of modern Chinese society, we must find out the novel changes as well as isolate for study the traditional elements.

In the light of the above critiques, the notion of a modern China warrants further study. The present thesis proposes to study China's modernization in terms of social attitudes in the 1920s. This exercise is not only a piece of research of a neglected area. It also provides a corrective perspective of development in modern Chinese urban society with reference to social attitudes and institutions.
The idea that conservative social attitudes existed in the cities will illustrate and explain the pattern and consequences of social changes.

The Criterion of Social Change: Conservative Social Attitudes in Modern Chinese Cities

With special reference to Turkish society, Daniel Lerner suggests that modernity is the equilibrium of changes experienced by a society.\(^7\) This equilibrium depends on the extent to which a society makes continuous and subconscious references to traditional practices in daily life. However, while some irrational and less useful elements in a tradition are discarded, modernity is not necessarily anti-traditional.

The idea of conservative social attitudes used in the present thesis is derived as an induction from Lerner's thesis. The premise is that within a society there is a tendency to adhere to traditional practices, ideas and institutions. Many people take for granted certain established values and modes of living. They prefer to accept and persist in those things which are readily available and familiar to them.\(^8\) This frame of mind can be called conservatism, and it is the base upon which the society makes its response to changes. In this manner, the extent and the level of modernity are influenced by this set of consolidated social attitudes. And it provides the people with a sense of historical consciousness and social continuity.\(^9\)

This theory is especially useful for understanding a society as envious of its tradition as China. Benjamin Schwartz suggests that there is a need to look at the "other
side" of Republican China. By this he means that there were certain ingrained habits and customs in Chinese politics, and he labels this brand of political inertia as conservatism. Moreover, this conservative temperament was not limited to those politicians and intellectuals who were averse to rapid, and often iconoclastic, changes.

The masses ... may often support conservatism because they are unreflectively but deeply attached to many established ways of life as true and valid and are thus willing to accept the conservative position that these ways of life are inextricably bound up with a total prevailing sociopolitical system.

In this light, this thesis argues that in the 1920s, the "modernization" of Chinese politics, economy and thoughts was not matched by similar degree of transformation in Chinese social attitudes. This lag was indicated by the trend of conservative social attitudes, which was in turn founded upon particular attitudes towards certain fundamental issues in Chinese society. Such a phenomenon also explained why changes in many areas were impeded or slowed down.

To comprehend the causal relationship between conservative attitude and modern transformation of society, it is necessary to make a definition of social modernization. To oversimplify it to mean a process by which a traditional society becomes modern is not only a tautology but also a misleading exaggeration. Certain perimeters must be set to make the definition a working one. In this context, historical analysis provides the greatest aid. It may be noted that the development of western industrial society has become the standard largely acceptable to leading scholars on the subject.
The massive applications of scientific and technological innovations transform the direction and quality of growth of society. Due to progress in modern medicine, the general health of people improves at the same time as life expectancy lengthens. With mechanized labour replacing manual labour, professional and clerical skills are more in demand. People become more orientated towards a capital-intensive economy.

One of the most notable signs of a modern society is the proliferation of cities. Urbanization not only summarizes the change of an agrarian into an industrial society, but it also results in new social structures, social relationships and social roles. There are other less physically visible attributes of social modernization. An extension of literacy, accompanied by improvements in communication, instils in the general populace a greater awareness of their society and its problems. Thus a sense of rapport amongst the individuals is created, and this leads towards both emotional and communal unity. The organization of such sentiments -- social mobilization -- is reflected in the breakdown of the traditional kinship and hierarchical order, and the establishment of an "equal-individual" and communal system.

Social modernization is a widely inclusive concept of change compared to political and economic modernization. On the other hand, it spells a more concrete form of change than cultural modernization. With the primary aim of improving social conditions in a rational and systematic manner, social modernization has greater temporal than
structural significance. Basically, both political and economic modernization belong to the category of involuntary and planned changes. As far as political modernization is concerned, the prerequisite and the fundamental nature are the existence of an enlightened leadership which is committed to rationalizing the social system by mobilizing the resources more efficiently. In fact, the leaders believe in dictating the tempo of change to the benefit of all in the society. Thus, a set of consistent policies characterizes political modernization, and sometimes the perpetuity of the modernized system is ensured by a legal framework which reduces the importance of the individual.

Similarly, in economic modernization structural changes are more significant than temporal ones. Again, leadership and planning are the prerequisites of economic transformation. The major aim is undoubtedly material improvement, thus economic growth via technological specialization sometimes entails enormous social cost. Indeed, both political and economic modernization differ from social modernization in the most crucial aspect of being modernization from above and are particularly prone to popular dislike.

Cultural modernization is different from social modernization in ways unlike political and economic modernization. It is basically an ideal as well as a philosophy of change. In the broadest sense, it means that a particular human society makes efforts to attain progress (an ideal) and to adjust its systems and reorientate its thinking (structural change) in order to suit the needs of time. Since a culture is both the tradition and the
structure of a society, there cannot be a well-defined pattern and schedule of cultural modernization. Instead, the singularly important issue is that the various forms of modernization -- political, economic, social, intellectual etc. -- are dependent on the nature of the culture. It is the specifics of the culture which determine the rate and the degree of modernization.

In this thesis, social modernization is seen as related to political, economic and cultural modernization in the general sense that modernization is a broad concept of change in human societies. More concrete than cultural modernization, social modernization indicates the actual changes (planned or otherwise) which are being experienced by people in the society. This may include political and/or economic modernization which are part of the systematic (functional) transformation in human organization. Social modernization is also related to cultural modernization in that it reflects the resilience and the intrinsic values of the tradition undergoing change. Both political and economic modernization are comparably more dramatic and noticeable than social modernization such that they are easily taken as the yardstick of modern changes. In effect, social modernization is the more fundamental aspect of modernization. It is only with individuals perceiving the need for change and willing to transform their norms of behaviour vis-à-vis planned changes in politics and economy can then modernization be implemented and sustained in society.

Modernization is a process which involves a series and a level of structural changes that can only be accomplished
in an undefined period of time. The crux in understanding this process is to identify the basic ingredients of the particular culture undergoing modernization, and to transform them accordingly. This process continuously improves with increasing human knowledge, efficiency and desire to change for the better. Thus, modernization cannot be a goal. Very often, planned modernization is committed to a functional approach, and aims basically at an equilibrium of transformation in society. The problem thus emerges is that it assumes that all aspects of human affairs are rational and subject to coordinated changes: obviously, emotional and psychological matters are not.

It must be recognized that whatever the kinds and levels of transformation taking place in society, the process is such that it means an orientation of the past -- "traditional" institutions and attitudes -- towards the requirements of the present. There is a continuity of the past in the present. The traditional cannot be clearly identified from the modern. In this light, the differentiation of conservative behaviour/practices from modern ones is an extension of this problem.

Indeed, a few fallacies befell the analysis of a "conservative-versus-modern" syndrome. It is mistakenly believed by some people that the modernization process eradicates all traces of the past. Moreover, much influenced by the fact that the concept first originated in the West, there is the misleading view that western culture is modern. Conversely, eastern culture is conservative. Similarly, there are other dichotomies; namely, divisions
between traditional and rational, spiritual and material. These fallacies cannot help us to understand the actual nature and process of historical and social changes.

The most useful standard for assessing the saliences of conservative (or modern) practices/views is to judge whether such actions/attitudes are anathematic to (or supportive of) necessary changes in society. The crucial point, however, is to remember that even in the most modernized society, there is remnants of the past, which exist either as tradition and treasured as such, or as obstacles to wholesale and arbitrary transformation.

Value systems are the most problematic factor in the process of modernization. While institutions and policies are easily planned to change in order to perform more efficiently and progressively, political leaders and economic planners find it difficult to transform the man-on-the-street's attitudes towards his life and surroundings. In other words, individual social worlds all differ and are not easily subject to levelling changes. Institutional and economic modernizations may offer brand new facilities which are acceptable to many conservative people -- those who tend to adhere to the past in deciding over their future -- out of convenience, but when it comes to interpreting the importance of taking particular actions within the framework of their "social philosophy", they prefer to take a more cautious approach. There lacks the openness and readiness to accept new experience because of the undesirable implications of new social mores. For example, many people may realize that the law-court offers the best protection of
individual rights, but are sometimes reluctant to make use of it out of moral concern. Women are especially aware of the moral implications if they dare to divorce their husbands in court. Ironically, men often exploit this moral pressure to their advantage by taking their wives to court over marital problems.

All in all, it is of vital importance to understand the diversity and disparity of modernization as a process of change in human society. In this thesis, particular emphasis is placed upon the difficulties to define and to measure modernization of ideas, social values and social acts.

Jerome Greider, in accounting for the failure of liberalism in modern China, suggests that radicalism was the key to successful political modernization. As an ideology, radicalism was probably the logical and inevitable development from liberalism. It was basically a political motif with little permutation in Chinese society. This thesis attempts to show that even in the most modern sector of Chinese society, the general populace harboured some conservative social attitudes. It is these which retarded the rate of modern changes.
For that matter, it is also argued as part of the thesis that conservative social attitudes were a constituent factor of some "modern" institutions. The setting up of thoroughly modern institutions, without reference to the people's actual social needs, was of course detrimental to an acceptable programme of modernization. At times, some organizations, which were modelled on their western counterparts but operated on Chinese principles, merely confounded the people's sense of adjustment. Indeed, some experiences with them convinced the people that they should rely on the traditional past.

The Analysis of Conservative Social Attitudes in Modern Chinese Cities

Before further analysis, we must ask two questions. Firstly, what is a social attitude? Secondly, what is the relation of social attitude to social change? The answers to these two questions will provide us with the theoretical background for the present study.

In working out a definition of social attitude, it is important to understand the functional relationship of attitude to value. The sociologist Allport suggests that:

An attitude is ... organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related.13

Obviously, there are many diversified individual attitudes in a society. What links up and gives broad meaning to these different social attitudes is value. Two scholars define values as "assumptions, both conscious and
unconscious, of what is right and important."\textsuperscript{14} These assumptions take the form of social expectations and social norms, and influence the formation, development and fixing of certain social attitudes. Indeed,

The sequence from value to attitude ... moves from the general to the specific, from a broad mental set of disposition to a narrower one and finally to a specific and concrete expression of it.\textsuperscript{15}

By "concrete expression", it is meant social behaviour or response. The crux of the argument is, therefore, social value predetermines social attitude, and social attitude influences social behaviour.\textsuperscript{16}

In order to answer the second question, we must understand the process of socialization. Every individual's social behaviour and attitudes are subject to the influence of group pressures and environmental differences. Originally, and ideally, the system of social values and the process of socialization are aligned. However, according to the sociologists Jones and Gerard:

... there is an undeniable tendency toward conservatism reflected in the economizing principle of applying past solutions to present problems. ... [A]titudes ... change slowly and reluctantly ... [even] when they are clearly out of tune with changing reality.\textsuperscript{17}

Put in the perspective of modernization as a form of social reality (change), this conservatism creates a disparity in the rate of change between social values and social behaviour. Some persons are more inclined to respond to new social situations or institutional changes. Their responses, however, may run counter to the social norm, and are considered as anti-social. Also,
institutional changes can end up with a nebulous situation, in which people are not given distinct choices in their response. These two state of affairs are labelled as social problems. As two scholars sum it up:

A social problem exists when organized society's ability to order relationships among people seems to be falling; when its institutions are faltering, its laws are being flouted, the transmission of its values from one generation to the next is breaking down, the framework of expectations is being shaken,...\textsuperscript{18}

It is by investigating certain outstanding social problems that this thesis proposes to give a picture of a conservative Chinese society in the 1920s. These social problems will be analyzed to show the underlying values of modern Chinese society, and the intransigence of Chinese social attitudes.

In this thesis, family and morality are singled out as the two most significant values in modern Chinese society. The family was still considered as the nucleus of Chinese society, and all human affairs were focused on it. Social organizations were patterned on the family hierarchy. The stability of the society depended on the continuity and perpetuity of the family. A strict moral code was also important because it helped to ensure order and propriety within Chinese society. Social relationships and behaviour were judged according to the moral code, which was sometimes given priority over the law. Both private and public wrong-doings were sanctioned according to this code. These two social values pervaded and dictated modern Chinese social attitudes.
The exposition of conservative social attitudes in Chinese society in the 1920s is based on three themes. In chapter three, the theme is Chinese attitude towards sex. In the first part of this chapter, the general attitude towards sex and its ramifications in Chinese society are discussed. In the second part, some significant events related to matters of marriage and divorce are analyzed in order to show a conservative attitude towards sex problems.

Chapter four concentrates on the social attitude towards law. The first section deals with the general notion about law, especially with reference to its relationship with daily life. The second section looks at the social problem of crime. In so doing, it is shown that most crimes were viewed as a deviance from traditional social values.

The fifth chapter explores the Chinese attitude towards the relationship between individual and society. The first part of this chapter provides us with an understanding of the concept of homicide and of suicide in traditional Chinese society, with particular emphasis on the adverse result of social pressure on an individual to conform. The second part tries to illustrate the power and influence Chinese tradition and society held over the people. Homicides and suicides were negative and ultimate responses; and their increase in numbers suggests a widening gap between the social values and the society undergoing change.

These three themes -- sex, law, and the lack of
individualism in Chinese society -- are drawn up with the following considerations of social control in China. The attitude towards sex is related to the enforcement of private virtues in society. The attitude towards law affects the maintaining of public order in society. The attitude towards homicide and suicide highlights the conservative character of the Chinese social order. Each of these three chapters also tries to show that governmental and institutional methods in dealing with social problems were affected by this conservatism.

Scope and Methodology

In making this study a feasible one, it is necessary to look at some problems concerning scope and methodology.

First of all, this is a study of Chinese society in the 1920s. Specifically, the facts and data gathered for analytical purpose cover the years from 1917 to 1932. The choosing of the 1920s as a period for study is based on the consideration of several interesting historical issues.

Politically, the death of Yuan Shih-k'ai in 1916 ensured the passing away of imperial rule forever and marked the beginning of the KMT's attempt at democratic government. For the next fifteen years, the KMT battled against the warlords, tried to weed out the underground CCP forces, and engaged in establishing a central government at Nanking. While western imperialism became less vocal, the continued presence and influence of western representatives in some Chinese cities proved obstructionist. The test of this period of political modernization came in
the 1930s, starting with Japan's military invasion of Manchuria and Shanghai.

In terms of economic performance, the record for this period was poor. Besides the misfortunes of natural disasters, China also suffered from the incessant conflicts between the warlords. Moreover, the programme of economic growth was ill-conceived and organized. It was oriented towards military modernization and centred upon the cities. Consequently, there was a neglect of agrarian and rural reforms.\(^2^0\) It is also interesting to note that the influence of the western economic system in Chinese treaty-ports was not significant.\(^2^1\) This was despite the favourable economic climate provided by the Concessions in a time of political adversity.

The 1920s saw the ideas of the May Fourth Movement mature and diversify, and being gradually realized. These ideas, which aimed to establish a strong Chinese nation and, more importantly, a modern Chinese society, were not simply a kind of anti-traditional iconoclasm.\(^2^2\) Scholars and intellectuals differed in their opinions on the aim, the pattern and the nature of modernization -- or, as some preferred to call it, westernization. Such divergences in view had led to several significant intellectual debates; namely, "Science versus Metaphysics" and the New Culture Movement.\(^2^3\) To a certain extent, these views added variety and confusion to the efforts to modernize.

Apparent to political historians of modern China, the years 1917 to 1932 are of external significance. This period means in China an era of tremendous political
upheaval and economic instability. The contemporary political leadership apparently tried very hard to modernize Chinese politics and economy in the light of continuous international challenges, internal power politics, and economic pressures. Indeed, most people's attention was directed to judging the KMT's political, economic, and diplomatic performance. In this context, it is fair to ask whether political and economic modernization are the prerequisites of modernization. At least for China during this period, the evidence seem clearly indicative of this necessity.

However, a unity of purpose to modernize the country was absent amongst the leadership and the people. For that matter, intellectuals, as social critics, were not sufficiently impressed by the spate of modernization programmes. Some conservatives criticized the attempt at importing western culture. Iconoclasts, while bent on dismantling the traditional elements of society, found it difficult to draw a compromise between anti-traditionalism and anti-imperialism. The general populace were, of course, given the modern facilities without really being made to understand the principles of modern changes. So in intellectual and social modernization, the balance between aim and understanding was missing. This observation gives rise to a second interesting issue: is it possible to argue that intellectual-cum-social modernization should precede political and economic modernization so that modernization can become successful? One tentative answer is that attention should be given to a structural and temporal
correlation of all areas. Yet it must be remembered that a historical process cannot be over-idealized and rationalized.

The second problem is to give the reasons for making Shanghai, Tientsin and Hong Kong the locale of the present study. Mark Elvin and Rhoads Murphey have cast doubt on
considering treaty-ports in China as modern cities.\textsuperscript{24} Admittedly, some infrastructures within Chinese cities did show the influence of colonialism and industrial capitalism of the West. But there lacked the commensurate change in the political, economic and social systems; and such discrepancy brought about contradictions in the people's response and adjustment. The urban population was therefore placed in a dilemma. While accepting certain modern facilities, most people were reluctant to transform their attitudes overnight. It is also interesting to note that the physical presence of the foreigners promoted further the polarity between structures and attitudes within modern Chinese cities.\textsuperscript{25}

The city background will add more conviction to the thesis. If it can be proved that conservative social attitudes affected social changes in the cities, it is not difficult to infer that development in China's rural areas was even more constrained.

The chosen cities had certain characteristics which made comparison useful. All three are coastal cities. (See Map 1) They had a long history of western influence as treaty-ports. Consequently, they were considered as the most modern cities in the 1920s. By choosing these three cities as the background to the present thesis, a general picture of society undergoing change in North, Central and South China is painted.

The third problem relates to the use of newspapers as the main source of the research. Basically, the evidence for the thesis are gathered from several large and
MAP 1  KEY CITIES OF CHINA IN THE 1920s
important Chinese newspapers of the 1920s. Copies of these newspapers for the years 1917, 1922, 1927 and 1932 are used; and news events, editorial comments, articles and advertisements are read for their significance in reflecting the contemporary social attitudes towards sex, law, homicide and suicide. The dividing of the period of study into four parts is to enable the observation of changes in particular social trend over the period.

Three important newspapers used for this thesis are *Shen Pao* 申报 (of Shanghai), *Ta-kung Pao* 大公报 (of Tientsin) and *Hua-tzu Jih-pao* 華字日報 (of Hong Kong). Ideally, all the Chinese newspapers published and circulated in the three cities in the 1920s should have been used. However, most of them are no longer extant. A few extant ones had a short run. Copies of others which have survived are incomplete. Therefore, most extant newspapers are not particularly useful in helping us to gather enough information for a general picture of Chinese society in the 1920s. Needless to say, finer analysis of social trends and social attitudes is also not possible.

All the back-issues of *Hua-tzu Jih-pao*, which are pertinent for the study, are available. Copies of *Shen Pao* for 1917 are missing. As a substitute, I have made use of *Shih Pao* 時報. The rationale is that it had been ranked as an important newspaper alongside *Shen Pao*; more importantly it was also considered like *Shen Pao* as a commercial newspaper.

The gathering of newspaper information on Tientsin runs into greater difficulty. While *Ta-kung Pao* was first
published in 1902, copies of it are available on micro-film only for the years starting 1929. In fact, I have used those of 1929-1930 in substitute for the missing ones of 1927. For the years 1917 and 1922, I have consulted *Shun-t'ien Shih-pao* 順天時報, a Peking newspaper controlled by Japanese interests. Despite its political undertones, this newspaper was extremely popular in the North China region before the Northern Expedition. Moreover, Tientsin had traditionally been affiliated with Peking, and it was placed under the latter city's political, economic and intellectual influence. In this context, social development of the two cities should not be too different. Thus, it is possible to apply certain information on Peking to situations in Tientsin.

Since commercial journalism caters for the taste of a wide reading population, newspapers reflect closely the prevailing norms of the society. According to Shao Li-tzu 邵力子, a prominent journalist who became a KMT politician:

> The newspaper is a reflection of contemporary life. ... A complete history can only be compiled by including information from the newspapers. ¹²⁷

However, it can be argued that the newspapers -- especially with regards to the editorials -- are the sounding-board of the intellectuals and, as such, tend to foster opinions and shape attitudes within the society. ¹²⁸ In this light, the revelations of the newspapers can lead to a misconception about contemporary society: they represent the predispositions and perceptions of the editors and
writers. The intellectual approach and style of *Ta-kung Pao* is a good example.

Despite the pitfalls, newspaper reports and articles are significant in two ways. Firstly, when certain social events happen on a frequent basis and form a pattern, we cannot fail to notice their importance as social norms or social problems. Secondly, newspaper discussions and criticisms of these social issues tend to emphasize the difference between the past and the present. Thus, we become more aware of the degree of change in society and social attitudes. Indeed, Rose Lee, an urban historian, suggests that the contents of a newspaper reflect liberal and conservative views in the society.  

A related question is how influential and representative are the newspapers. That these three newspapers enjoyed a wide circulation is the reason they are being used for the present study. The development of journalism in modern China has an interesting history. Suffice to note, by 1932 the daily circulation of *Shen Pao* was 150,000, of *Ta-kung Pao* was 35,000, and of *Hua-tzu Jih-pao* was 10,000. By the standards of the day, they were influential publications. Unfortunately, it is not possible to establish the exact social background of those people who favoured these newspapers. We do learn, however, that both *Shen Pao* and *Hua-tzu Jih-pao* were widely followed by the merchants and tradesmen, while *Ta-kung Pao* appealed to the intellectuals and students. One explanation is that Shanghai and Hong Kong were largely commercial cities, while Tientsin was traditionally close to the centre of Chinese
The fourth and last problem involves the statistical presentation of the thesis. Ideally, the use of statistics can add more accuracy and conclusiveness to this piece of social analysis. But due to the limited availability and erratic nature of the data, this approach is not feasible. For Shanghai and Tientsin, attempts to gather social statistics by the respective municipal governments only started after 1927. And, very often, they involved under-reporting and double-entry. Foreign governments kept only sparse records of social development within their own concessions. As far as Hong Kong is concerned, I have gone through the census reports, law reports and some other compilations, but failed to obtain enough data to illustrate the changes in social trend. It is possible but not probable that these particular data are never compiled. More likely, the records were destroyed during the Second World War.

An alternative to supplementing the present study with statistical information is to work on the news items as raw material. We can collate demographic details such as differences in sex, age, provincial origin (chi-kuan), education and vocation, and work out specific social groupings and their relationship with particular social problems. We can also make a rough estimate of the number of social problems from the press accounts. However, both these line of approach are impractical. News reports are highly selective, and they show different emphasis in their description and appraisal. It is therefore difficult to
quantify them.

Taking this problem in methodology into consideration, this thesis can only provide an impressionistic analysis of a complex subject. The intrinsic weaknesses of the statistics cannot enhance our understanding of modern Chinese society. They can only give a superficial illustration of the trends in the city, where most of the data were collected.
Notes to Chapter One


4. This is labelled as the "Harvard School" approach to the study of modern Chinese history. For a critique of this approach, see A.J. Nathan, "Imperialism's Effects on China", Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars 4:4 (December, 1972), pp. 3-8.

5. Historical study of Chinese cities is a recent trend in western scholarship. The main emphasis is on the morphology, institutions and economic system of individual cities. Detailed analysis of social and intellectual development of modern Chinese cities is conspicuous by its absence. In 1968-9 the Subcommittee on Research on Chinese Society (of the Stanford University) organized two conferences on Chinese cities. Three publications emanated: they are The City in Late Imperial China (1977), The Chinese City Between Two Worlds (1974) and The City in Communist China (1971). Each of these edited volumes has a central theme: the first one focuses on the morphological, economic and administrative significance of the Chinese urban system; the second one discusses the syncretism of Sino-western culture and the development of the Chinese revolution in the cities; the third one analyzes the urban policy and its practices under the Communist regime. One of the few works, which is stimulated by the budding interest expressed in the three studies,
is D.D. Buck, *Urban Change in China. Politics and Development in Tsinan, Shantung, 1890-1949* (Madison, 1978). This is a systematic study of Tsinan, whose political and economic development are discussed within the broad framework of modernization in modern China. He asserts (p. 215) that "[c]ultural modernization without economic and political development proved to be not a blessing but a curse, for it robbed those who acquired modern culture of their grasp of the traditional culture without providing a firm economic and political base on which all China could change." Thus, Tsinan's experiences in political and in economic modernization illustrates the role played by the cities in recent Chinese history.


7. Lerner, *loc. cit.*, p. 329. For greater details, see D. Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East* (Glencoe, Ill., 1963). While his definition merits adaptation to the present study, his conclusion is not necessarily applicable to Chinese society.


13. The quotation is cited from J.L. Freedman et al., *Social Psychology* (New Jersey, 1974), 2nd edn., pp. 244-5.


19. The KMT successfully recovered China's tariff autonomy in 1928. It also took back the whole or part of the concessions in Tientsin, Amoy and Chen-chiang. For a full description of the KMT's diplomatic victories during the 1920s, see Wu Sung-kao, "Shih-nien-lai ti Chung-kuo wai-chiao" (Chinese diplomacy in the last ten years) in Chung-kuo wen-hua chien-she (ed.), *K'ang-ch'ang chien-shih-nien chih Chung-kuo* (Hong Kong, 1965 reprint), pp. 27-40.


23. For a detailed account of the different views on the problem of China's modernization, see Liu Hsi-san, "Wu-szu i-hou Chung-kuo ko-p'ai ssu-hsiang-chia tui-yü hsi-yang wen-ming ti t'ai-tu" (The attitudes towards western culture held by the various schools of Chinese intellectuals after the May Fourth Movement), She-hui hsüeh-chieh 7 (1933), pp. 271-317. We are familiar with the idea of the New Culture Movement starting in 1919 with a public statement signed by ten prominent college professors. However, one of their contemporaries, Ch'en Hsü-ching, suggests that the inception of the movement was in 1925. This would make the 1920s a more significant period as far as the keen interests in developing a programme for modernizing China are concerned. Cf. Ch'en Hsü-ching, "I-nien-lai kuo-jen tui-yü hsi-hua t'ai-tu ti pien-hua" (Changes in Chinese attitudes towards westernization during the past one year), Nan-feng 12 (1936), p. 98.


27. Shao Li-tzu, "Shih-nien-lai ti Chung-kuo hsin-wen shih-yeh" (Chinese journalism in the last ten years) in K'ang-chan ch'ien-shih-nien chih Chung-kuo, p. 481.


30. A newspaper which had a circulation of 5,000 to 10,000 was considered as influential. See Chin Chung-hua, "Chung-kuo hsin-wen shih-yeh ti hsien-chuang" (The present state of Chinese journalism), Chung-hsüeh-sheng 4 (1934), p. 150. The magnitude of the social importance of newspapers could be seen from the following facts. 80% of the newspapers were circulated in five cities: namely, Shanghai, Nanking, Canton, Peking and Tientsin. These cities altogether made up only 2% of China's population. It was estimated that one in five/t/en persons read a newspaper. Cf. V. Nash & R. Löwenthal, "Responsible Factors in Chinese Journalism", CSPSR 20 (1936-7), pp. 422-3.

CHAPTER TWO

Historical Setting: The Study of Change in Modern Chinese Cities

This chapter looks at the historical background to the formation of conservative social attitudes in Shanghai, Tientsin and Hong Kong. In so far as urbanization is a "cultural and social-psychological process whereby people acquired [sic.] the material and non-material culture of the city",¹ a certain degree of change is evident. We will discuss the political, economic and social developments of the cities in the 1920s with the following questions in mind.

Politically, was there a stable and peaceful environment for carrying out a programme of modernization? We must also find out whether the urban administrations were sufficiently unified in purpose and function to make this programme practicable. The cities were undeniably the centres of industry and trade. We must ask, however, how stable was the economic growth, and how significant it was vis-à-vis the whole of China? Socially, the physical structures and the demography of the cities will offer us insight into the actual changes of the cities. Undoubtedly, in the cities, the people's living standard was generally improved, and new ideas were more easily spread because of better communication facilities. However, we have to study the diverse views on social change in order to understand how willing were the people in accepting changes in their life-style.

The answers to these questions will help us to understand how contemporary conditions affected social changes.
within the cities in the 1920s.

Political Changes

The opening of China in the 19th century laid the foundation of the modern cities of Shanghai, Tientsin and Hong Kong. The Treaty of Nanking (1843) and the Peking Convention (1860) temporarily satisfied the foreign powers' demand for access to the vast China market; and consequently weakened the Chinese government's political and administrative control over these three city-ports.

A series of political incidents and diplomatic wheedlings in the following years (see Table 11.1) resulted in the creation of Foreign Concessions in Shanghai and Tientsin. Hong Kong became a British Colony.

The illusory success of the 1911 revolution and the Peking government's declaration of war against Germany and Austro-Hungary during World War I did little to reassure the Concession powers that China had the ability to handle its own internal and international politics. In the 1920s, the constant bickerings and incessant "wars" amongst rivalling factions of the warlords were seen as threats to the political stability and economic prosperity of Shanghai and Tientsin. Ironically, the May Fourth Movement, the May Thirtieth Movement and even the success of the Northern Expedition -- ostensibly political developments which might have given China a greater sense of unity -- were also viewed with suspicion by the foreign powers. They hung on resolutely to their extraterritorial rights. It was only in the late 1920s, with the growing prestige and strength of the KMT
TABLE II.1

Treaties and Agreements affecting the Three Cities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Shanghai</th>
<th>Tianjin</th>
<th>Hong Kong</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1843</td>
<td>Treaty of Nanking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Treaty of Nanking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>Land Regulations lead to the creation of the British and French Concessions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Treaty of Tianjin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1858</td>
<td>Peking Convention. The creation of the British, French, and American Concessions</td>
<td></td>
<td>Peking Convention. The creation of the British, French, and American Concessions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>The creation of the International Settlement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Treaty of Tianjin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>The creation of the International Settlement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Treaty of Tianjin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895-1900</td>
<td>The creation of other foreign Concessions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Treaty of Nanking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>Extension of the International Settlement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New Territories leased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Extension of the International Settlement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New Territories leased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>The American Concession incorporated into the British</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New Territories leased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>The creation of the New French Concession</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New Territories leased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>Peking takes back Austrian and German Concessions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New Territories leased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Russia returns her Concession</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New Territories leased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>China does not renew lease on Belgian Concession</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New Territories leased</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24a
and the rise of Japan in the Far East, that the powers adopted a more friendly policy towards China, which was able to recover some Concessions.

Hong Kong in the 1920s was being slowly developed as a commercial city through the guidance of the British colonists and the industry of the Chinese. Though bordering the two Chinese provinces, Hong Kong was little affected by the factional politics of the Kwangtung and Kwangsi warlords, except perhaps in the way it became a refuge for defeated politicians and vanquished soldiers. This influx of refugees was regarded by the British administrators as a problem, and they resorted to nightly curfews and deportations of criminals in order to maintain law and order. It was significant that the May Fourth Movement had little effect on the Colony. Though the labour unions participated in the 1925 General Strike, which was part of a broader movement in South China against the British, the Colony was more affected by the resultant economic losses.

The nature of the Concessions was such that the Chinese government not only suffered a loss of territories, but its administrative and judicial powers over the Chinese population in these three cities were curbed. (See Maps 2 and 3)

In the 1920s, Shanghai and Tientsin were under the nominal control of the Chekiang and the Chihli governments respectively. In practice, the actual rule of the two cities had changed hands several times as a result of political vicissitudes. For example, in 1924, Ch'i Hsieh-yüan of the Chihli clique won temporary control of Shanghai from the Anhwei warlords. But in 1925, he was
MAP 2 MUNICIPALITY AND CONCESSIONS OF SHANGHAI, 1920s
MAP 3 MUNICIPALITY AND CONCESSIONS OF TIENTSIN, 1920s
defeated by Sun Ch'uan-fang from Chekiang, who then established a directorate for the commercial ports of Woosung and Shanghai as a form of administration. Tientsin in the 1920s was ruled alternately by the Fengt'ien and the Chihli warlords -- whoever was controlling Peking. In contrast, throughout this period, Hong Kong was under a stable, though foreign, administration.

After 1927, the warlords had been defeated or bought off. In order to allay foreign suspicion, the KMT did not try to forcefully take back the Concessions. Instead, the special municipality of Shanghai and of Tientsin were created, and they were responsible to the Central government and the Hopeh provincial government respectively. Again, nothing was done about Hong Kong.

The non-Chinese administration of Shanghai and Tientsin was left fairly intact. Each Concession had its own executive committee, or board of directors, or taxpayers' association to look after the various aspects of urban administration. (See Table II.2) Most of the members of these committees were prominent social figures, who were also the nationals of the Concession powers. Rarely were Chinese invited to join. In 1914, the French Concession in Shanghai had its first Chinese director. It was only in 1926 that two Chinese were asked to sit on the executive committee of the International Settlement (Shanghai). In Hong Kong, the governor, who was by constitution a personal representative of the British monarch, "ruled" with the help of an executive and a legislative council. Official appointees to both councils outnumbered the unofficial
**TABLE II.2**

*City Administrations of Shanghai and Tientsin in the 1920s*

**Shanghai**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before 1911</th>
<th>Under Chekiang governorship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After 1911</td>
<td>under Kiangsu government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914-26</td>
<td><em>Shanghai kung-hsün-chüan tsung-chü</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td><em>Sung-hu shang-pu tu-pan kung-shu</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td><em>t'e-pieh shih</em> (KMT)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**International Settlement**

*Executive Committee (Ch. member in 1926)*

**French Concession**

*Board of Directors (Ch. member in 1914)*

**Tientsin**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before 1911</th>
<th>under Chihli governorship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After 1911</td>
<td>under either Chihli or Fengt'ien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td><em>t'e-pieh shih</em> (KMT) -- former</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>German, Austrian, Russian, Belgian Concessions as special districts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**International Settlement**

*Executive Committee*

**French Concession**

*Board of Directors (with Ch. members)*

**Japanese Concession**

*Executive Committee of Association of Japanese Residents*

**Italian Concession**

*Committee of Administration (with Ch. observers)*
members, who were chosen from a group of socially important persons. The Legco had its first Chinese member in 1884, but the Exco only had one in 1926. Altogether, these arrangements for urban administration reflected the continuing presence and dominance of foreign power, and the powers' inclination to protect, if not increase, their interests in the three cities.

Before the ascendancy of the KMT, the mixed-court system interfered with the administration of Chinese law. (See Table II.3) While the district-courts of Shanghai and Tientsin could freely deal with cases which happened on Chinese soil, many refugees from law sought protection in the Concessions. Foreign judges and magistrates sometimes intervened in some cases to the advantage of their nationals. This state of affair continued after 1927, though the Chinese government had partially recovered some of its sovereignty. In Hong Kong, British law was practised and enforced. Significantly, in those cases which might touch upon Chinese customs, the judges sometimes took into consideration the Chinese practice when they made their decision.

The political scene of the 1920s was at best chaotic, especially as Shanghai's and Tientsin's political developments were fragmented. The failure of the Chinese government to unify the country was instrumental in keeping the Concessions -- and different administrative and legal systems -- alive. Perhaps, it may be justifiably claimed that the presence and dominance of foreign administrations gave some semblance of political stability to the three cities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE II.3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal Administrations of the Three Cities in the 1920s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Shanghai**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Administration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1912-27</td>
<td><em>Shang-hai ti-fang shen-p'an-t'ing</em> 上海地方審判廳</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td><em>Shang-hai ti-fang fa-ydan</em> 上海地方法院</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**International Settlement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Administration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1869-1926</td>
<td>Mixed court 會審公廳</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>Provisional court 臨時法院</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>First special district court of Shanghai, Kiangsu* 江蘇第一特區法院</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**French Concession**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Administration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1870-1926</td>
<td>Mixed court 法租界會審公堂</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>Joint judiciary committee 法租界審委員</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Second special district court of Shanghai, Kiangsu* 江蘇第二特區法院</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The higher judiciary was the Kiangsu Supreme Court, third court 江蘇高等法院, 第三分院*

**Tientsin**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Administration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before 1928</td>
<td><em>T'ien-chin ti-fang shen-p'an-t'ing</em> 天津地方審判廳</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td><em>T'ien-chin ti-fang fa-ydan</em> 天津地方法院</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Concessions**

- Mixed court

**Hong Kong**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Administration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Since 1844</td>
<td>English Common Law (supplemented by <em>Ta-Ch'ing lü-li</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>Jury system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Privy Council/Appeal Court</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supreme Court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magistracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Economic Changes

All three cities were forcefully "opened" to foreign trade in the nineteenth century. By the 1920s, their commanding positions in foreign trade justified the amount of effort and investment.

TABLE II.4

% of Trade going through the Five leading Chinese Cities
(1925-35, excluding Manchuria)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Foreign</th>
<th>Domestic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shanghai</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tientsin</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canton</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hankow</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsingtao</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: R. Murphey, Shanghai: Key to Modern China, p. 65)

Shanghai was the most important port in all of China. Tientsin was the leading port in North China. Hong Kong had acquired the status of an international port, though it was still very much dominated by English shipping. And because of the volatile political situation of China, it had also become a trans-shipping centre for South China, notably dealing with the importing of rice to Canton.

We can understand in greater detail the economic development of the three cities by looking at two types of trading activities. The first one was direct foreign trade, which was the combined value of imports and exports. The second one was whole trade, which was the total of net
import of foreign and native goods, and net export of native goods. 4

TABLE II.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Tonnages of Shipping of Hong Kong</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>17,329,841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>13,982,966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>26,635,557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>29,727,264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>26,983,190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>33,794,775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>37,909,385</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: China Year Book)

In the 1920s, direct foreign trade (imports and exports) through these three cities was on the whole increasing.

TABLE II.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of Direct Foreign Trade and Ranking of the Three Cities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shanghai</td>
<td>47.12% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tientsin</td>
<td>8.40% (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>2.73% (5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: China Year Book)

An examination of Table II.7 reveals, however, the effects of domestic politics and international economics on this trade.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Shanghai Im</th>
<th>Shanghai Ex</th>
<th>Shanghai Total</th>
<th>Tientsin Im</th>
<th>Tientsin Ex</th>
<th>Tientsin Total</th>
<th>Hong Kong Im</th>
<th>Hong Kong Ex</th>
<th>Hong Kong Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>383,917,526</td>
<td>193,795,412</td>
<td>577,712,938*</td>
<td>18,245,320</td>
<td>88,100,213</td>
<td>106,345,533</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>425,513,930</td>
<td>210,527,893</td>
<td>636,041,823</td>
<td>38,515,636</td>
<td>126,912,210</td>
<td>165,427,846</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>419,593,331</td>
<td>218,051,344</td>
<td>637,644,675</td>
<td>46,471,488</td>
<td>142,893,003</td>
<td>189,366,481</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>417,870,452</td>
<td>276,838,233</td>
<td>694,708,685</td>
<td>49,953,666</td>
<td>126,132,021</td>
<td>175,085,687</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>483,469,942</td>
<td>276,454,921</td>
<td>759,924,863</td>
<td>47,825,419</td>
<td>123,957,867</td>
<td>171,783,326</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>431,887,836</td>
<td>306,185,443</td>
<td>742,073,279</td>
<td>62,214,330</td>
<td>147,302,246</td>
<td>209,516,576</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>596,555,405</td>
<td>361,899,940</td>
<td>958,455,345</td>
<td>84,424,281</td>
<td>145,038,695</td>
<td>239,463,076</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>455,317,144</td>
<td>330,506,047</td>
<td>785,823,191</td>
<td>100,892,111</td>
<td>189,801,157</td>
<td>290,693,268</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>548,607,899</td>
<td>362,220,148</td>
<td>910,828,037</td>
<td>81,996,104</td>
<td>194,629,733</td>
<td>386,625,837</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>624,645,823</td>
<td>364,040,891</td>
<td>988,686,714</td>
<td>82,334,793</td>
<td>196,403,303</td>
<td>388,738,106</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>679,741,710</td>
<td>312,667,646</td>
<td>992,409,356</td>
<td>104,185,112</td>
<td>182,933,907</td>
<td>387,119,023</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>833,567,598</td>
<td>277,476,440</td>
<td>1,111,044,038</td>
<td>109,352,042</td>
<td>198,053,323</td>
<td>307,405,365</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>510,373,174</td>
<td>158,324,225</td>
<td>668,697,399</td>
<td>104,548,979</td>
<td>62,876,524</td>
<td>167,425,503</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In Haikuan taels. In 1917, 1 Hai kuan tael (HKT) is equivalent to 4s. 3-13/16d. sterling. By 1930, the year HKT was abolished, 1 HKT is equivalent to 1s. 10-11/16d. sterling.

(Source: China Year Book)
The May Thirtieth Movement, the Northern Expedition and the Japanese invasion of 1932 had adverse effects on Shanghai. In 1925, the volume of imports decreased as a result of the boycott placed on foreign goods. As a result of the political turmoil, the total amount of foreign trade declined in 1927 and 1932. In Tientsin, the warlords' conflicts of 1923-4 reduced the total amount of foreign trade. The Northern Expedition had little ill effect on the trade, except in affecting Tientsin's capacity to export. Again, the volume of foreign trade going through Tientsin in 1932 decreased as the political situation in North China became tumultous. In Hong Kong, while the 1925 General Strike affected the volume of trade, both the Northern Expedition and the national crisis to the north had little influence on the foreign trade of the Colony.

The world depression which began in 1929 had immediate effect on the exporting industries of Shanghai. This economic catastrophe set back the total amount of foreign trade of Tientsin and Hong Kong. Hong Kong showed itself to be susceptible to economic pressures. The 1922 Seamen's Strike and the 1925 General Strike (which included a boycott of foreign goods) had effectively reduced the volume of foreign trade. Moreover, the temporary emigration of Chinese from the Colony had aggravated the economic depression. Both the consumer and labour market declined.

Summing up, we can say that only a severe political crisis could really hurt the foreign trade of Shanghai. Economic crises just reduced the volume of exports without affecting the total of foreign trade. In contrast, both Tientsin and Hong Kong suffered greatly from political and
economic changes. According to Table II.8, Shanghai's whole trade (net import, export and entrepôt trade) -- which can be taken as a fair measure of the economic growth -- only declined in 1925 and 1927. But there were four such crises in Tientsin, and five in Hong Kong.

These facts illustrate the degree of economic strength resting with the cities. By the 1920s, all three cities were also developing as industrial cities. However, only Shanghai's industries held a competitive edge over some foreign ones. This helped it to set up a valuable exporting industry. (See Table II.9)

Shanghai was the economic city par excellence.5 Besides being the leading port of China, its manufacturing industries had shown favourable results. Tientsin's economy was sorely affected by internal politics. Hong Kong's economy relied on its unhindered operation as a free port. Therefore, in the 1920s, the various strikes and boycotts had detrimental effects. Industrial development in Tientsin and Hong Kong were not strong and competitive enough. The two cities in the 1920s still played the role of an entrepôt.

Population Changes

The growth -- and therefore the attraction -- of a city is best illustrated by demographic changes. There are many factors which affect the size of a population in the city. In this section, the political and economic causes which influenced the size of the urban population in the 1920s are explained. Moreover, a few important characteristics of the population are discussed.
TABLE II.8

Total of Whole Trade passing through the Three Cities, 1920-1930

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Shanghai</th>
<th>Tientsin</th>
<th>Hong Kong</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>511,915,033*</td>
<td>173,482,542</td>
<td>41,222,995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>551,774,463</td>
<td>224,779,202</td>
<td>72,711,446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>631,990,093</td>
<td>244,516,332</td>
<td>75,907,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>712,101,318</td>
<td>238,407,938</td>
<td>53,732,972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>776,810,304</td>
<td>251,695,599</td>
<td>77,962,412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>754,696,378</td>
<td>287,704,766</td>
<td>52,992,104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>972,287,275</td>
<td>277,574,753</td>
<td>19,964,895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>868,978,484</td>
<td>325,339,223</td>
<td>65,016,831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>1,029,056,209</td>
<td>348,250,655</td>
<td>66,112,037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>1,035,698,733</td>
<td>342,631,149</td>
<td>58,506,782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>1,145,576,122</td>
<td>315,113,886</td>
<td>54,518,285</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In Haikuan taels

(Source: China Year Book)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Shanghai Im</th>
<th>Shanghai Ex</th>
<th>Tientsin Im</th>
<th>Tientsin Ex</th>
<th>Hong Kong Im</th>
<th>Hong Kong Ex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>224,632,688*</td>
<td>232,664,201</td>
<td>89,201,524</td>
<td>44,588,530</td>
<td>20,476,342</td>
<td>14,839,144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>217,285,647</td>
<td>275,954,482</td>
<td>113,791,298</td>
<td>63,618,531</td>
<td>45,569,271</td>
<td>17,514,823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>239,054,283</td>
<td>306,423,079</td>
<td>122,440,309</td>
<td>75,061,512</td>
<td>47,964,770</td>
<td>18,557,911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>243,887,033</td>
<td>363,356,145</td>
<td>102,341,339</td>
<td>86,420,212</td>
<td>31,957,386</td>
<td>16,712,804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>301,201,236</td>
<td>384,443,201</td>
<td>103,260,453</td>
<td>87,566,738</td>
<td>51,228,459</td>
<td>20,961,692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>259,040,798</td>
<td>382,618,547</td>
<td>107,709,088</td>
<td>99,937,953</td>
<td>34,077,631</td>
<td>12,064,903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>387,416,904</td>
<td>469,527,912</td>
<td>105,841,839</td>
<td>95,629,632</td>
<td>6,756,887</td>
<td>5,221,721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>294,107,879</td>
<td>458,991,566</td>
<td>128,492,918</td>
<td>119,997,109</td>
<td>45,054,911</td>
<td>13,076,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>371,337,504</td>
<td>519,289,166</td>
<td>136,121,064</td>
<td>113,659,636</td>
<td>45,228,703</td>
<td>14,362,039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>416,790,205</td>
<td>499,550,862</td>
<td>145,095,553</td>
<td>108,284,739</td>
<td>34,819,312</td>
<td>15,347,137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>470,231,624</td>
<td>533,986,623</td>
<td>133,246,191</td>
<td>110,225,213</td>
<td>31,657,716</td>
<td>17,014,433</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In Haikuan taels

(Source: China Year Book)
In the 1920s, one of the reasons for the growth in population in the three cities was the greater degree of economic prosperity. This was especially the case for Shanghai and Hong Kong (see Tables II.10a & b). The setting up of different industries in Shanghai attracted many people to immigrate to the city as industrial workers. For that matter, many of them were peasants, or young people who rejected the notion of being a second-generation farm-hand.  

The rapid increase in the population of Hong Kong was explained by the Census Report of 1921. The reasons were "civil commotion and famine in [Kwangtung], activity of trade and emigration in the Colony". In other words, with Hong Kong offering greater and better opportunities for a livelihood, many impoverished people from South China sought "refuge" in Hong Kong. That the Colony served no other purpose to the Chinese except for them to make money was best illustrated by the decrease in population after the General Strike of 1925 hit the economy of Hong Kong. In 1926, the overall population was no more than 600,000. Many people chose to return to China.

It is interesting to note that, according to a Japanese source, every spring about 30,000 to 40,000 "natives" of Tientsin departed from the city to make a living elsewhere. At the same time, the same number of people arrived from Shantung, Honan, Shansi and Shensi. Apparently, Tientsin had not the same economic attraction as the other two cities. In fact, when North China was afflicted with a serious famine in 1930, many people fled from Tientsin to the
## TABLE II.10a

**Chinese Populations of Shanghai and Tientsin, 1915-1932**

### Shanghai

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>International Settlement</th>
<th>French Concession</th>
<th>Chinese Municipality</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>620,401</td>
<td>146,595</td>
<td>585,707*</td>
<td>1,352,703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>759,839</td>
<td>166,667</td>
<td>651,661</td>
<td>1,578,167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>810,279</td>
<td>289,261</td>
<td>820,000*</td>
<td>1,919,540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>971,397</td>
<td>421,885</td>
<td>1,692,325</td>
<td>3,085,617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>1,030,554</td>
<td>462,342</td>
<td>1,571,089</td>
<td>3,063,985</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tientsin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>International Settlement</th>
<th>French Concession</th>
<th>Japanese Concession</th>
<th>Chinese Municipality</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>119,100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>600,746</td>
<td>713,146*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td></td>
<td>838,629</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>838,629*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925-8</td>
<td>33,172</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>21,347</td>
<td>994,000</td>
<td>1,155,753**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>23,452</td>
<td>27,640</td>
<td>30,112</td>
<td>961,884</td>
<td>1,052,699**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes foreigners. Chinese population cannot be established. **Includes Chinese population in Italian Concession and special districts.

(Source: Various)
## TABLE II.10b

*Total Population of Hong Kong, 1911-1931*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Hong Kong</th>
<th>Kowloon/N. Kowloon</th>
<th>New Territories</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>227,849</td>
<td>91,108</td>
<td>80,622</td>
<td>456,739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>323,273</td>
<td>245,730</td>
<td>83,163</td>
<td>652,166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>410,921</td>
<td>264,675</td>
<td>98,905</td>
<td>849,751</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: *Hong Kong Census Report, 1921, 1931*)
A second important reason was the extent of political stability. The fact that the Concession areas of both Shanghai and Tientsin enjoyed a relative amount of extraterritorial rights contributed towards the aggregation of Chinese in these treaty ports. In the 1860s, the crisis of the Taiping Rebellion had helped to build up a sizeable Chinese population in the Concessions of Shanghai, which were formerly closed to the Chinese. When World War One broke out, and especially with China's entrance into war on the side of the allies, many Chinese chose to live in the Concessions of Tientsin. The 1911 Revolution had its effect on the population growth of Hong Kong. Realizing that Hong Kong was a British Colony, many people fled from the turmoil of South China to this small place. Indeed, the Colony had a tradition of becoming the haven for unsuccessful politicians and soldiers. During the 1920s, Hong Kong continued to play this role as political fortunes wavered between the KMT and the warlords.

In the context of general political development within China, there was a dramatic increase in the populations of Shanghai and Tientsin after 1925. Specifically because of the success of the Northern Expedition, many Chinese felt safe to live in the Chinese sectors of the cities. Indeed, when the Japanese attacked Shanghai in 1932, there was an exodus from the Chinese municipality. In contrast, there was an increase in population in the International Settlement and the French Concession. The British and the French governments had remained neutral during this period of
Sino-Japanese conflict.

One of the characteristics of the urban population in the 1920s was the predominance of males over females. (See Tables II.11a-c) One of the reasons was the relative ease for a man to find a job in the city and the willingness of parents to send their boys to schools in the city. Another, very much a corollary of the first, was the reluctance of most families to let their women venture into the city and be corrupted.

Except for Tientsin, for which one cannot find the M/F ratio of the individual administrative areas, the general picture was that the more developed and "westernized" areas had a higher ratio of males to females. These areas were the commercial and financial sectors of the cities, where most of the jobs were filled by men. Many of these men still believed in making enough money in the city and then returning to their families in the countryside. In marked contrast, the ratio in the less developed sectors was much lower. This was a consequence of the men moving to the more developed areas as clerical or industrial workers.

It is also significant that the M/F ratio for all three cities was declining throughout the years of the 1920s. The attraction of better job opportunities and the promise of political stability helped to encourage many women to move into the cities.

On the whole, the contributory factors, which led to the difference in the number of males and females in the cities, had their roots in the traditionalistic notion of the predominant role of men in society and economy.
### TABLE II.11a

**M/F Ratio of Shanghai**

**International Settlement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>M/F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>284,188</td>
<td>165,632</td>
<td>172:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>333,257</td>
<td>208,479</td>
<td>160:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>370,186</td>
<td>215,082</td>
<td>172:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>437,300</td>
<td>280,709</td>
<td>156:100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**French Concession**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>M/F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>164,557</td>
<td>98,531</td>
<td>167:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>178,612</td>
<td>109,411</td>
<td>163:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>179,803</td>
<td>111,864</td>
<td>161:100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chinese Municipality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>M/F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>865,461</td>
<td>638,461</td>
<td>135:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>979,727</td>
<td>723,847</td>
<td>135:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>1,077,934</td>
<td>792,039</td>
<td>135:100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: *Shang-hai-shih t'ung-chi*, [1932], "Population", pp. 11, 13)

### TABLE II.11b

**M/F Ratio of Tientsin**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>M/F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>860,497</td>
<td>531,224</td>
<td>163:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>817,977</td>
<td>506,656</td>
<td>161:100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: *Shen-pao nien-chien*, [1933], p. D8)
### Table II.1lc

**M/F Ratio of Hong Kong**

#### Hong Kong

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>M/F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>169,208</td>
<td>75,115</td>
<td>225:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>219,456</td>
<td>121,904</td>
<td>180:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>247,961</td>
<td>162,954</td>
<td>150:100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Kowloon/N. Kowloon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>M/F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>43,849</td>
<td>23,648</td>
<td>185:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>74,685</td>
<td>47,441</td>
<td>157:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>146,618</td>
<td>118,057</td>
<td>124:100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### New Territories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>M/F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>44,663</td>
<td>43,265</td>
<td>103:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>46,820</td>
<td>45,799</td>
<td>102:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>50,147</td>
<td>48,758</td>
<td>102:100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: *Hong Kong Census Report, 1921, 1931*)
A second characteristic was the formation of a heterogeneous population. Being growing cities, Shanghai and Hong Kong attracted many immigrants. To a lesser extent, this was also true for Tientsin. The populations were therefore a mixture of people from different provinces.

It is useful to look at the composition of the Chinese population of the cities in terms of provincial origins (chi-kuan). (See Tables II.12a-c) In Shanghai, the bulk of the population was made up of four provincial groups; namely, that of Kiangsu, Chekiang, Kwangtung and Anhwei. People born in Shanghai accounted for no more than one-quarter of the total population.

Generally speaking, people from provinces nearer to Shanghai were more inclined to move in: for example, people from Kiangsu, Chekiang and Anhwei. This was because of easier passage to the city. People from Anhwei were running away from natural disasters, such as flood and famine.10

There was, however, an exception. The Cantonese formed the third largest provincial group making up the population of Shanghai in the 1920s. They were attracted to the commercial city of Shanghai, whose "opening" to foreign trade had caused the economic decline of Canton. Immigrating to Shanghai, the Cantonese more or less pursued the same occupations as before.11

A break-down of the Chinese population of Shanghai into "Shanghai" (pen-chi 留籍) and "non-Shanghai" (fei pen-chi 非籍) origins shows that the International Settlement had a higher percentage of "non-Shanghai" Chinese
TABLE II.12a

Chinese Populations of Shanghai according to Provincial Origins

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>International Settlement</th>
<th>Chinese Municipality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kiangsu</td>
<td>Chekiang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>230,402 (43%)</td>
<td>201,206 (37%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>292,599 (43%)</td>
<td>235,779 (35%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>308,096 (43%)</td>
<td>229,059 (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>500,576 (55%)</td>
<td>304,544 (33%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Lo Chih-ju, T'ung-chi-piao chung chih Shang-hai [1932], p. 27)
### TABLE II.12b

**Chinese Populations of Hong Kong according to Provincial Origins**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hong Kong</th>
<th>Kwangtung</th>
<th>China</th>
<th>Total Ch. Pop.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>26,000 (5.83%)</td>
<td>412,155 (92.54%)</td>
<td>3,729 (0.84%)</td>
<td>445,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>45,516 (7.46%)</td>
<td>555,315 (90.98%)</td>
<td>6,037 (0.98%)</td>
<td>610,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>270,478 (32.93%)</td>
<td>534,239 (65.04%)</td>
<td>13,160 (1.59%)</td>
<td>821,429</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Hong Kong Census Report, 1921, 1931)

### TABLE II.12c

**Primary and Secondary School Students according to Provincial Origins**

(Tientsin, 1933)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tientsin</th>
<th>Hopeh</th>
<th>Kiangsu</th>
<th>Chekiang</th>
<th>Kwangtung</th>
<th>Liao-ning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Students</td>
<td>8,468 (50%)</td>
<td>3,683 (22%)</td>
<td>657 (3.93%)</td>
<td>632 (3.78%)</td>
<td>584 (3.49%)</td>
<td>546 (3.27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Students</td>
<td>614 (27.2%)</td>
<td>803 (35.6%)</td>
<td>141 (6.3%)</td>
<td>118 (5.2%)</td>
<td>136 (6%)</td>
<td>84 (3.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: T'ien-chin-shih t'ung-chi nien-chien [1935], pp. 20; 25-6)
compared to the Chinese Municipality. (See Table II.12d) They were attracted to the developed commercial and financial sectors of the city.

The heterogeneity of the Chinese population in Shanghai was further compounded by the mobility of the people. Many people of "non-Shanghai" origin tended to take the city as a temporary residence. It is interesting to note from Table II.12e that the M/F ratio was the highest for the Cantonese. While the men were prepared to go to Shanghai, the women were left behind to mind the families in Kwangtung.

Due to lack of available data, an analysis of the Tientsin population according to provincial origins is not possible. As a substitute, I have used two surveys which show the percentages of primary- and secondary-school students who came from different provinces. The assumption is that most parents would be with their children. The idea is that a correlation can be drawn against these figures to give a rough approximation of the provincial groups.

Compared to Shanghai, "natives" of Tientsin constituted a significantly higher percentage of the population. These people together with those from other parts of Hopeh formed over 60% of the population. The rest of the population was evenly made up of many different provincial groups, none of which constituting a significantly substantial percentage. These facts indicate that there was an apparent lack of attraction as far as the city of Tientsin was concerned.

In the 1920s, Hong Kong could be called a migrant city. If we take the immigration/emigration ratio as a criterion, we find that Hong Kong had a more mobile population than
### TABLE II.12d

**Chinese Populations of Shanghai according to "Shanghai" and "non-Shanghai" Origins**

**International Settlement**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>&quot;Shanghai&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;non-Shanghai&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>91,161 (17%)</td>
<td>448,054 (83%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>117,039 (17%)</td>
<td>565,437 (83%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>121,238 (17%)</td>
<td>660,848 (83%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>200,230 (22%)</td>
<td>710,644 (78%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chinese Municipality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>&quot;Shanghai&quot;</th>
<th>&quot;non-Shanghai&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>426,648 (28%)</td>
<td>1,073,852 (72%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>436,337 (26%)</td>
<td>1,255,998 (74%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>455,662 (25%)</td>
<td>1,368,327 (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>430,875 (28%)</td>
<td>1,140,214 (72%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Tsou I-jen, *op. cit.,* p. 112)

### TABLE II.12e

**M/F Ratio in Municipality of Shanghai according to Provincial Origins, 1930**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kiangsu</strong></td>
<td>227,773</td>
<td>142,980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(156:100)</td>
<td>(82,015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chekiang</strong></td>
<td>138,414</td>
<td>82,015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(169:100)</td>
<td>(82,015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kwangtung</strong></td>
<td>19,242</td>
<td>11,016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(175:100)</td>
<td>(11,016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anhwei</strong></td>
<td>9,560</td>
<td>5,884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(145:100)</td>
<td>(145:100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Lo Chih-ju, *op. cit.,* p. 27)
Shanghai. (See Table II.13) Besides economic factors which influenced the size of the population considerably, the local custom of sending boys back to mainland China for education and the reluctance to claim British nationality accounted for the small number of people who considered themselves to be "natives" of the Colony. The bulk of the population was of Kwangtung origin, and the tendency was to see themselves apart from persons of other provinces (wei-sheng 僧).

Population growth and structure of the three cities were subject to the influence of political and economic conditions which surrounded and which were parts of the cities. The influx of migrants brought with it many different traditions and forms of social life. Such heterogeneity affected the rate and the level of social changes.

Social Changes

Hsü Kuo-chen 徐國楨, writing on Shanghai society, refers to the dichotomous nature of the society: it was Chinese as well as western; and it was prosperous as well as impoverished. Undoubtedly, in the 1920s, the three cities were provided with facilities which gave them a modern appearance. There were electricity, gas, and water supply. Public transportation was provided by trams, and automobiles appeared in great numbers. The conditions of roads had improved, most of these roads being no longer for horse-carts and rickshaws. Sanitation had also improved under the supervision of the various urban councils.
### TABLE 11.13
Immigration and Emigration of Shanghai and Hong Kong

**Shanghai**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Immigration</th>
<th>Emigration</th>
<th>I/E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>254,530</td>
<td>148,769</td>
<td>171:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>306,712</td>
<td>208,706</td>
<td>147:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>473,228</td>
<td>199,042</td>
<td>238:100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: *Shang-hai-shih t'ung-chi*, "Population", p. 6)

**Hong Kong**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Immigration</th>
<th>Emigration</th>
<th>I/E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>159,011</td>
<td>156,011</td>
<td>101:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>143,547</td>
<td>98,393</td>
<td>146:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>121,102</td>
<td>120,224</td>
<td>100:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>130,194</td>
<td>129,859</td>
<td>100:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>91,622</td>
<td>140,534</td>
<td>65:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>181,100</td>
<td>285,593</td>
<td>63:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>187,847</td>
<td>257,162</td>
<td>73:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>223,136</td>
<td>188,900</td>
<td>118:100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: *China Year Book*)
However, within each city the developments were not uniform. While each city had its particularly modernized sector, it also had other areas which still showed the existence of traditional aspects of Chinese society. Altogether, these different sectors reflected and contributed to the unevenness in urban experience. Small wonder, a writer suggests that a promenade in the Tientsin concessions is like a trip overseas.  

In the 1920s, the best developed area of Shanghai was the International Settlement. Especially along the Bund, the area bordering the Whampoo River, were many banks and commercial institutions. Indeed, there were not a few examples of colonial architecture, which reflected the extent of foreign influence. Most of the multi-storeyed buildings within the area were for commercial use, and they housed department-stores, hotels, first-class restaurants, dancing-halls, theatres, club facilities etc. It is interesting to note that Chinese money-changers (ch'ien-chuang; yin-hao) were competitive in this modern business sector of Shanghai. However, most Chinese shops, tea-houses and even brothels were located to the west of the banking and financial centre of the city. Obviously, the buildings were not as modern. 

Hung Kou or the northern part of the International Settlement had a large Cantonese population, who were mainly shop-keepers and clerical workers. The tendency of people of the same provincial origin to live in the same region created many provincial communities within the urban society. This was also reflected in the setting
up of t'ung-hsiang hui, or associations of fellow-provincials. Inevitably, the practising of different regional customs was strengthened and prolonged; and therefore it was difficult for any attempt at social modernization to be widely accepted.

The French Concession was largely developed as a residential area. This place was relatively quiet, and scenic. Most of the people who lived in the modern apartments had a good steady income. In stark contrast, poor Chinese families crowded together in old wooden buildings in the Pa-hsien-ch'iao area, which was on the western outskirt of the French Concession.

Compared to the Concessions, the Chinese Municipality was the less modernized sector of Shanghai. It had a large and poor Chinese population, and they mostly lived in very old concrete or wooden buildings. Most of these people from Chiang-pe	 worked as seamen, stevedores, farmers (living mostly in the Pu Tung area) and factory workers (living mostly in the Tsa Pei area, which was near the industrial areas on the northern and western outskirts of the International Settlement).

Economic activities were concentrated in Nan Shih. Shops selling rice, handicrafts, traditional Chinese medicine were plenty. There were also many pawnshops, inns, temples, tea-houses -- altogether, reflecting an area of life with little western influence. The numerous hui-kuan situated within this area further symbolized the strength of tradition.

In the 1920s, the British, French and Japanese
Concessions in Tientsin were developed as modern commercial and residential areas. Amongst these Concessions, the British was the most prosperous. Only fairly rich Chinese -- wealthy merchants, associates of foreign firms, and high government officials -- could afford to live in these areas. The other five Concessions were little developed, and they held little attraction to the Chinese.

Same as in Shanghai, the Chinese Municipality of Tientsin was the less modernized sector of the city. The large and poor Chinese population were crammed in small old buildings of Chinese design. These buildings were organized as hu-t'ung (alleys), structures which were traditional and which reflected community orientations. Most of the people were shop-keepers, hawkers, factory and farmers.

The entire area was divided into five administrative districts. The central district was the economic centre, where most of the shops dealt with Chinese products. It is interesting to note that Shantung, Kwangtung, Fukien and Shansi provincials practically monopolized the trades. Indeed, they also set up their t'ung-hsiang hui in this district. The other districts were mainly for residential purpose.

In the 1920s, the conscious development of Hong Kong as a colonial and modern city was limited to the northern shore of the island. (See Map 4) This was because of the easy access to the fine harbour facilities, and the range of mountains -- which runs across the island -- formed the natural barrier to the south. In fact, this southern part
MAP 4  CITY OF HONG KONG AND KOWLOON
was left as fishing villages until fairly recent time.

To systematize administration, Hong Kong island was divided into four huan (districts), which were sub-divided into nine yu. The Central District formed the most modern sector of the Colony, mainly developed as a banking and commercial area. Besides some colonial architectures, most of the buildings were of modern design. Most of the Chinese, who worked as clerks and shop-keepers, lived in Sheung Wan and Sai Wan, two districts flanking Central District. They shared tenements in two-storeyed wooden buildings. Beginning in 1921, by a process of reclaiming land from the sea, Wan Chai and Causeway Bay were slowly being developed. The Mid-levels -- an area parallel to and overlooking Central District from the Victoria Peak -- remained the residential area for foreigners and a few wealthy prestigious Chinese.

Despite greater potential for development, plans to develop Kowloon into a residential area were only implemented from 1924 onwards, starting with Shumshuipo. Before that time, Yaumati and Mongkok were the populous districts, with most people living in Chinese-style wooden buildings. The Hunghom district was inhabited by people working in nearby shipyards, dry-docks and godowns. Tsimshatsui, a quiet and scenic area, was taken up by foreign residents. The Walled City of Kowloon -- whose origin was due to the Ch'ing government's face-saving gesture -- remained outside British jurisdiction and was taken up purely of Chinese architectures. Together with the New Territories, which was inhabited by farmers and
fishermen, it stood out in stark contrast to the developing urban areas. It may be inferred that the removing of traditional practices and customs was more difficult in these two areas.

The above descriptions give us an idea of the lack of uniform urban transformation in the three cities. A contemporary French writer observes:

This mass [of Chinese people] that flows into the Occidental structure establishes itself under the shelter of its institutions, of its troops, of the jurisdictions, ... that prospers here while, in the madreporic formations of the old Chinese cities, it vegetates in the most sordid anarchy.16

It is therefore understandable that people were different in their appreciation of urban experience.

More significantly, an experience with and acceptance of modern facilities in the city did not necessarily bring about changes in a person's fundamental values and attitudes. Most people in the three cities were prepared to use foreign products, try out novelties, dress up in western clothes. These same people, however, were apt to celebrate Chinese festivals, consult fortune-tellers in times of uncertainty and crisis, and believe in "appeasing" ghosts and spirits.17

This disparity between superficial adoptions of foreign goods/facilities and conservative regards for traditions was often enlarged by political and institutional forces, which proved negative in transforming social values. Admittedly, the influence of the family and the clan over a person diminished as he emigrated to the city. But urban institutions might have failed to take over the functions of the social-moral community to which the person once submitted himself. Instead, contemporary governments
sometimes contributed towards confusing the people's response. For example, the administration of the French Concession (Shanghai) used both the western and the Chinese calendar in its administrative procedures. The Hong Kong government was quite willing to let Chinese customary practices in celebrating certain festivals and worshipping the dead to continue, though it was keen to arrest and prosecute swindlers who played upon their victims' superstition. The government also invited tenders for the running of Chinese temples.18

As far as shaping the people's social attitudes was concerned, social changes in the three cities in the 1920s were more apparent than real. Two pieces of observation, which are related to Hong Kong, are perhaps illustrative.19

[Hong Kong] is an English city. ... The might of England and the faces of England are everywhere. ... [However], inside -- all is Chinese. Nothing but Chinese.

The Cantonese who make up the bulk of the population have stubbornly resisted changes, and in Hong Kong you will find many old customs and traditions flourishing in a lively manner ....

In the 1920s, there were undoubtedly many articles and novels being written to advocate certain new ideals and values. Many of the creative writings were set in an urban context. People, especially the younger generation, were asked to reject the corrupt tradition. They were encouraged to free themselves from the anachronism of Confucianism, the burden of the family, and the irrationality of some moral dictums. Each person, man or woman, had fundamental rights and freedom to decide. Translated into social relationships, the family must not meddle with the future of its junior
members, marriages and divorces must be "free", an individual must have equality before the law and \textit{vis-à-vis} others. Pa Chin 巴金 in his famous trilogy of novels expressed these sentiments succinctly. Ch'en Tu-hsiu 陳獨秀 and Lu Hsun 鲁迅 adopted a more "sociological" and cynical approach in their condemnation of the feudalistic Chinese society.\textsuperscript{20}

However, one must bear in mind that these literary efforts were not a summary of the real society, nor were they accepted in totality. For the appreciative ones, they served as guidelines to a new democratic Chinese society. Conservative readers tended to see them as giving poor advice to the people. The result was a poor imitation of western society, whose values might not at all suit the Chinese. In one comment, publishers of newspapers and journalists were cautioned about their responsibility to enforce the moral norm. They should only let the public read those stories which were, in a moral sense, "healthy".\textsuperscript{21}

Chiang Meng-lin 蔣夢麟 (1886-1964), minister for education under the KMT, criticized the "mindless" social changes as something "for convenience, or self-gratification, or out of sheer curiosity".\textsuperscript{22} Indeed, there were criticisms directed at the people living in the cities for an unthinking adoption of western paraphernalia and habits. To varying degrees, they became extravagant, loose in morals, lacking in social cohesion, and unpatriotic.\textsuperscript{23} The real meanings of Chinese tradition -- which were the belief in social unity and moral obligation -- were forgotten. One writer comments that most people remembered to celebrate Confucius' birthday
without remembering his teachings.  

Sometimes, the attack on the undesirable social changes was made in the light of urban growth. One writer suggests that before the advent of the treaty ports, most people were satisfied with a simple and unassuming life, preoccupying themselves with farming, fishing, salt-making etc. The dramatic rise to world importance (as the sixth largest city in the world) had changed Shanghai society.

It is not an exaggeration to say that Shanghai is the most boisterous and hedonistic of all the Chinese cities. ... The creation of the Concessions has changed the milieu and tempo of its society: opium dens, casinos and brothels are seen all over the city. ... Consequently, crimes such as blackmail, swindle, adultery and theft are no longer rare news items.  

Chinese society was being modernized in the 1920s in the context of a growing city. Partly because of urban policy and partly because of social inertia, some sectors were more developed than others. People therefore cultivated different feelings about social changes, and they derived their responses accordingly. Moreover, new ideas and institutions would not be accepted as easily as some modern facilities. This entrenched conservatism was also promoted by the governments, which aimed to maintain social stability.

Conclusion

While there were changes in various aspects of the Chinese experiences, these were sometimes more apparent than real. Politically, the early years of the decade were dominated by warlordism. After 1927, political factionalism and struggle involved the KMT's attempt to consolidate its
rule and to eradicate communism. More significantly, the Chinese government's continuous failure was highlighted by the municipal divisions in Shanghai and Tientsin. Parts of the administration and judicial system were still controlled by foreign powers. And Hong Kong was a British Colony.

Economically, vast potentials within these three cities, which might be used for uplifting and changing the general economy of China, were improperly exploited, and the result proved disappointing. Partly, this was because of continuous political unrest in the country. Partly, the agrarian mentality still dominated Chinese economic development. As soon as industrial development failed to sustain the livelihood of some people in the city, there would be a return of the population to the countryside. This phenomenon was particularly noticeable in Tientsin and Hong Kong.

In general, all three cities had a trend of a growing population. Political and economic factors were responsible for this growth, which was also partly due to a shift of the population from the countryside. Many women were moving into the cities as the opportunity for a job -- and for independence -- increased. But judging from some demographic data, the male ethos of Chinese society, the belief in the security of the family and the reliance on a small community were still essentially parts of Chinese social organizations and relationships.

The present thesis focuses on social attitudes. In the 1920s, Chinese cities were regarded as an example of
modern society. Urban developments were in fact praised, and criticized, in this context. By tracing the political, economic and demographic changes which formed the historical background to urban growth, this chapter shows that there was a series of disparity which made uniform social changes difficult. In "Urbanism as a Way of Life", Louis Wirth suggests that one of the factors which influence the extent of social change in a city is the attitudes of the people. Despite the facade of urban growth, Chinese people had changed little in their social attitudes. Their social experiences in these three cities were a product -- as well as a reflection -- of their traditionalistic attitudes being confounded by the new urban experience. In this light, we can readily accept the definition that:

The city is ... a state of mind, a body of customs and traditions, and of the organized attitudes and sentiments that inhere in these customs and are transmitted with this tradition. The city is not, in other words, merely a physical mechanism and an artificial construction.

And we might use this as the "geography" of the thesis.
Notes to Chapter Two


2. To qualify as a board member of the committee of the International Settlement, a person must have property worth more than 500 taels of silver and pay an annual tax more than 500 taels. To be a director in the French Concession, a person must have an income over 4,000 francs and pay an annual tax of at least 1,000 francs. Appointments in both organizations were based on election amongst qualified tax-payers. See Toa Dobunkai (ed.), *Shina shōbetsu zenshi: vol. 15 kōso shō* (Tokyo, 1916), pp. 46-7.

3. By the end of the 1920s, there were six official and three unofficial members in the Executive Council; and there were ten official and eight unofficial members in the Legislative Council. There were one Chinese member in the Executive Council and three Chinese members in the Legislative Council. The best work on the subject, which takes a historical approach, is G.B. Endacott, *Government and People of Hong Kong 1841-1962* (Hong Kong, 1964): see especially p. 294.

4. According to Lo Chih-ju, *T'ung-chi-piao chung chih Shang-hai* (Nanking, 1932), p. 87 the trading activities which made use of Shanghai's port facilities could be broken down into nine categories: (1) foreign products imported from overseas and Hong Kong; (2) foreign products imported from other treaty-ports; (3) total of imported native products; (4) foreign products trans-shipped to overseas and Hong Kong; (5) foreign products trans-shipped to other treaty-ports; (6) native products trans-shipped to overseas and Hong Kong; (7) native products trans-shipped to other treaty-ports; (8) native products exported to overseas and Hong Kong; (9) native products exported to other treaty-ports. Direct foreign trade = Foreign imports (1) + Native exports (6 + 8). Whole trade = Net foreign imports (1 + 2) - (4 + 5) + Net native imports (3) - (6 + 7) + Net native exports (8 + 9). It is obvious that data under items (4) to (7) give an indication of the amount of entrepôt trade. The economic tables of this thesis are mostly modifications of Lo's compilations.

5. According to Rhoads Murphey, Shanghai handled 48% of all of China's foreign trade from 1910 to 1920; and 45% from 1920 to 1930. See R. Murphey, *Shanghai: Key to Modern China* (Cambridge, Mass., 1953), p. 65. The city also had flourishing manufacturing industries. See Feuerwerker, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

6. See Ts'ou I-jen, *op. cit.*, p. 50. According to a survey conducted by the Bureau of Public Safety
(Shanghai) in 1930, 9.72% of the population could be classified as agricultural workers; 19.10% as industrial workers. See "Residents of Greater Shanghai Classified According to Vocation (1930-1932)" in Shang-hai-shih ti-fang hsieh-hui (ed.), Shang-hai-shih t'ung-chi (Shanghai, 1933), "Land" p. 9.


8. See Li Shih-i, Hsiang-kang - tung-fang ti Ma-erh-t'ai (Shanghai, 1930), p. 9.


10. See Ts'ou I-yen, op. cit., p. 42.

11. See Otani Kotaro, "Shanhai mi okeru dokyo dantai oyobi dogyo dantai" (Provincial associations and trade unions in Shanghai), Shina kenkyu 18 (1928), pp. 258-9. See also Ts'ou I-jen, op. cit., p. 42.

12. See Hong Kong Census Report, 1921, p. 163. In 1921, 43,275 persons claimed birth in Hong Kong, but only 15,645 of whom claimed British nationality.

13. See Hsü Kuo-chen, Shang-hai sheng-huo (Shanghai, 1930), p. 3.

14. See Kao Chin-hsü, "T'ien-chin su-hsieh" (A rough sketch of Tientsin) in TK: 28/10/1932 (9).

15. The different provincials were associated with the hui-kuan (site of the association) in two ways: This was because they were either from the same place or engaged in the same trade. Very often, people from the same place also pursued the same kind of job. In this case, the association which they joined was called a kung-so. For example, the largest and most influential Ningpo and Kwangtung groups were also dominant in the shipping business and export. However, as the modern commercial system (with the proliferation of commercial chambers) increased in efficiency, these associations which aimed at promoting stronger ties amongst provincials and settling disputes began to lose its importance. They merely became club-houses where members relaxed and entertained themselves. See Tōa Dobunkai, op. cit., p. 1035; Shang-hai chih-nan (Shanghai, 1920), 11th edn., p. 20a.


18. See P'an K'ung-yen, "Hsiang-kang ti shen-ch'üan" (Superstition in Hong Kong) in Li Chin-wei (ed.), Hsiang-kang pai-nien shih (Hong Kong, 1948), p. 129. Cf. the government's advertisements in HJ: 25/2/1918 (1/3); 13/5/1918 (1/3).


20. Ch'en Tu-hsiu argues that anti-Confucianism is a moral philosophy, which is made necessary because of the changing times. In other words, this is the inevitability of social development. See Ch'en Tu-hsiu, "K'ung-tzu chih tao yü hsien-tai sheng-huo" (Confucianism and contemporary life) in Tu-hsiu wen-tu (Shanghai, 1922), I, pp. 124-5. See also L.C. Young, "Literary Reflections of Social Change in China 1919-1949" (Unpublished thesis, School for Social Research, 1964), pp. 49-52.


24. See "Chu K'ung" (To celebrate Confucius) in HJ: 17/10/1922 (1).


CHAPTER THREE

Marriage and Divorce in Modern Chinese Cities

This chapter looks at the modern Chinese attitudes towards sex with reference to certain cases which happened in the three cities. These cases reflect the general attitude towards sex, marriage and divorce problems, and illustrate the underlying social values. Moreover, the contemporary institutional controls are analyzed. Altogether, the analyses will show how one important area of social organization and relationship was still dominated by a conservative regard for traditional practices. This conservatism also affected attempts at institutional changes.

Eros and its repression leading to the emergence of human civilisations is a familiar theme in history. In this light,

... the conflict between the sexual drive and the cultural restrictions on its expression makes sex a powerful force in its influence on human behaviour.\(^1\)

The influence comes in the form of sex attitudes. In this thesis, attitudes towards sex are defined as cultural norms which organize the social relationship amongst men and women, and dictate the moral behaviour of the sexes.

Guided by their sex instincts, men and women play different roles \(\text{vis-à-vis}\) other members of society. Initially, these social roles are expressed in terms of the family. By marriage or divorce, individuals are integrated into or dissociated from a family. Especially in these societies of which the family is the corner-stone, there is
particular emphasis on a proper sex role.

Individuals are expected to play one or many specific sex roles in family and society. This conformity is important for sustaining order and stability. It is thus considered morally reprehensible for a person to deviate from his/her assigned sex role, whether by accident or intent. And moral sanction is often backed up by legal control. In this context, the institutionalization and legislation of marriage and divorce reflect social and moral attempts to limit excessive changes in sex matters, which may be a result of rapid urban development.²

One of the characteristics of the city is the greater degree of intermingling amongst men and women. Facing and reacting to changes in the social and economic structures, many men and women would have developed different ideas about their sex roles. In real terms, this is reflected in the changing attitudes towards marriage and divorce. The crucial question is on what basis do the people make their adjustment and whether this represents a thorough breakaway from the past?

Traditional Chinese Attitudes towards Sex

In traditional China, sex was not only a natural concern with the difference between males and females. It was also an institution which helped to procreate the family and regulate the moral behaviour of men and women. Since Chinese society was oriented towards a patriarchal and patrilineal family³ as a nucleated unit, the men had superior familial, social and legal positions compared to
the women.

In this context, the Chinese had devised a series of institutional controls and produced a set of philosophical justifications to formalize male predominance in society and politics. Besides enforcing strict segregation of the sexes as contemporaneous ethics required, the Chinese also developed an inequitable conception of sex. For example, the men were allowed to marry as many women as they could afford, but a rigid code of chastity dictated that every woman was permanently and legally married to only one man. Indeed, female chastity was an ethical concept which gradually developed into a kind of moral and legal sanction on the social behaviour of Chinese women. Hu Shih, writing in 1918, attacked vehemently the moribund contemporary law which heaped meaningless honours upon these virtuous women who remained in widowhood, thus in some cases forcing women to suppress their emotional wants.4

The totality of these justifications, controls and experiences, which was commonly known as li-chiao (religion of propriety) and which Lu Hsun condemned in his writings as "cannabalistic" (meaning its strangle-hold on an individual's social freedom), was instrumental in arranging the hierarchy of sex roles and implementing marriage and divorce. The traditional view was that a father chose a husband for his daughter; a husband dominated his wife; and a son looked after his widowed mother. Moreover, Chinese men were taught to place the importance of fatherhood and brotherhood above that of love for their wives. Because Chinese women spent a major part of their lives as the wife
and daughter-in-law in another family, their upbringing and domestic training were geared towards the perfecting of these two roles.

In traditional China, romantic love leading to sex was not necessarily the basis on which a marriage was formed. Because the priorities of an individual were given to the family, sex after marriage primarily ensured the continuation of the family line.

A marriage was viewed as fundamentally a family concern. It was arranged between two persons -- who represented two families -- of compatible social and economic background. This would become a union of strength, enhancing the chances of the sons and heirs of the two families to prosper and to move up the social ladder. As the wife was placed in charge of domestic affairs, she was married for her virtues rather than sexual attractiveness. At the same time, a woman would often sacrifice sexual compatibility (love) for the security of a family and economic support. Indeed, A marriage forcefully bonds two biologically and emotionally incompatible persons, who lead two different sorts of life. ... [Yet] a marriage is the best insurance for a woman's future.

Since many marriages were arranged for social and economic convenience, sexual fulfilment and emotional satisfaction were rarely attained. Men were allowed to have concubines -- or go to a brothel -- in compensation for their lack of sexual pleasures. But they must justify concubinage in social and moral terms. Often, a man used the pretext that his wife failed to produce an heir in order to take a concubine. Significantly, the first wife retained her "predominant" position within the household. Thus,
concubinage was endorsed in order to protect the position of the first wife, to sustain the completeness of the family, and to save the family from the embarrassment of a divorce. 7

Because of its social implications, the permanence of a marriage became a vital moral issue. Each and every member of a family was morally responsible to maintain the "health" of a marriage. A broken marriage was, indeed, a reflection of a family's moral rectitude. Moreover, a marriage created a number of new relationships, and everyone who formed part of it should observe and play his/her ascribed role. Failure to do so was a moral offence, which was punishable by law. Even a pre-marital problem such as calling off an engagement on an unilateral decision was subject to moral sanction.

Breach of promise has been a serious and suable offence in China; but heretofore the offence has been against the family of the jilted because the family "lost face" and suffered financially by the breaking of the marriage or betrothal contract. 8

The contrived nature of marriage in traditional China was the general reason behind many unhappy marriages. Undoubtedly, the ultimate but undesirable solution for relieving the emotional pain was divorce. However, the traditional Chinese attitude towards divorce was that it caused tremendous social and moral trauma, and therefore it should be avoided. As Chou Chien-jen, a Chinese writer, explains:

[The conservatives] believe in the intrinsically evil nature of Man. If marriages are too freely absolved, moral depravity, rejection of certain social norms, and sex promiscuity will be encouraged. To forestall such happenings, domestic quibbles, desertion, adultery, and even physical assault must be tolerated between married couples. By the same
token, it is perfectly acceptable for a man to visit a brothel or take a concubine. Nothing is as serious and unacceptable as a divorce without the sanction of established customs. 9

It was small wonder that other alternatives were exhausted before a divorce was contemplated and carried out.

The impingement of the family system and female chastity (as a womanly virtue) upon the women prevented many of them from freely divorcing their husbands. Moreover, a moral stigma was attached to those women who were being divorced by their husbands. Thus, obviously, one of the effective psychological and moral weapons the husbands could employ to compel their wives' obedience was the threat of divorce. For many women, they preferred the less painful experience of absconding or committing suicide. Even murdering an irascible husband might sometimes win them a chance of judicial sympathy and a lighter sentence. 10

In traditional China, the feasibility of a marriage or a divorce was written into a set of rigid laws. For example, both the Ta-Ch'ing lü-li 大清律例 (Ch'ing Codes) and the Ta-li-yüan p'an-li 大理院判例 (Precedents of Peking Supreme Court cases) pointed out the unlawfulness of a man having two wives, but explicitly accepted concubinage. 11 There were strict regulations on the arrangement for a marriage and on the suitability of marriage amongst certain relations.

The infamous chi-ch'u chih t'iao 出妻條 (seven grounds for divorce) were first listed in the T'ang lü 唐律 (T'ang Codes) and kept in the Ch'ing Codes. Simply, a man could repudiate (divorce) his wife if she:
(1) disobeyed her husband's parents
(2) failed to produce heirs
(3) committed adultery
(4) showed signs of jealousy
(5) had repulsive diseases
(6) was garrulous
(7) was larcenous

These rules demonstrated how much a marriage was considered to be a family affair (1, 2); how unequal was a woman compared to her husband (3, 4, 5); how easily a man could divorce his wife on the slightest pretext of immoral conduct (6, 7).

Indeed, reciprocity was not one of the basic principles of the divorce laws of traditional China. In general, a woman could ask for a divorce only if she was deserted. Moreover, in times of war or famine, the official stand was that a divorce would be allowed after either marriage partner had disappeared for a period of time. However, even such an arrangement was not ultimately beneficial to the divorcee. Since the Sung dynasty, female chastity was promoted and enforced. Therefore, women who had exercised their right to divorce were discouraged from remarrying.

The institution of igoheh (compulsory divorce) further exposed the inequity of the divorce laws. Chinese officials could force a man to divorce his wife if she committed adultery with particular members of the family, or she caused bodily harm to the relatives of her husband's family, or she intended to harm her husband. In the case of a man, this kind of divorce would only be carried out if
he caused bodily harm to his wife's relatives. This official intervention in marriages also illustrated the extent to which a divorce was a family and moral problem, and was often beyond the control of the married couple. A wife could still be divorced even though she and her husband loved each other. This happened in the case of an outbreak of violence between their families.

The importance attached to the family and its continuity had created a society dominated by men in traditional China. This attitude was carried over to the institution of marriage and divorce, which helped to define specific sex roles, to formalize sex relationships, and to stabilize the family system. Each person in the family was morally obliged to see that these functions were fulfilled. Social reprimand and moral stigmatization ensured that few persons would neglect or reject their responsibilities. Moreover, Chinese legislators when formulating marriage and divorce laws also bore in mind the importance of perpetuating sex inequities, of stabilizing the family, and of inculcating moral behaviour.

Attitudes towards Sex in Modern Chinese Cities

If one browses through some of the advertisements and public notices in the newspapers, one may get the impression that in the 1920s people in the three cities had a liberated and relaxed attitude towards sex. Pornography and aphrodisiacs were freely advertised and easily available despite the increasing threat of prosecution. Many doctors advertised their "service" to help improve virility or to
cure venereal diseases. Indeed, some of them were thanked in public notices put in the newspapers. Potent drugs, which served the same functions, were also easily bought at dispensaries. Perhaps what reflected, and encouraged, permissiveness in the society at that time was the glut of popular literature which focused on the pursuit of carnal pleasures. That these writings had some possible influence can be seen in the numerous advertisements on contraceptives -- some of which being labelled as specially for women.14

The customary rule of segregation between the sexes appeared to have broken down. Social intercourse between young men and women became popular. As clearly shown in many pictures, young couples were enrapt in romantic moods in public places, and some of them carved monograms on wooden columns and trees to demonstrate their intimate relationship. Not a few "liberated" women were reported to be seen smoking or visiting a dance-hall. However, the reporting of these activities indicated that the new experiences were still not common features of daily life.

Provided with legal sanction, women apparently found better opportunities for employment and got greater recognition in society. Many girls found work as salesgirls, waitresses, and governesses. Others were attracted to becoming an actress or a hostess in a dance-hall. More importantly, women who had a sound education overseas and a good family background could be given responsible positions in banks and companies. While not every job reflected a genuine concern with sex equality, the fact was that for a woman to "show" herself in public (p'ao-t'ou lu-mien 批頭
for economic reasons had become more acceptable than before.

Many banks deliberately set up a department which catered for the needs of their growing female clientele. Lawyers advertised their expertise in giving advice to women on claiming their share of inheritance. Thus, women appeared to have acquired greater economic status. For that matter, girls were first admitted to the University of Hong Kong in 1922, showing that some parents were prepared to give them the economic support necessary for the education.

Some aspects of the social changes in the 1920s proved to be more apparent than real, and they contained significant traditional elements. For example, commercial products -- especially those luxury items -- were promoted by using female models in the advertisements. This resort to sex appeal revealed the predominant role of men in the economy. Many female doctors advertised that they specialized in looking after women patients. Their service was demanded because the notion that men and women should avoid physical contact with each other in public (nan-ni shou-shou pu-ch'in 男女授受不親) was still prevalent. Many women put advertisements in the newspapers for male companions or husbands. However, this was not as daring and "revolutionary" as it seemed. Most of them in finding a compatible partner stressed that economic viability was the important consideration.

Indeed, there were many writings in the 1920s which recognized and discussed the change in sex relationship within Chinese society. At the same time, most of them,
however, had taken a reserved attitude towards the desirability and practicality of excessive changes.

The dangers of "desexualizing" Chinese society were criticized by many writers. The basic objection to social intercourse between men and women was that it was immoral. It was both barbaric and depraved for a man and a woman to hold hands in public. One of the critics infers that holding hands and kissing will inevitably lead to sexual intercourse because the acts fuelled uncontrollable passion.\textsuperscript{16} In the same light, especially in the early years of the 1920s, men and women who shared the same rickshaw were often jeered at. Obviously, they were regarded as having violated the primary principle of sex segregation -- the prohibition of physical contact.

Women in particular were asked by the critics to take a more cautious approach towards sex equality and liberation. They must not be too enthusiastic about asserting themselves. By defending whatever they did as a matter of sex freedom, they could easily lose sight of their integrity and virginity. In fact, many liberated women "dress casually, talk coarsely, behave strangely; and even visit brothels."\textsuperscript{17}

The conservative criticisms are perhaps best explained by Chou Tso-jen, who suggested that Chinese attitude towards sex in the 1920s was traditionalistic and hypocritical.

Sexual intercourse is still the monopoly of men. For women, it is a sacrifice and a blemish.\textsuperscript{18} Pre-marital and extra-marital sex when perpetrated by men were tolerated. Some writings attribute the indulgence in
carnal pleasures to the failure of social and moral traditions in the city. Moreover, they warn that such indulgence will affect a person's ability to produce heirs.¹⁹

Men and women continued to believe in and play their traditional sex roles. This was the crucial factor which helped to form the conservative sex attitude in the 1920s. The new ideas of sex freedom and equality were rarely adopted in social relationships, except, as one writer comments, in the parks and cinemas.²⁰ Indeed, it would be acceptable for a male teacher to marry his female student. If a female teacher married her male student, the result was a scandal.²¹

Sometimes, the men were criticized for persisting in certain traditionalistic thoughts and practices vis-à-vis the opposite sex. However, much of the blame for perpetuating sex inequities was significantly put on the women. So-called modern women still willingly submitted themselves to the whims and economic control of men. Social intercourse became a sex bargain, with some women giving sexual fulfilment in exchange for material rewards. In this light, men tried to seduce women with their social prestige and money; and women tried to entice men with their beauty and charm. Many writers warn that only actresses and prostitutes care to put on cosmetics and fashionable clothes in order to attract a rich man. And they were contented to be a man's playmate.²² These "modern-minded" women were therefore criticized as no more progressive than their counterparts in the past. They showed themselves to be as economically oriented as those widows who preserved
their chastity in order to secure economic support.23

All in all, people still tried to maintain the traditional difference between men and women. For some particular reasons, Chinese in the 1920s considered that adherence to past attitudes towards sex would prevent excessive and unsettling social changes.

Family Concern

One important reason was the continuing belief in the importance of the family system. As part of this conservative attitude was the notion that men should play the dominant role in family. In the 1920s, one finds that it was often the men who took the initiative to settle family problems, mostly in order to keep their unfair advantage over the women.

In the three cities, there were many cases in which the husbands sued their wives or concubines for adultery. Significantly, most of these cases, which can be read from the newspapers, were not contested by the women. They probably chose to remain silent because they were accustomed to making passive responses, which meant they left everything to social and moral judgements. In this light, one finds that many women were reluctant to reveal family problem to others. Even in cases of their being ill-treated or denied economic support by their husbands, many women would not make an open challenge because they might be regarded as having violated the obligation to the family. Indeed, many aggrieved women absconded rather than stayed in the family to face continuous pressure.24
Many men were aware of their superior roles within a family, and tried to perpetrate this arrangement. Interestingly, many women willingly observed the unequal sex relationship. There were many reports on how men expressed tremendous concern with their brides' virginity. Few girls objected to insulting tests to confirm their innocence. Thus, T'u Fu-fu's case against her fiance must be considered as an exception. She refused to be examined about her virginity by Sung T'ien-hsiang, her fiance who was a doctor in Shanghai. This concept of female chastity also induced many widows to keep a life of solitude and to deny themselves any chance for remarriage. Their just reward was public eulogies on their virtuous behaviour. The obsession with demonstrating a woman's virtues was exemplified by many cases in which the women tried to restore health to family members -- mostly, husbands, parents, and parents-in-law -- by inflicting physical pain on themselves. Such an act supposedly would evoke the sympathy of Heaven and create a miracle.

The lowly position of women in the family was best illustrated by a widespread phenomenon in North China. Many husbands in times of dire poverty sold their wives as if these women were their personal chattels. This not only indicated the passive role of the women in the family, but also showed the economic dependence of women on the men, whose unemployment would affect the whole family. There had been many instances when a wife was sued in court for hitting at her husband's relatives. The fact that she was doing it under provocation was overlooked. One fails to
find cases in which men were prosecuted for beating up their wives' relatives.

In the 1920s, the authority and tradition of the family were still paramount and overwhelming in Chinese society. Sexual freedom, according to some writers, threatened to disrupt the family fabric. One serious consequence was that women gradually lost sight of their duties and obligations. In a few rare instances when some men were sued by their wives, the defendants often tried to suggest that the plaintiffs had failed to be a wife in the family. Significantly, some critics compared the notion of free love to the tradition of chastity. Equally unyielding, the idea of free love was used to defend all sorts of foolish deeds. The unthinking adoption of abortion and divorce merely hurt the integrity of the family rather than solved any sex problem. Indeed, sex had lost all meanings to both married and cohabitating couples; and cries of free love and free marriage were used as excuses to refuse family advice and to indulge in carnal pleasures.

Not necessarily a direct response to this "sex revolution", many people nevertheless tried to assert, or rather reassert, the family control over women. When Wu Sung-ti of Hong Kong was asked to explain his reasons for tying up his wife, whom he also tried to forcefully take to China, he suggested that he was acting within his family rights to punish an unruly wife. Contemporary governments evidently understood the need for the family to influence sex relationship. In Shanghai, Hung A-mao sued her mother and step-father for withholding her right to marriage.
During the hearing, the judge asked the contending parties to settle the matter within the family. Significantly, he advised Hung to listen to her parents in matters of marriage. Moreover, he said that she should not have embarrassed her mother by the legal action. In this case, the girl's legal right was recognized, but she was also asked to consider the welfare of her family.

The continuity of the family was regarded as an important function of sex. A woman in Tientsin was ill-treated by her husband's family because she gave birth to a daughter. The family was obviously concerned with the problem of an heir. In this light, the integrity of the family was equally emphasized, and any sex scandal would be taken as a measure of the family's moral rectitude. If such cases should happen, members of the family were affected, and they felt responsible.

In Shanghai, Hsü Ta-chen spied on his mother's adultery and told his father about it. Together, the two of them caught his mother and her illicit lover. Hsü, in exposing his mother's unchaste behaviour, was thinking about the reputation of his father and family. To him, this was the superior form of filial piety. In another example, a mother and her son were badly beaten for sending the man's wife back to her parents. This was on the grounds of her immoral conduct. The woman's family felt offended because the accusation would certainly tarnish its reputation.

Indeed, most people believed that the family, especially its male members, had the final say in sex
problem. In Shanghai, a woman who was caught having affairs with two men was confined by her brother to the house. He also asked her husband to make a decision on whether to take her back. In this case, the woman's family believed it had the right to control her activities; and her husband had the final decision on her fate.

Moral Concern

The second reason why some people adopted a conservative attitude towards sex was the tendency to associate sex behaviour with morality. In the 1920s, one of the complaints lodged by the critics was that sex freedom and equality led to a deterioration in moral standard. Physical and social contacts between men and women were regarded in some quarters as a moral evil. Men who tried to socialize with women could be arrested. Men and women caught petting in public places were condemned as shameless. In the following example, it can be seen that the notion of sex segregation was sometimes over-extended. A father beat up his daughter's boy friend for holding her hand.

Women of the 1920s were still confronted with a set of sex codes which was highly moralistic in character. Indeed, many newspaper reports cautioned the women to take extra care in safeguarding their moral behaviour. The blame for causing a sex scandal was often placed upon women, especially those who spoke in favour of sex freedom. In Shanghai, a woman was arrested for conspiring with her lover to murder her former husband. Instead of trying to understand her motives, the newspaper simply described her
as a lascivious woman. This was indicative of the social prejudice which was quite common in the 1920s. In a different case, Sun Kuo-an was sued by a woman, who refused to live with him, for theft. During the hearing, Sun tried to get a favourable verdict by saying that she was lecherous. To attack a woman's moral character was a common tactic used in a lawsuit which involved a man against a woman.

Some writers were despaired of female chastity becoming an empty concept. In both the city and countryside, many self-proclaimed modern women frowned at the concept, and considered it as an anachronism. As revealed in the following cases, the society-at-large was still not ready to go that far. In Hong Kong, a widow, who was probably driven to despair by loneliness, was caught trying to seduce the younger brother of her illicit lover. In reporting this, the newspaper emphasized that she had blemished her chastity. Moreover, the newspaper stated that it was carrying out its moral duty to expose the woman. The significance of this case was that the newspaper, which might be taken as a reflection of conservative elements in society, engaged in a kind of moral crusade against the woman without taking into account her predicaments as a widow.

The second case involved Ho Chao-ch'iung who sued for separation from her husband. The reasons she submitted were that her husband and mother-in-law accused her of losing her virginity before marriage; and they would not grant her permission to go home and visit her sick
mother. Obviously, both parties agreed that virginity was important to a girl because it was a mark of her moral integrity as well as chastity. After all, the man tried to broaden the dispute by suggesting that Ho was an avaricious woman, who was trying to damage his reputation by instigating legal action against him. To him, this lawsuit was therefore between a moral man and an immoral women. By asking permission to go home, Ho hoped to draw the attention of relatives and friends to her maligned cause. This was a kind of moral protest within the traditional framework of a woman making passive response. And it was better than the disreputable solution of litigation.

In the 1920s, many people still exhibited a reluctance to express openly an interest in sex. For that matter, the time-honoured practice of "face-saving" in Chinese society had made people much aware of the moral detriments of being implicated in sex problem of any sort. In Hong Kong, a man was dragged to the police station by his wife. She found out that he had been living with and supporting another woman, and therefore she asked the police to intervene. The officer on duty asked the couple to go home and settle the dispute. When the row continued, he threatened to detain them. At this stage, the man pleaded with the officer not to do so because inevitably he would lose face. As a businessman, face was important to him. Similarly, when a woman was arrested for prostitution, she covered her face while going through a crowd which jeered at her. The hostility of the crowd, which symbolized
the moral strictures she would be facing, was generated by the assumption that the woman had "discarded her face" -- or, rather, thrown away her honour. The woman's gesture indicated an understanding and fear of such an accusation.

The aversion to being implicated in a sex scandal in fear of moral repercussions induced many attempts at cover-up. Again it was in Hong Kong where the body of Wu K'ai-sheng, a waiter, was found on a side-street. Autopsy revealed that he died from an overdose of drug which he had been using to cure venereal disease. Police investigation disclosed that his co-workers had deliberately left his body. Besides wishing to avoid any involvement with the law, they were probably trying to conceal the fact that some of them also suffered from the same disease. At least, the public was quite ready to interpret the spread of venereal disease as a symptom of moral depravity.

Full details of a sex scandal rarely appeared in newspaper reportages. The names of the people who were involved, as a general rule, were left unprinted. This tendency creates for us the impression that few persons got involved in a sex problem. And the few disclosures invariably concerned people of poorer social background. However, this does not necessarily preclude the middle-class and the social elites. The fact was they might be more adept at and concerned with covering up all traces of a sex problem.

In the newspapers, misdemeanours such as premarital sex and crimes such as prostitution, rape, seduction were reported and criticized as immoral happenings. In Tientsin,
T'ao Yung 陶鑾 was prosecuted for his attempt to rape his daughter-in-law. After judging him as guilty in accordance with the law, the judge proceeded to censure T'ao for his immoral behaviour, especially as he was the victim's father-in-law. The woman, in fact, was praised by the judge as a most virtuous woman, who successfully preserved her chastity. The report on this event concentrates on the moral implications.46

The inclination to moralizing some sex issues sometimes appeared excessive. In Hong Kong, some women wearing cosmetics were found to be sitting on the laps of some men. They were arrested and charged with prostitution. The prosecution tried to put forward its case by suggesting that only immoral women put on cosmetics and they were most likely to engage in the illicit sex trade. Fortunately for the suspects, the case was dismissed because of lack of substantial evidence.47 However, this case illustrates the degree to which moral consideration continued to affect social regulation of sex mores.

Institutional Concern

The third reason leading to a conservative attitude towards sex was that institutional agencies in the 1920s sometimes encouraged people to hold onto traditional sex attitudes. In fact, most people still believed that sex mores should be defined and controlled by government. In 1917, some people of Shanghai became concerned with the growing numbers of adultery and elopement. They therefore requested the government to adopt measures which might
better the standard of morality. \(^{48}\)

Contemporary governments made the appropriate responses, almost too willingly. The Shanghai government prohibited men and women from sharing a rickshaw on the grounds that it was unbecoming, and unhygienic in summer. The KMT, which ostensibly stood for progress, threatened to arrest anyone who wore fancy clothings (fashions). It also tried to perpetrate a kind of segregation policy by warning men not to make unauthorized entry into women associations. \(^{45}\)

Some of the policies instead of fixing an acceptable sex attitude were confusing to the people. While legislating the right of women to work, Tientsin's Bureau of Public Safety threatened to punish any waitress who failed to return home by midnight. Its rationale was that only indecent women stayed away from home at this late hour. \(^{50}\)

The Hong Kong Government legislated against printing and displaying of pornographic materials, yet set about licensing prostitution. \(^{51}\) The consequence of such self-contradiction, which are exemplified by the two cases, was that institutional arrangements for solving sex problems were also infected by a conservative regard for traditional elements. In Hong Kong, the British administration evidently understood and left the enforcement of the Chinese sex relationships to Chinese family and society. It set up a Secretariat for Chinese Affairs, part of the reason being to handle disputes amongst the Chinese population. However, the Secretariat was not given any statutory power to implement its decisions, which were shaped in the context of Chinese tradition and customs.
Some of the urban institutions could only mitigate the undesirable effects of an entrenched attitude: they failed to encourage people to adopt a more suitable sex attitude for living in the urban society.

Again in Hong Kong, the Po Leung Kuk (Po-liang Society for the Protection of the Meek) was set up as a semi-autonomous charity to look after deserted and absconding women. These women were victims of male-oriented sex attitude. Significantly, the Po Leung Kuk could and did only look after their welfare for a short period. It could not erase the popular impression that women who had stayed with it were those with a dubious past and a dented moral character.

Contemporary governments were sometimes asked to arbitrate in cases which pertained to problems in sex relationships. In the 1920s, many of the legal opinions showed a penchant towards preserving the traditional sex attitude. K'uei Mou-k'ang was judged guilty of deserting a woman. When the judge explained his decision, he emphasized that K'uei had committed crimes which were detrimental to a family (article 237 of the Civil Code) and which constituted a grave moral offence (article 244). Indeed, the law was still viewed by most people as the final part of a series of controls of sex relationships; the other parts being the family and moral sanction. The officers of the law were contented with this interpretation of their responsibilities. In Tientsin, Wang Wen-hsiung sued her father for not supporting her education. The judge
ruled that Wang's father should provide for his daughter's educational needs as it was both customarily and legally acceptable for parents to provide for unestablished children. However, the court (this lawsuit took place before 1927) refused to further entertain Wang's plea to right of inheritance. The Supreme Court simply stated that she was not eligible. In this light, the judges were implying that there was no precedent for a girl to inherit her family fortunes. That they might change this did not occur to them.

Attitudes towards Marriage in Modern Chinese Cities

Having explained how family influences, moral interpretations and institutional forces interacted with each other to produce a conservative sex attitude, it is important to see how marriage and divorce problems reflected this attitude.

For practically all men and a majority of women a central motive in marriage is sexual satisfaction. In fact, a marriage does not exist legally unless it is sexually consummated. Marriage is used in this thesis to indicate the regulation of sex instincts and the formation of sex relationships. The institution of marriage also has many social ramifications. Together, they are the concrete expression of a set of sex attitudes, which most people regarded as ideal and preferred it to be changed as little as possible.

According to contemporary writings, most people in the cities still preferred the formality of a traditional marriage. Many of them married at a relatively young age.
Men still married for heirs and sexual gratification; women married for the security of a family. Indeed, these same writings also point out the vogue of free marriage -- meaning the uninterfered union of two willing and loving persons -- and stress that it was a trend favoured only by the intelligentsia.

Critics did recognize the advantages of a free marriage. Because it was supposed to be based on self-determination, a free marriage removed the possibility of putting together incompatible and despondant couples. Moreover, a free marriage was ideally an equal sex relationship. As a result, polygamy was abolished and the notion of female chastity de-emphasized.

In reviewing the pros and cons of traditional and free marriage, most writings, however, were inconclusive. Some writers compare the traditional form of marriage to rape, but at the same time liken free marriage to a kind of legal contract which is devoid of emotion and a sense of commitment. By this they mean that in traditional marriage the women lose all control and self-respect of their sex life. And by way of free marriage, men and women can make mutual agreement on their sex life without any consideration for contemporaneous social and moral requirements.

The departure point for many of these writings was that free marriage failed to produce the functions of traditional marriage, that is, preserving the civility and decorum between the sexes and ensuring the permanence of a proper sex relationship. Indeed, many so-called free marriages were prompted by an urge for sexual fulfilment. In a way,
free marriage when in operation promised much but achieved little result in improving sex relationship.

Interestingly, it was pointed out by one critic that a free marriage assumed many forms, and they did not necessarily work to the advantage of the women. Many men and women chose to cohabit without seeking legal recognition of their "marital" status. At the same time, many self-proclaimed liberated women took out cheng-hun (marriage-seeking) advertisements in the newspapers. The rationale was that they would be making the ultimate choice of a marriageable partner. However, in these two forms of free marriage, which were ostensibly for the sake of love and independence, the inherent danger was that women contracted to the ensuing sex relationship were often not afforded legal and moral protection.

Reflecting the pervasive and resilient influence of traditional thinking, many women were still concerned with establishing economic viability by means of a marriage. Yet all the while these women mouthed the needs for a free marriage. The consequence was that free marriage became a sort of economic speculation with the women contriving to marry rich and powerful men. When the wives were dissatisfied with their husbands' status, they could always try to leave the men on the pretext that the free marriage had failed. Indeed, many genuinely idyllic free marriages were wrecked by economic difficulties. Thus, a greater risk confronting those people who believed in free marriage was a volatile marital relationship.

On the whole, the contemporary criticisms on the
institution and the ramifications of marriage indicated that a conservative regard for the worthiness of traditional marriage still existed in modern Chinese cities. This conservative attitude was a result of family and moral influences, and was confirmed by institutional arrangements.

**Family Values**

In the 1920s, a marriage still marked an important occasion for the family. In order to bestow pride and prestige upon the family, many people spent a lot of time and money to make a wedding a social extravaganza. In this context, many marriages were consummated for family rather than personal reasons. In Hong Kong, an eleven-year old boy was married to a nine-year old girl. The boy's family hoped that the marriage would bring good luck, especially at a time when the boy's mother was critically ill. While the couple was engaged to marry even before they were born, the ceremony would not have been advanced in time if not for the wish of *ch'ung-hsi* (soliciting good fortunes). 60

The family, especially the parents within it, still had the power to decide a marriage for its members. Many contemporary writings suggested that the younger generation should listen to their parents and families when making a decision on a marriage. 61 The notion of *fu-mu chih ming mei-aho chih yen* (a marriage based on the parents' consent and influenced by the matchmakers' counsel) was still widely accepted by many people. P'u Shao-ch'ing betrothed his daughter to two men. When one of the men discovered about the double
engagement and confronted P'u with it, P'u made the promise that this man could marry his younger daughter when she grew up. It was significant that a father continued to decide for his children even though his former decision had already brought him into trouble.

In the newspapers of the 1920s, one can read many engagement and marriage notices. An important characteristic of these notices was that they were often proclaimed in the name of the family and directed to the attention of the family's relatives and friends. These notices therefore constituted an approval of the family and an invitation to the society to accept the union. As a result, a feasible and legitimate marital relationship was recognized. Without such recognition, many couples found that the marriage confronted many unhappy problems. In this light, cohabitation might have been the only acceptable form of marital relationship without outside interference, but it would not be accorded the full social, moral and legal recognition.

Many people still experienced the overwhelming pressure of the family on their marriage decisions. In some articles, some men were reminded of the family tradition, and categorically warned not to prefer their concubines to their wives. Few couples who tried to refute the family control over their marriage could really feel that they were completely free of family influence, which often took the form of moral pressure. In Tientsin, Sun Ching-chien eloped after her father tried to force her to marry someone she did not love. Sun and her lover were eventually caught, and
her father sued the man for abduction. The case was dismissed in court and the couple was released. While her family seemed to maintain silence over future arrangement, Sun decided to move out of the family. Her motive was to reduce family pressure to a minimum.

The Chinese family system in the 1920s still operated on certain traditionalistic principles. One of the most important functions attributed to marriage was to enlarge the male membership of the family. The idea of preserving the family undoubtedly was in the minds of many parents who arranged to get their children married when the Japanese started their offensive in 1932. The married couples were sent to the safety of the countryside.

The problem of concubinage and bigamy demonstrated the selfish attitude being held by men towards marriage. Many Chinese men in the 1920s had concubines or went through a bigamous marriage in order to have heirs or a better sex life. Indeed, the Hong Kong Government mutely accepted concubinage and bigamy. It realized that it had no control over those men who left their wives in China and travelled alone to the Colony. In any case, it had promised to accept Chinese customs as part of its laws, thus it recognized concubinage.

The fact that some men were able to defend successfully their bigamy by way of citing the family tradition indicates the strength of and support for this tradition. Cheng Chih-yün's mother stated in a public notice that Cheng's bigamous marriage of perforce was the result of the family's desire for an heir. His first wife had contracted
some dubious disease which prevented her from bearing children. The two concubines whom he married before this controversial marriage also failed to produce any child.65

The status of women before and after marriage remained secondary to that of men. Occasionally, one can read from the newspapers that some women tried to assert their rights in a marriage. These cases involved mostly the rejection of pre-arranged marriage, especially if the bride-to-be was treated as a money-object or was misled into marriage. Chiang Su-hsin 蔣素心 advertised that she was refusing a marriage because it was arranged by her parents for a sum of money. In another case, Yang Hsiao-nan 杨曉南 called off her engagement because she discovered that her fiance was not an Oxford graduate as he had claimed.66 This second example is significant because the girl obviously would have married the man if he was really from a famous university. Women, no matter how modern-minded they claimed to be in the 1920s, were still associated with their husbands' status.

In the newspapers, one can also read many reports which reveal marriage problems existing in a male-dominated family. Both wife and concubine were likely to be neglected as a result of their husband's latest marriage. Moreover, concubines were given inferior position in the family and they could be harshly treated. In trying to gain the husband's pleasure, the wife and the concubine were often at loggerheads with each other. In a way, a marriage, by introducing new female members into the family, helped to spread this bickering behaviour amongst the married women by
creating new conflict of interests. These women were already given very little rights in the first place. Adultery, abscondment and suicide were also marriage problems, which reflected the fact that women were basically still passive in their responses to unpalatable marital situations. Significantly, some contemporary articles, which focused on these issues, were not sympathetic to women. In fact, the advice was that these women should be more prepared to accept their fate instead of adopting some morally or legally reprehensible action.\(^{67}\)

In the 1920s, the family was still the basic economic unit in Chinese society. Thus, any consideration for matrimony would also involved economic factors. For some people, cohabitation was of economic necessity in order to dispense with the extravagant marriage ceremony.

Many marriages were fixed by parents in order to obtain economic benefits or to enhance the family's prestige. What concerned these parents was that the background of the two families matched rather than the couple loved each other. Indeed, a marriage which involved two families of distinguished and wealthy background was a cause for celebration, and it often caught the public attention. In Hong Kong, for example, the newspaper report gave much coverage to the marriage between a man, who was the son of a t'ai-shih 太史 (Hanlin academician) and who was educated in America, and Liang Shih-i's 理士 (Minister of Communications under Yuan Shih-k'ai) daughter.\(^{68}\)

Most men and women preferred to marry people from a good background. In many of the cheng-hun advertisements,
which were quite common in the 1920s, the conditions listed were invariably a sound education, an impeccable moral character and financial security. Indeed, in Tientsin, a man (who was probably too embarrassed to disclose his name) advertised that he was an overseas student and he did not mind marrying into the bride's family provided that it was wealthy. 69

An important adverse effect of the economic view of marriage was the tendency to relate a family's well-being to marital situations. Central to this was the continuing belief in a wife's responsibility to making up the family's working force and affecting its prosperity by the sheer fact of her joining it. In the 1920s, the system of t'ung-yang-hsi (child-brides) was still widely practised in all three cities. Young girls were engaged or bought to become future wives. When they reached maturity, the wedding would then be conducted. Before that happened, many of them were accepted into the bridegroom's household as a domestic servant. That there were many instances of these child-brides runaway was a fair indication of the abusive system being continued. During this period, many idling husbands forced their wives to work and support him, no matter how unwilling the women might be. 70 The men's argument was often that their women had brought them bad luck after marriage. Therefore, they must work to compensate for their "destructiveness". After all, through the marriage, the men had secured control over the women.
Moral Values

In the 1920s, most people gave meticulous attention to the details of the engagement and marriage ceremony. This was because they believed that a marriage was a lifelong commitment and any deviation from a proper matrimonial relationship was an immoral act. Thus, a marriage reflected the moral rectitude of the people concerned.

The idea of permanence had a morally binding effect on most marriages, and it especially affected the women, who were given less moral support in an unsuccessful matrimony. Ostensibly,

The continued residence of widows in the Colony [of Hong Kong] after the death of their husbands shows a very remarkable change in the customs of the population ... Formerly on the death of the husband the widow returned to the country; now she evidently remains in Hong Kong where she can if necessary find work in the various industries ....

The former practice required widows to spend the rest of their lives with the husbands' family. In the 1920s, some of them were forced to find jobs in Hong Kong. However, few ever got remarried. Most of them believed that they still had the moral duty to look after the children, who would only be sent back to China when they reached a certain age.

Even under mitigating circumstances, a marriage was still rigidly enforced in the 1920s in order to avoid possible moral reproach. In one of such cases, a woman became mad after her fiance failed to return from a trip. Both she and her family refused to call off the engagement even though the man's family had given its consent. In another case, two families agreed to carry out the wedding
between their children who had both died. In both examples, the people's decision was compelled by a strong sense of moral commitment.

The concern with personal and family honour was the most important factor which influenced the moral view of a marriage. For example, a woman who gave birth to a child without being properly married not only tarnished her own reputation, but also threatened to bring her family into disrepute. The moral obligation of ensuring the propriety and continuity of a marriage must be observed by the married couple as well as members of their families. The failure to carry out such responsibilities on the part of one party would give the other a moral advantage should a dispute arise.

In Shanghai, Han Su-chüan 蘇素娟 asked the court to invalidate her engagement to a man. The betrothal was arranged as early as 1916, but in 1922 the man's mother tried to revoke the marriage agreement. Han had then refused. Then in 1926, her fiancé's mother again changed her mind, suggesting that a wedding be held. Han decided to bring the matter to court following her rejection of the proposed marriage. In court, she accused the man's family as morally irresponsible in taking a casual approach to marriage. Moreover, she said that their delay had caused much speculation about her moral character. In this lawsuit, a woman tried to alleviate some moral pressures on her by asking for legal judgement. After all, the man's family had placed itself in an inferior moral position because of its procrastination.

The moral fear of suffering from social disgrace
discouraged many people from disclosing details of a marriage problem to the public. This was especially true if the problem ended in a lawsuit, in which all pertinent information had to be divulged. The newspaper reports of the 1920s reflect that (1) not many people coming from a good social background seemed to have marriage problems, (2) most people were generally reluctant to talk about their marriage, and (3) the newspapers themselves tend to suppress information on these issues. One may, therefore, get the false impression that the middle- and upper-class had a better approach to marriage. However, it was more likely they were more concerned with keeping these problems privately to themselves. While men could use the threat of public exposure to coerce their marriage partner, the revelation might not serve its intended purpose. Often, public sympathy and moral support would be shifted to the women when it was discovered that the cause of abscondment or elopement was a desire to escape from ill-treatment or fixed marriage.

Institutional Controls

In the 1920s, the principles and implementation of marriage laws showed little change from the past. Theoretically, according to article 972 of the Civil Codes, a girl was given legal right to decide her marriage. The court also gave a clear definition on the lawfulness of a marriage, thus eliminating some false claim to marriage -- and control -- on the part of men. For example, Chi Ts'un-yü 褚村玉 sued his wife for abscondment. However, the judge
dismissed the case because the piece of paper which Chi produced was not accepted as evidence of marriage. On it was written the girl's birth date.

However, the governments realized that "marriage morals are [sic.] in a state of transition, and much unhappiness and misunderstanding must necessarily follow until the new law becomes a custom." Consequently, the officials displayed a predilection to give leeway to Chinese traditions in matters of marriage. For example,

Monogamy is [sic.] established, but it is a monogamy which, given the tacit consent of the wife, allows a man to set up permanent relationships with other women from which legally recognized children may issue.

Such conciliatory approach led to much bitterness and controversy. In Tientsin, Ch'en Chu-ling, a wealthy merchant had died, and his wife and concubine both claimed to be his lawfully wedded wife and disputed over the inheritance. The wife said that she held a copy of the lung-feng t'ieh, which was a document given to the girl engaged to be the wife. The court regarded this piece of evidence as vital, and admitted it.

Indeed, some people tried to take advantage of the law's inclination. Sun T'ing-i defended his action for not supporting his step-mother by saying that she was not legally wedded to his late father. Sun was manoeuvring between the tradition which required him to support anyone wedded to his father, and the law which did define the legality of a marriage. However, the court of the 1920s failed either to back up the tradition or enforce the new laws.
The law recognized the importance of the family. Especially with regards to the influence of parents over marriage, article 22 of the Civil Codes states that a marriage must have the consent of the father or mother. Sun Hsiao-nü sued her mother for interfering with her right to marriage. While granting Sun the freedom to decide her marriage as she was mature enough to do so, the judge warned her about the vogue of free marriage and advised her to listen to parents' advice.

Again, the law because of its indistinct position played an ambivalent role in settling marriage problems. Ch'en Hsü-fu, through her lawyer, objected to being arranged by her father to become somebody's third concubine. She also claimed to sever all legal ties with her family which she deemed responsible for her troubles. In a public notice, Ch'en's father rebuffed her statement, saying that she had been agreeable to the engagement which was made in 1913. Since then, she had treated her fiance well. Moreover, her father also stressed that she was 27 years old, and, if she had really been opposed to the marriage, she could have done so long ago. That she only posed her objection now was insufficient reason to blame the family. Thus, within the limits set by law, he proposed the public to pay close attention to the matter. In this case, the girl framed her arguments in the context of contemporary law. Her father, while cleverly accepted a girl's right to freedom of marriage, suggested that Ch'en herself had accepted the family's decision, which had the effect of customary law.
As an effort to preserve the integrity of the family, the law-court sometimes preferred to adopt a conciliatory approach to solving marriage problems. In Shanghai, Lu Shou-k'ang 龚守康 was sued by his wife for cohabitating with another woman. Instead of pressing charges of bigamy against him, the judge asked Lu to return to his home in Chen-chiang and unite with his wife. In this case, the judge made allowance for the fact that the man, a merchant, was away from home. The misdemeanour of extramarital sex was overlooked, and the harmony of his family was to be maintained.

In Hong Kong, the Government deliberately let the Secretariat for Chinese Affairs handle the marriage problems. In this way, the official policy that Chinese family customs could be used to settle any dispute under the supervision of a semi-autonomous institution was implemented. A woman, who had been officially married, was arranged by her mother to marry another man. When she approached the Secretariat for a settlement, it advised that the woman had freedom of marriage, but she should also try to reconcile with her mother.

In the 1920s, contemporary law on marriage showed a recognition of Chinese moral tradition. There were strict regulations on the formal expression of a marriage. The details for a ceremony were listed as part of the Codes. In Tientsin, a merchant was sued by a girl for breaking his promise to marry her as a wife. In his defence, he said that he had married her as his concubine. More importantly, he went through the wedding ceremony in order to please the
girl and her family. The judge accepted his explanation. Thus, the court had taken into consideration the importance of moral propriety to a marriage. The meaning of the wedding as a moral justification, however, had nothing to do with the legal status of the girl. In this light, the law could prove confusing.

At the same time, this allowance for moral customs and human feelings often turned the law-court into a moral agency. Indeed, some judges tended to moralize the cases sent before them. In Shanghai, Hsü Yüeh-hsien, sued her mother and uncle for forestalling her marriage even though she had reached a mature age. While she was given the freedom of marriage in accordance with article 972, the judge emphatically reprimanded her for becoming pregnant before marriage.

Attitudes towards Divorce in Modern Chinese Cities

The inevitable result of a discrepancy between a conservative attitude towards marriage and an idealistic conception of marriage was the creation of marital tension. According to one critic,

There are many loveless couples in present-day Chinese society. They had been forced together by the family and marriage systems of old, thus listlessly spending their entire lives together. As for the so-called modern marriage, the married couples will be most gratified if only they can retain their love for each other, which has been so strong before the marriage.

This passage also points out the difference between theory and practice, with many modern-minded couples finding out that they were still subject to the influences of Chinese family and moral traditions, which came into operation once
the marriage was consummated. One of the ways to solve the problems of marriage is divorce. Divorce is defined in this thesis as the absolution of a marriage by mutual agreement or by law. The study of the major ramifications of divorce in the three cities will illustrate the impact of a conservative sex attitude on sex relationship in crisis.

In the 1920s, divorce as a social phenomenon engaged the attention of many writers and critics. For those who supported the idea of divorce as a mutually acceptable and amicable solution to marriage problems, the increasing numbers in divorce indicated the emergence of a new society and a new morality. As part of this growth, the burden of sex segregation and family ties was reduced. Especially for the women, a divorce marked their right to sex equality and liberation, and their determination to be freed of family control. At the same time, the general acceptance of divorce also signified the gradual relaxing of moral sanctions on female chastity and remarriage.

However, a note of caution appeared in many contemporary writings. People who contemplated divorce were asked to consider more carefully the social and moral consequences. Some critics advised women not to take the initiative in asking for a divorce. This was because most men still held divorcees -- women who had lost their virginity -- in contempt. In a news report, Chang Shun-yi stressed that she was still a virgin after marrying her husband, whom she now sued for divorce. For her, this was a more important issue than the fact that he had venereal disease. Other critics also warned that a divorce broke
up a family and tarnished a family's reputation.

The conservative approach to divorce was reflected in many actual cases which happened in the three cities in the 1920s. Such conservatism was related to most people's tendency to see a divorce in the light of family and moral problems. Even institutional arrangement for divorce was influenced by these traditionalistic considerations.

Family Problems

Theoretically, both men and women in the 1920s could ask for divorce on an unilateral basis. Indeed, some of the reasons seemed trivial. Wang Ch'üan-lin, who was married for 17 years, was divorced by her husband for addicting to opium. He regarded her no longer capable to be his wife. Similarly, Ch'iu Ts'ui-fang, who was married for 10 years, sued for divorce from her husband who was an opium addict.91

In the 1920s, a persisting unequal sex relationship between men and women formed part of the family problem which led to many divorces. Many men still held on to the notion of male superiority, and some women began to assert their right to equal treatment. This discrepancy was reflected in the conflicting views on the right to claim a divorce. Many men asked for a divorce from their wives whom they claimed to have venereal disease. In contrast, when women requested a divorce on similar grounds, the men often accused them of being hypercritical. At the same time, men would divorce their wives without reservation if they committed adultery. This was because men insisted
on the importance of female chastity. Again, they would sneer at their wives who sued for divorce on grounds of extramarital sex.

Many men still believed that they could simply state a reason — such as adultery or abscondment — and divorce their wives. They would not expect the women to contest the divorce in public. Moreover, many of them counter-accused their wives of immoral behaviour when the women took the initiative in asking for a divorce. These husbands often argued that they had been tolerating their wives because it was better to keep a scandal within the family. In Hong Kong, for example, Lin T'ai-chen sued for divorce from her husband on grounds of desertion. Their marriage was fixed by their parents while Lin's husband was alone in Hong Kong. When Lin brought the case to court, her husband defended his action by saying that Lin had committed adultery before he took her to Hong Kong. In this case, neither the man nor the court was interested in the man's behaviour when he was alone in the Colony. The behaviour of the woman, whom the man probably had never seen, became the important issue. All in all, a divorce to a large extent was to a woman's disadvantage.

The contemporary view was that a divorce was a family affair and, if it was inevitable, must have the family's approval. Indeed, many divorces were announced publicly and jointly in the two families' names. This was considered as a mutual and civil arrangement, which would help to reduce the social and moral impact. In Tientsin, Han Hsieu-wei and his wife secured their families'
approval for a divorce. In the public notice, it was noted that they now wished to end the painful experience of the old-fashioned marriage which had been arranged seven years ago. The case was significant in that two individuals had to endure for some time before their families decided on a divorce. Apparently, if the two of them divorced on their own accord, their families would pose the greatest opposition.

In the 1920s, many divorces were assessed in terms of the family's needs. One of these needs was to have male descendants in order to continue the family line. In Shanghai, a divorced woman, Ch'en Chi-fang, was given custody of her daughter while her husband kept the three sons. Such an arrangement reflected the concern -- of both the family and the law -- with the line of male descendants.

Ironically, some women, recognizing the persistence of this concern, used it to their own advantage. Ting Chin-hsiang's wife sued for divorce on the grounds that Ting had venereal disease, could not have sexual intercourse with her, and thus unable to produce an heir. The divorce was granted. Similarly, Ho Shou-sun asked for a divorce from her husband, saying that he had venereal disease and could not have a child. Actually, Ho's complaints were more than this. Although she had been betrothed to him for many years, her husband had at first procrastinated, and refused to marry her. After eventually marrying her, he forbade her to see her parents. He also failed to communicate with her when he
went from Kiangsi to Shanghai. So she went to Shanghai and sued him for divorce. In this case, the woman was aware that a man's failure to fulfill his promise of marriage and to take care of his wife would be easily overlooked, if not condoned. Therefore, she emphasized his failure to continue the family.

The family's honour was also considered as a more important issue than the happiness of the individual in a divorce. When Chu Ch'i-ch'in asked for a divorce, her husband requested her to drop the case for the sake of the family's reputation. Chu found it intolerable that her husband continued to favour his concubine. Sometimes, the blame for a divorce was attributed to the family rather than to an individual. In Shanghai, Wang Te-chao accused Liu Huan-ch'ing of neglecting her duty as a wife. He suggested a divorce and granted her the freedom of remarriage. Significantly, he also mentioned Liu's father by name, thus implying that he had failed to teach Liu the necessary virtues to be a good wife. Answering Wang's accusation, Liu in a notice states that Wang is the son of Wang Sheng-san, the commissioner of Chekiang. She also reveals that Wang Te-chao had received her father's financial assistance while studying overseas. After he returned, they got married and had children. Liu was implying that Wang's family had been ungrateful in asking for the divorce; moreover, Wang's action threatened to break up a family.

Many cases of divorce in the 1920s involved women who complained that they were ill-treated by their husbands.
This was especially prevalent in cases which involved their husbands having a favourite concubine. More significantly, the fact that a married woman played an inferior role in her husband's family would mean that she was easily abused by other members of his family. The wife might be badly treated by her mother-in-law. In one case, for example, a woman decided that she could no longer live with her parents-in-law, and asked to leave the family. At the same time, she emphasized that she was not leaving her husband. 99 Indeed, continuous pressure exerted by the husband's family sometimes overwhelmed the woman's feeling for the man, and forced her to ask for divorce. In Shanghai, Cheng Ch'iu-hua put a notice in the newspaper, stating her decision to divorce her missing husband and to give him right of remarriage. Cheng had married for 10 years, and she did not mind waiting for her husband who had gone to Shensi several years ago. Since then, he failed to maintain contact with his family. And Cheng's parents-in-law and sisters-in-law began to treat her with cold indifference. According to her, she was forced to ask for divorce publicly over their injurious remarks -- probably about her "responsibility" for her husband's disappearance -- which would lead people to believe that she was an unchaste woman. 100 In this case, while the woman had displayed extreme patience, the husband's family continued to treat her badly, and there is no reason to believe that the various members would improve their behaviour even if the husband had been present.

Economic problem formed part of the family problem which influenced many people's decision to divorce. It also
affected the outcome of a divorce. Many husbands still regarded themselves as solely responsible for the income of the family. Especially prevalent in North China, many husbands suggested that they were compelled to divorce their wives because they had great economic difficulties. The rationale was that the men were "freeing" the women to look for better husbands. It did not occur to these men that women might find jobs outside the family. Neither did they want that to happen because of their conservative mentality.

Paradoxically, in Tientsin, many women asked the Association of Women for help in arranging a divorce. This was because their husbands threatened to force them to work, to sell them as prostitutes in order to overcome economic difficulties. In other cases, some husbands ill-treated their wives out of sheer frustration of their own inability to find money to support the family. All these cases were influenced by the notion that a wife was her husband's property, and he could do whatever he wanted to her in a time of crisis.

Many women still subscribed to the idea of economic dependence on their husbands, and this belief made them less willing to divorce. In Tientsin, a woman refused to comply with her husband's request for divorce. She argued that she would lose all her property rights, which she had surrendered to her husband after the marriage. Indeed, many women asked for property settlement in a divorce as a kind of compensation for the damage to their reputation, which would make a remarriage difficult. In another case,
a woman suggested that she was forced to divorce her husband who was being jailed for one year. She said that during this period she would lose all economic support. Obviously, she did not think she could find a job on her own.

**Moral Problems**

In the newspapers of the period, there were many divorce notices which expressed two persons' consent to a divorce on a mutual basis. The significance of such an arrangement was to show that both parties were equally morally responsible for the decision, especially in cases of incompatibility. In this light, contemporary criticism of divorce as an irresponsible act between promiscuous lovers was significant. Indeed, some people sought to terminate an illicit love relationship by advertising their intention on an unilateral basis, and this was often to the disadvantage of the rejected women. Most of the declarations were made in the name of the parents or through a lawyer. This method made the divorce a morally more acceptable affair. People would not construe it to be a rash decision, which was identified with libertine youngsters. Also, it was mentioned in the notices that both partners were released from any moral obligation after the divorce. This was a public statement that both parties had to a certain extent fulfilled their moral duty in the marriage. Other people therefore could not criticize that the divorce was a moral revenge, which was exacted by one person on the other for infidelity. These notices revealed the
immense concern of the society in presenting a divorce with utmost moral propriety.

In the 1920s, the ideal of a permanent marriage was still rigidly observed. Two anecdotes are illustrative. In the first one, a man, who was educated abroad, decided to give up his wife whom he found to be old-fashioned. His wife, under tremendous moral pressure to remain in the man's family, eventually committed suicide. In the second case, a modern-minded man sought to divorce his wife. His family, which had arranged the marriage, disallowed the divorce for fear of a scandal. At the same time, his wife refused to divorce him because she wanted to protect her moral stature. When the man brought the case to court, the judge reprimanded him, saying that he was morally compelled to treat the woman as his wife. In these two examples, the continuation of an unhappy marriage was preferred to a divorce. A divorce was considered to have undesirable moral effects.

If a lawsuit became part of the process of a divorce, the facts were seldom widely publicized in the newspapers. Moreover, in the few available reports, many of the details would be sublimated if the case involved persons of a good social background. These efforts at cover-up were related to the question of "face" in Chinese society. People were concerned with how others viewed their moral integrity. The view could easily be changed by certain incidents. In Shanghai, Ch'en K'un-jung 陈坤荣 was being sued for divorce by his wife. She accused him of having an extramarital affair. In the court, Ch'en said that his wife need not have caused such commotion by bringing the
matter before the judge. Because of her action, he had lost "face".\textsuperscript{107}

A divorce was also seen as a matter of family honour in the 1920s. In Hong Kong, Su P'ei-chao 蘇佩珊 tried to call off his engagement to Ch'en Hsiu-fen 陳秀芬, whom he found out to have been engaged to another man in Shanghai. Ch'en's father objected to this unilateral decision, saying that it damaged the reputation of his daughter and the family. Then in another notice placed in the newspaper, Su further revealed that he was engaged to Ch'en five years ago, and since then many people had seen them going out together.\textsuperscript{108} In this case, both parties viewed the divorce as a moral issue. The man, moreover, implied that the girl and her family had betrayed his trust. He also called upon witnesses as a kind of moral sanction.

In the 1920s, society-at-large was still skeptical of women who took initiative about their love life. In Hong Kong, Liang Shao-chih 梁少芝 was seduced by another man, and was eventually arrested for deserting her husband. She argued that her action was based on true love and was an assertion of her right to leave an incompatible marriage partner. The newspaper report on this incident, however, was unsympathetic, refused to discuss the background of her elopement (such as an unhappy marriage), and simply described her as a prostitute.\textsuperscript{109} In this case, the lack of social approval and the attempt to moralize the issue had failed the woman's act of self-liberation.

To most women, a divorce was a painful moral decision. Only when the situation became no longer tolerable and when
they knew they could secure moral support, the women would then ask for divorce. It was not surprising that women tended to give the fuller account of the reasons for divorce. In Shanghai, a woman asked to divorce her husband of 30 years. She accused him of not giving her any economic support, of stealing valuable items from their house, and of finally deserting her. She found out that he had married another woman. The woman said that she had long contemplated to sue her husband for bigamy, but someone (probably his relatives) intervened. Now that he had become so indiscreet about his bigamous behaviour, she stressed that she had a right to invoke public judgement.110

The important reason for many women to view divorce as a moral issue and to moralize their decision to divorce was to give themselves protection in a society which continued to see divorce as a moral problem. One common tactic employed by those women who asked to divorce their husbands was to build up a good character reference. In Tientsin, Li Li-ch'ing 李立青 requested a divorce after her husband had left without giving any explanation. According to her testimony, she had suffered a lot as a result of his disappearance, which had given rise to much speculation. Moreover, she had contributed towards supporting his husband's family.111 The woman assumed the role of a loyal and chaste wife, and, having fulfilled her moral duty, had the right to ask for a divorce.

Some women in fact suggested that they were forced to ask for a divorce because this seemed to be the only way to prove their moral rectitude. Ch'en Shu-ch'in 陳淑勤
argued that her husband had denied her the moral status of being the first wife when he married a concubine and expelled Ch'en. She stressed that she had committed no moral sin which warranted such treatment. \(^{112}\)

The action of some men exploited and helped to perpetrate the conception of divorce as a moral problem. Ch'i Jui-hou 祁瑞侯 sought a divorce from his illicit lover, whom he revealed to be a former prostitute. \(^{113}\) His strategy was to disclose her background, impress upon the people that she was of dubious moral character, and therefore win sympathy for his morally correct decision.

Indeed, some men tried to blame their wives for the failure of the marriage. When their wives asked for a divorce, they often referred to the women's moral character in order to avert public scrutiny of their own behaviour. When his wife sued him for divorce on grounds of ill-treatment, Chou Shu-t'ing 周樹庭 said that he preferred not to reveal his wife's immoral deeds. Significantly, the case was dismissed. \(^{114}\) Apparently, Chou had successfully convinced the court that he had a right to punish his immoral wife.

**Institutional Controls**

In the 1920s, some people -- particularly women -- were aware of and believed in changes in the divorce laws. Promising greater degree of equality, these laws gave the impression that a divorce would be free of traditionalistic implications. Therefore, most people in the three cities appeared more prepared to rely on legal arbitration to solve
their marriage problems. As an indication, the number of lawsuits over divorce increased and many notices were being placed in the newspapers, which stressed the legal right of a person to revoke an engagement or to divorce. For example, Tu Ho-chen denounced the marriage pact which was imposed on her when she was a child. Saying that she had reached maturity, she cited her legal right to revoke the "contract". Similarly, Li Peng-hsiang requested a divorce from a girl, whom his family forced him to marry. Taking care to cite articles 972 and 996 of the Civil Codes, he stressed that as a mature person he maintained the free will and independence in deciding his marriage. In these two cases, contemporary law seemed to support the individual right to divorce over family influence. More importantly, these individual rights were extended to the women. They were given greater protection against arbitrary divorce by their husbands. In Tientsin, Li Jo-chih objected to being divorced while she was in hospital. She argued that according to the Civil Codes she could not be divorced if she was only temporarily incapacitated.

Unfortunately, the few cases were the exception rather than the rule. Further analysis will show that the divorce laws of the 1920s were still considerably biased in favour of men. Such conservatism was especially noticeable in the Ta-li-yüan p'an-li which made it extremely easy for a man to divorce his wife. The "seven causes for repudiation" still formed part of the divorce laws. In fact, a man could divorce his wife on the slightest excuse. He could
divorce her if she did not tell him where she was going. If a wife hit her husband, she could be divorced. A woman only had to be accused of adultery -- though not necessarily found guilty -- and she would be asked to go.

The law made it difficult for a woman to take initiative for a divorce. A wife was allowed to separate from her husband if only she had irrefutable evidence that he tried to sell or to force her to become a prostitute, or he threatened her. The wife was legally permitted to ask for a divorce if her husband, or his parents, or his grandparents unreasonably maimed her. The first wife could ask for a divorce if her husband married another woman as a wife. She could not do so if he married the woman as a concubine. The husband must be proven guilty of and punished for adultery before his wife could divorce him. The wife could apply for divorce after her husband had disappeared for three years.

The Civil Codes were not any more progressive. Ten conditions were listed as sufficient reasons for divorce:

(1) bigamy
(2) adultery
(3) ill-treatment
(4) ill-treating or being ill-treated by his/her relatives (of lineal consanguinity) such that living together becomes intolerable
(5) desertion
(6) attempting to murder members of his/her family
(7) having an incurable disease
(8) insanity
(9) loss of contact over three years
(10) being jailed for more than three years, or being punished for a dishonourable crime

On paper, these conditions were applied to both men and women. Indeed, a greater degree of reciprocity was evident in items 1 to 4. And items 7 and 8 were no longer exclusively exploited by men. However, the conservative spirit of the law was confirmed when some provisions were quoted in applying these conditions. If a wife did not report on her husband within the first six months, bigamy and adultery, which were generally associated with men, would no longer constitute valid reasons for divorce. The fact was that most women still tolerated such misdemeanours and preferred to solve such problems within the confines of the family. Similarly, a woman must ask for divorce within one year if she wanted to sue her husband for attempted murder. But very often it was difficult to define and find evidence of the crime. A woman was given five years in which to sue her husband for divorce if she felt humiliated by his being jailed for a crime. Obviously, if the husband was jailed for more than five years, a wife who asked for divorce during this period would be viewed with apprehension.

In the 1920s, many people arranged to have a divorce through legal channels. The major motive, however, was to lend support to very traditional consideration. For example, in registering with the court their intention to divorce, the people were trying to obtain a moral recognition of their right to divorce. This practice was particularly prevalent in cases which involved a married person
disappearing, absconding or committing a crime. In Shanghai, Ku Ch'uan-lin 隆泉林 sought for a divorce from his wife who had been prosecuted for adultery. As much as being his legal right, Ku's action could also be interpreted as an attempt to punish an immoral wife. In Tientsin, a woman sued for divorce from her husband on grounds of bigamy. Significantly, she emphasized that she took action because she felt cheated. In other words, she believed that the revelation of the man's falsity as more important.

The law-courts in the three cities generally abstained from arbitrating in divorce problems. Most judges were prepared to reconcile estranged couples, thus exemplifying the virtues of a fu-mu kuan 父母官 (paternal-official). When T'an Mi-yung 譚眉影 asked for a divorce from her husband, she revealed that this was the second time she brought the issue to court. The first time she had been asked by the judge to reconsider her decision. In another case, the judge and the attorneys representing both parties advised Tai Hsin-ts'ai 戴信才 and Chao Nien-yün 趙年雲 to reconsider their application for divorce.

In Hong Kong, complaints which might lead to divorce were initially referred to the Secretariat for Chinese Affairs. The court would only intervene when the Secretariat failed to arrange a compromise and the contending parties still wished to divorce.

In handling those unavoidable divorce lawsuits, institutional agencies were under the predominant influence of traditional view of divorce. In Hong Kong, Pao Shu-chen
was advised by the Secretariat for Chinese Affairs not to bring a lawsuit against her husband. Originally, she wanted to sue her husband for marrying a concubine, neglecting and ill-treating her. The Secretariat, however, suggested that Pao and her husband make a compromise as the quarrel was basically a family affair. After all, he married the concubine in order to have an heir. In this case, the official-in-charge gave priority to the Chinese tradition of family unity.

In some legal cases, some judges displayed an inclination to moralize the divorce. In fact, many of them considered it as their moral responsibility to save broken marriages. In Shanghai, a judge refused to grant a divorce between Pi Pao-chen and Shen Fu-pao on the grounds that domestic quarrel between husband and wife did not merit consideration for a divorce. Moreover, he stressed that it was his moral responsibility to refuse permission for the divorce. In a more extreme case, a judge refused to absolve an old-fashioned marriage. He said that he was personally against the "new tide" of divorce.

The contemporary ambivalent attitude towards divorce was confirmed by the law-court's tendency to render justice on the one hand and to uphold tradition on the other. In Shanghai, Ting Lien-sheng sued his concubine for elopement and asked for a divorce. The woman's lawyer suggested that she had the legal status of a wife because she was married to Ting in order to give him an heir. She left Ting when he married another woman as his second wife. In other words, Ting was accused of bigamy. Ting's attorney
stressed that he married the woman as his concubine. After hearing both sides, the judge ruled that Ting could immediately divorce the woman, whom he regarded as Ting's concubine. He emphasized that the law that a man must wait for three years after his wife had disappeared before he could divorce her was not applicable in this case. 127

Clearly in this case, whether the man would be punished for bigamy or the woman would be divorced for elopement depended on the judge's differentiation of the woman's married status. This social bias against the concubine was perpetrated by contemporary law.

Many people took advantage of this ambivalence. Shen P'ei-chen sued Wei Shao-wen when the latter refused to divorce his wife. She sued Wei for bigamy because she always considered herself as his wife. Wei argued that he always regarded Shen as his concubine. Therefore, his refusal to divorce his wife was a confirmation of Shen's status. 128

Conclusion

In this chapter, it is argued that Chinese attitudes towards sex in the 1920s were consciously and continuously influenced by traditionalistic concern for the family and moral righteousness. The ostensibly modern laws, which were more enforceable in the cities, helped to preserve and to promote such conservative attitudes.

The phenomena of marriage and divorce are discussed and some relevant cases are analyzed. Altogether, these show that men and women in the 1920s to a certain extent still
accepted that they were assigned to different and unequal sex roles. Moreover, both family and moral considerations permeated these two kinds of sex relationship; and modern institutions benefited and abetted those people who believed in and adopted the conservative approaches to marriage and divorce problems.

In the 1920s, most Chinese in the three cities resigned themselves to fairly traditionalistic sex roles. Because of this inertia, the conservative attitude towards sex formed a significant informal control of modern Chinese society. This was understandable in that Chinese individuals were still burdened by a concern with family and moral sanctions. The concern for personal virtues and vices vis-à-vis the broader categories of family and society regulated Chinese social behaviour. Institutional control of society was partially based on this formula.
Notes to Chapter Three


2. This is based on the notion of possible tensions in sex relationships and inevitable breakdown of marriage in industrialized society. See P. Worsley, *Introducing Sociology* (Middlesex, 1977), 2nd edn., p. 198. In order to arrest the rapid rate of divorce, which is a sign of social disorganization, laws must be drawn up and enforced to safeguard the permanence of marriage and to limit the freedom of divorce. See W.N. Stephens, "Marriage Defined" in L. Saxton (ed.), *A Marriage Reader* (Belmont, 1970), p. 205 and Broom & Selznick, *op. cit.*, p. 446.


4. Hu Shih, "Chen-ts'ao wen-t'i" (The problem of chastity) in *Hu Shih wen-t's'un* (Shanghai, 1921), v. 1, pp. 670-2.

5. In Chinese literature, there are many stories of young couples who were prevented from seeing, loving and marrying each other by their parents. If they tried to object to the family's decision, they would be regarded as unfilial and shameless. As far as the general attitude was concerned, romantic love must be limited and controlled through the institution of fixed marriage and the segregation of the sexes. The responses to such an rigid attitude were invariably secret meetings, suicides or taking vows in the monastery. See discussions of this phenomenon in Wang P'ing-ling, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-21; O. Lang, *Chinese Family and Society* (New Haven, 1946), p. 34; Chu Chieh-fan, "Man-t'an Chung-kuo-jen ti luan-ai" (Some discussions on love amongst the Chinese), *Ch'en-kuang* 2:4 (1954), p. 4; Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-7; A.K. Wong, "Women in China: Past and Present" in C.J. Matthiasson (ed.), *Many Sisters: Women in Cross-cultural Perspective* (New York, 1974), p. 235.


10. Olga Lang suggests that public opinion in China sometimes acted as a cushion to the women's bitter experience and condoned their unacceptable responses. See Lang, op. cit., p. 41. According to Ch'en Tung-yüan, Chung-kuo fu-nü sheng-huo shih (Taipei, 1965 reprint), p. 409, 40.6% of the murder, which happened in 1925, involved women who killed their husbands.

11. See Ch'en Chin-k'un, "Shuo Chung-kuo hsien-shih ti hun-yin" (On marriage in contemporary China), She-hui k'o-hsüeh chi-k'an 2:2 (1924), p. 163.


13. There were many reports on people being arrested for pandering pornography. In one comment on this, the writer of an article suggests an even stricter control. See Ch'ıeh, "Che-shu ju che-yu" (To choose a friend is like to select a book), SH: 21/12/1932 (12).

14. See TK: 17/1/1930 (9).

15. See HJ: 13/1/1922 (2).

16. T'ien Wei, "Ou-wen" (Gossips), SH: 19/9/1932 (13).


18. Chou Tso-jen, "Shang-hai ch'i" (Shanghainess) in T'an-lung chi (Shanghai, 1927), p. 158.

19. See HJ: 26/7/1922 (1).


21. See TK: 7/12/1932 (9).

22. See Ch'i, "Wo tui nan-nü t'ungh-hsüeh ti i-chien" (My opinion on male and female students), SH: 22/8/1923 (supp. 1); Sou, "Nü" (Female), SH:5/12/1932 (14); TK: 2/8/1932 (9).

23. See Li Jen-chieh, "Nan-nü chieh-fang" (Sex liberation) in Mei Sheng (ed.), Nü-hsing wen-t'i t'ao-lun chi (Shanghai, 1934), vol. 2, p. 79; P'ei T'i, "Fu-nü tsai ching-chi-shang ti ti-wei chih chien-t'ao" (Discussion on women's economic status), Hei Chung-hua 3:5 (1935), p. 28.
24. Wu Chih-hsin, in a survey, points out that most women were likely to adopt a negative response to an unhappy marriage, such as by absconding. See Wu Chih-hsin, "Tsui-chin i-shih-lu-nien chih Pei-p'ing li-hun-an" (Divorce cases in Peiping of the past sixteen years), She-hui yen-chiu 1:1 (1935), p. 38. Indeed, some women were forced to kill themselves because they abhorred the moral consequence of a divorce. See Hsia Mei, "Tzu-yu li-hun lun" (On freedom of divorce) in Mei Sheng, Chung-kuo fu-nü wen-t'i t'ao-lun chi, chang pien, p. 19.

25. See SH: 15/8/1932 (14); 30/9/1932 (15); 27/11/1932 (15). As can be read from the reports, Sung persisted in asking the girl about her virginity.

26. See ST: 13/8/1917 (3); 17/12/1917 (5). In Shanghai, both T'an and T'ang were praised for spending their whole lives as a widow. T'ang in fact became a widow before the marriage took place. See SP: 27/1/1917 (6); SH: 4/9/1923 (15). Indeed, the Shanghai municipal government was keen to promote chaste behaviour amongst the women. In Min-kuo hsü Shang-hai hsien-chih, 14 filial women and daughters were mentioned; and 3 women who injured themselves to solicit heavenly help were listed. See Chung-kuo ch'u-pan she, Shang-hai yen-chiu tzu-liao hsü-chi (Taipei, 1973), p. 610.

27. TK: 23/11/1929 (9). In this case, the woman was insulted and beaten up many times before she retaliated.


29. See Huang Chia-teh, Hsin nü-hsing (Shanghai, 1936), p. 4; Li Chao-min, Chung-kuo kuo-tu shih-tai ti chia-t'ing (Shanghai, 1925), p. 6; T'an Jen-chiu, Chung-kuo li-hun ti yen-chiu (Shanghai, 1932), "Introduction", p. 10.

30. See HJ: 26/5/1927 (2).

31. See SH: 12/10/1927 (15).

32. See TK: 4/1/1930 (9).

33. See SH: 30/9/1923 (15).

34. See ST: 23/6/1922 (7).


36. See, for example, HJ: 3/10/1922 (22).

37. See ST: 3/2/1922 (7).
38. T'ang conspired with her present lover, Chu, to murder her former husband, whom she accused of threatening and beating her. Moreover, she said that her father-in-law of a previous marriage asked her to avenge his son's death. His son was murdered by the woman's former husband. See SP: 11/3/1917 (6).

39. See SP: 17/9/1917 (6).

40. See TK: 24/7/1932 (9); 28/7/1932 (9). It is suggested that the city corrupted those people from the countryside.

41. See HJ: 18/6/1927 (2).

42. See HJ: 17/6/1927 (2).

43. See HJ: 4/6/1918 (1).

44. See ST: 2/8/1922 (7).

45. See HJ: 13/9/1922 (1).


47. See HJ: 17/5/1918 (1).

48. See SP: 16/5/1917 (5).

49. For the various aspects of government policy during this period, see SH: 3/3/1927 (14); 27/5/1927 (16); TK: 28/2/1932 (7).

50. See TK: 19/10/1932 (7).

51. See HJ: 18/6/1918 (1).

52. See SH: 30/5/1932 (10).

53. See TK: 14/12/1929 (9); 19/12/1929 (9); 20/12/1929 (9); 8/3/1930 (12).


55. See Wang Liao-i, Lung-ch'ung ping-tiao-chai so-yü (Shanghai, 1949), p. 133. The less ritualized form of civil marriage (wen-ming chieh-hun 文明結婚) also emphasized the formal aspect of a marriage. See Hsieh K'ang, Chung-kuo she-hui yen-chiu (Hong Kong, 1961), p. 222; Wu Pa-ling, "Ti-i-chieh chi-t'uan chieh-hun" (The first group marriage) in Li Chin-wei, op. cit., p. 117.

56. See Shih-wo, "Wo ti lüan-ai kuan" (My views on love), HJ: 9/5/1927 (4); K'un-yüan, "Ting-hun yü ting-huo" (An engagement to marry is like an order for some goods), HJ: 30/12/1932 (4).
57. See Ch'en Ch'uan-kang, "T'ung-chü yü chieh-hun" (Cohabitation and marriage), Fa-hsaeh tsa-chih 6:4 (1933), p. 791.

58. See Kuo Chen-i, Chung-ko fu-nü wen-t'i (Shanghai, 1937), pp. 49-50.

59. Ibid., p. 49. See also Lu Fu, Fu-nü wen-t'i hsin-chiang (Hong Kong, 1949), p. 20.

60. See HJ: 6/9/1927 (3).

61. See Yü Jen-y'ing, "Tsao-hun yü ch'ing-nien" (Early marriage and the youth), HJ: 12/11/1932 (4); SH: 24/9/1923 (1). It is commented that parents were less emotionally involved when choosing a marriage partner for their children.

62. See ST: 5/2/1922 (7).

63. See, for example, ST: 14/1/1922 (7); HJ: 23/11/1922 (2).

64. See TK: 10/9/1930 (7).


66. See SH: 22/10/1927 (2) and SH: 3/5/1927 (4). Chiang, in fact, argued that her parents' action was unacceptable in accordance with party rule.

67. See, for example, the article "Hun-pien" (Marriage problem), SH: 31/7/1927 (16).

68. See HJ: 6/8/1918 (1).


70. In Tientsin, Li Ta-ts'ui was forced to work despite her sickness. See TK: 20/4/1930 (9). In Shanghai, a man used up all his wife's dowry money and then forced her to work. See SH: 12/7/1927 (15).

71. Hong Kong Government, Census Department, Hong Kong Census Report, 1921, p. 163.

72. See ST: 12/1/1922 (7).

73. See ST: 26/7/1922 (7).

74. See SH: 17/2/1927 (15).

75. See SH: 24/7/1927 (15).

57. See Ch'en Ch'uan-kang, "T'ung-chêl yü chieh-hun" (Cohabitation and marriage), Fa-hsüeh teo-chih 6:4 (1933), p. 791.

58. See Kuo Chen-i, Chung-kuo fu-nü wen-t'î (Shanghai, 1937), pp. 49-50.

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61. See Yü Jen-yîng, "Tsao-hun yü ch'ing-nien" (Early marriage and the youth), HJ: 12/11/1932 (4); SH: 24/9/1923 (1). It is commented that parents were less emotionally involved when choosing a marriage partner for their children.

62. See ST: 5/2/1922 (7).

63. See, for example, ST: 14/1/1922 (7); HJ: 23/11/1922 (2).

64. See TK: 10/9/1930 (7).


66. See SH: 22/10/1927 (2) and SH: 3/5/1927 (4). Chiang, in fact, argued that her parents' action was unacceptable in accordance with party rule.

67. See, for example, the article "Hun-pien" (Marriage problem), SH: 31/7/1927 (16).

68. See HJ: 6/8/1918 (1).


70. In Tientsin, Li Ta-ts'ui was forced to work despite her sickness. See TK: 20/4/1930 (9). In Shanghai, a man used up all his wife's dowry money and then forced her to work. See SH: 12/7/1927 (15).

71. Hong Kong Government, Census Department, Hong Kong Census Report, 1921, p. 163.

72. See ST: 12/1/1922 (7).

73. See ST: 26/7/1922 (7).

74. See SH: 17/2/1927 (15).

75. See SH: 24/7/1927 (15).


78. See *TK*: 31/7/1930 (7).

79. See *TK*: 6/11/1929 (9).

80. See *SH*: 21/9/1927 (11).

81. See *TK*: 17/2/1932 (7); 22/2/1932 (7).

82. See *SP*: 29/3/1917 (7).

83. See *HJ*: 18/8/1927 (2).

84. See *TK*: 8/3/1930 (9).

85. See *SH*: 7/9/1927 (15).


87. Other ways of resolving tension are polygyny, concubinage, and annulment. See R.M. Marsh, *Comparative Sociology. A Codification of Cross-Societal Analysis* (New York, 1967), p. 89. According to S. Koenig, *Sociology: An Introduction to the Science of Society* (New York, 1968), p. 310: "a high divorce rate may be due to a better knowledge of the divorce laws and of ways to obtain a divorce, altered attitudes towards marriage, a lessening of marital hypocrisy ...". In the 1920s, however, any attempt to seek greater sex equality through divorce was neutralized by a slow-changing attitude and institutional arrangement in modern Chinese society.

88. Basically, most analyses suggest that individualism had influenced many persons' perception of their roles in society and economy. Women especially were susceptible to such influence. Moreover, the former strictness about sex relationships was relaxed to the extent of encouraging promiscuity. See Shen Teng-chieh & Ch'en Wen-chieh, *loc. cit.*, p. 316.

89. See "Li-hun sui-hua" (Brief remarks on divorce), *SH*: 28/10/1923 (8). See also Hu Shih, *loc. cit.*, p. 670. Hu suggests that one factor which affects a widow's decision to remarry is the concern of her chastity.

90. See *SH*: 29/10/1932 (12).


92. See *HJ*: 29/6/1932 (3).

93. See *TK*: 2/12/1932 (2).
94. See SH: 3/1/1927 (2).
95. See SH: 12/8/1927 (15).
96. See SH: 25/5/1932 (12).
97. See SH: 24/7/1927 (15).
98. See SH: 20/8/1923 (8).
100. See SH: 18/8/1923 (1).
101. See TK: 18/5/1930 (9).
103. See Sung-t'ao, "Ai ti li-hun" (Divorce of love), SH: 28/3/1927 (13); "Chieh-hun yū li-hun" (Marriage and divorce), SH: 10/6/1932 (16).
104. See "Tuan-ch'i hun-chih" (Temporary marriage), HJ: 14/11/1922 (2). These free-loving girls are said to be married for not more than three days.
105. See San-chang, "Fu-fu chih tao" (The way of husband and wife), SH: 23/10/1932 (17). The writer cynically comments that the wife committed adultery in retaliation to the husband's extramarital affairs.
106. See Chiang-chen nū-shih, "Hsiu-ying-tzu ti szu" (Death of elder sister Hsiu-ying), TK: 30/2/1930 (15) and Shen Chien-yūn, "Fa-kuan" (The judge), TK: 9/6/1932 (9).
107. See SP: 18/2/1917 (6).
108. See HJ: 19/9/1922 (1); 27/9/1922 (1); 28/9/1922 (1).
110. See SH: 29/5/1932 (11).
111. See TK: 18/8/1932 (1)
112. See TK: 23/7/1932 (7).
113. See ST: 11/5/1922 (1).
114. See SP: 12/2/1917 (6).
115. See SH: 4/6/1932 (5). Indeed, a marriage fixed by dubious means, that is, not subject to legal approval constituted a prima facie case for divorce.
117. See TK: 29/5/1932 (6).

118. According to T'an Jen-chiu, there were few changes in the divorce laws since the T'ang dynasty. See T'an Jen-chiu, op. cit., p. 3. The analysis of the divorce laws of China in the 1920s is broadly based on T'an's work.

119. Some contemporary writers considered that law was a conservative instrument to constrain the desire to divorce. See Wu Chih-hsin, loc. cit., p. 42; Chou Chien-jen "Chung-kuo chiu-chia-t'ing chih-tu ti pien-tung" (The transformation of traditional Chinese family system) in Mei Sheng, Nü-hsing wen-t'i t'ao-lun chi, vol. 3, p. 234.

120. See SH: 14/5/1927 (8).

121. See TK: 23/1/1930 (9).

122. See SH: 25/1/1932 (11).

123. See SH: 17/6/1932 (12).

124. See HJ: 26/5/1932 (2).

125. See SH: 14/7/1927 (15).

126. See SH: 22/6/1927 (15).

127. See SH: 6/7/1927 (15).

128. See HJ: 3/7/1918 (1).
CHAPTER FOUR

Law and Crime in Modern Chinese Cities

This chapter looks at the modern Chinese attitude towards law. In the first part of this chapter, the study of certain relevant cases will show that the traditionalistic view of law persisted in the three cities. This view was related to using the law to complement family control of individual behaviour and to give formal expression of moral values in society. In the second part, certain crimes are studied to show how they were considered as deviances from family and moral traditions. At the same time, these crimes also indicated the mounting contradictions between traditional practices and contemporary social changes. In this light, many people in the 1920s still believed that the law was best used to safeguard the social norms. Altogether, the two parts of this chapter show that the conservative regard for tradition in modern Chinese cities affected the control and the stability of Chinese society.

As implied in the last chapter, there was a formal aspect of control of modern Chinese society. In theory, one of the significant functions of law is that it legitimizes and preserves the existing social order. The law gives the precise definition of what is acceptable within a society and clarifies the obligations and the rights of the people. In China in particular, the law acts as a kind of public conscience and prescribes the ideal behaviour which each individual should follow. The stability of the society is based on an individual's fear of public
prosecution for deviance from assigned social roles.

In practice, laws are not immutable, and they change according to the need and transformation of each society. Because of the inevitable social changes, new laws are necessary to reflect new standards of morality.\(^2\) In this context, crimes are indices as well as stimuli of social change.\(^3\) The contemporary legal norm is not always followed by every individual: the violation of the law is considered as a crime. An increase in the numbers of crime shows that the current laws are inadequate to deal with such deviances. Therefore, new laws must be legislated. However, these laws could prompt further social changes. Furthermore, with some of these laws being rooted in past principles, the consequence is partial contradiction and partial confusion. More opportunities are given to criminal activities.

The city is a favourable milieu for crimes to take place. Here, social and economic experiences are diversified and people are subjected to different pressures to survive.\(^4\) For example, the process of industrialization, which is predominant in the city, displaces many manual workers. At the same time, many people who travel to the city because they are tempted by the prospect of finding a job are ultimately disillusioned when the urban economy is not supportive of such aspiration. Impatient or denied of institutional help, many of these impoverished people become criminals. Increasing social mobility, anonymity and heterogeneity of the city-dwellers provide the "ideal" conditions for the committing of crime. More importantly,
the city is often lacking in close-knit communal organization and relationship, which exert considerable pressure on an individual to conform to established norms. In order to reduce the ill effects of personal disorientation and social disorganization in the city, law is regarded as a powerful and effective agent to arrest rapid social changes. It is therefore important to discuss the traditional attitude towards law and crime so as to understand the influence of conservative attitudes on legal control in the 1920s.

Traditional Chinese Attitudes towards Law and Crime

In traditional China, people in the society were kept under control by either a rule of law or an education in propriety -- the latter method being much idealized and preferred. The law was seen as a negative instrument of social control; and its limited application was in supplementing  

The Chinese legal tradition was intrinsically tied up with family disciplines and moral suasions. Family relationships were extended to cover the government of classes and hierarchies. Specific laws were drafted to stratify groups within the society, to differentiate sex roles and kinships, and to emphasize values such as filial piety, loyalty and harmony. The nature of these laws was such that the notion of equality and reciprocity was not recognized and codified. More importantly, both the law and its precedents helped to preserve secular customs and to ensure social stability and harmony.

The concern with propriety and harmony was originally
a moral belief. Thus, whenever possible, moral sanctions -- against those people who had disrupted the harmonious social order -- were used in preference to legal penalty. After all, the effectiveness of law enforcement in a country as big as China was a subject of doubt and mockery. One common assertion was that "the emperor with his laws could not touch the local people because he was too far away." The fact was that laws, often enough, were taken into the hands of wealthy and prestigious members of the local community. Elders and gentry members because of their social positions were regarded as morally superior and were delegated the power to arbitrate in and mediate social conflicts. Only when they failed to settle the issues amicably -- and perhaps to everyone's satisfaction -- were the cases brought to the attention of the local magistrate, whose representing the imperial law might be to the litigant's discomfort.

Most people tried to avoid entanglement with the law. An ancient adage was that a person should stay away from a yamen 衙門 all his life; and hope to stay away from hell after death. This pinpointed a moralistic and fatalistic conception of law. To be implicated in any form of lawsuit was an embarrassing experience. No matter what the outcome, such involvement was regarded as a blemish of a person's moral rectitude.

Commoners in traditional China were apt to believe that the law was biased in favour of the rich and the powerful. Very often, a lawsuit was an expensive affair: the corruption of Chinese law-courts and law officials was
not only a legend. In fact, most wealthy and powerful families were related to officialdom. Therefore, bribery often replaced incriminating evidence.

The administration of justice was hierarchical and retributive. Specific punishments were accorded to specific crimes, but the severity of the sentence also depended on the relationship between the offender and the victim. The important thing was the social (family) and moral consequences of the case, and the extent to which this particular case affected the ideal of social and moral harmony. In the same context, *yen-hsing chiu-fa* (harsh sentences and severe laws) were considered by the officials to have a preventive purpose. For the same reason, torture was acceptable as a means to extract confession as well as to discourage people from haranguing in court.

Closely related with the inhibitive view of law was the tendency of both Chinese people and officials to see crimes as a symptom of a society at fault and of a moral order collapsing. The general idea was that many people would become criminals under the pressure of social (including economic) disorder -- they were *pi-shang liang-shan* (forced to become thieves). It was also considered as no accident that crimes increased at a time when educational and institutional means to inculcate moral behaviour failed -- when *shih-feng jih-hsia* (morals become loose). These interpretations of crime were easily associated with the bankruptcy of the contemporaneous government. Thus, both politically and
psychologically, it behooved the officials to present a picture of an orderly society with a successful system of moral controls. Indeed, some officials withheld crime reportages from the central government. Failure to do so was of graver consequence than the actual loss sustained by the victims of the crimes. Not only was the career of the local officials jeopardized, but the established order was further challenged and abandoned.

**Attitudes towards Law in Modern Chinese Cities**

In the 1920s, Shanghai, Tientsin and Hong Kong were thriving as commercial ports, thus requiring much efforts to maintain a peaceful and lawful environment to ensure their continuous economic growth. Especially in Shanghai and Tientsin, whose populations were made up of people from various parts of China, rigid and punitive laws were considered as necessary in face of the breaking down of community relationships and morality.

Even after the success of the Northern Expedition, which enhanced the political fortunes and reputation of the Chinese government, the problem of extraterritoriality still affected legal control of Chinese society in Shanghai and Tientsin. A mixed-court system was also set up to take care of cases which involved a Concession resident, and its decision was often in favour of the resident. Moreover, the Concessions and the Chinese municipality enforced different sets of laws. Indeed, it was suggested that the most lawless sector of Shanghai was the area at the juncture of the Concessions and the Chinese territory. This was
because foreign and Chinese authorities denied it their responsibility to enforce law in such an area. Many criminals took care of this "advantage". At the same time, many Chinese criminals fled to the Concessions. Because of the different administrations and the troublesome process of extradition, Chinese officials often turned a blind eye for the sake of reducing the amount of paper-work.

Though the foreign Powers were weaker in Tientsin, the warlords did even less to convince the Chinese people of the trustworthiness of the law. After 1927, foreign consular officials continued to meddle with Chinese court decisions. This was in spite of certain compromises which were worked out between Chinese and foreign officials with regards to legal administration.

It is interesting to note from some contemporary observations the people's dilemma between adopting western laws and preserving Chinese laws. There was a growing awareness of the evils of extraterritoriality. Western laws were associated with those foreigners and Chinese persons who tried to escape from legal judgement by citing their extraterritorial right. Intimidated by the power of the western countries, Chinese officials allegedly favoured foreign litigants and criminals during a mixed-court hearing. To know the pitfalls of western law as it was practised in modern China did not necessarily mean an unconditional support for Chinese law. It was noted that contemporary Chinese law was too stringent. The police and the military were criticized for their draconian measures to control the populace. Their argument was that such
measures were necessary in times of political crises. And they would vindicate the adequacy of Chinese law to stabilize the society, thus removing any pretext for the foreigners not to give up extraterritoriality. However, some critics considered that the severity of these laws simply proved that Chinese law was not akin to individual right, which was the basis of a modern society.  

Hong Kong, which was administrated under a set of colonial laws, offered an interesting comparison. While the British monarch's sovereignty over the Colony was stressed and preserved, local judges were given flexibility to take Chinese customs into consideration when they passed judgements. Small wonder that Chinese people, especially businessmen, in Hong Kong were prepared to accept the colonial laws and to prosper under them. The quasi-legal Chinese tradition was used to solve most social and moral conflicts. It became the pivot of social and moral stability.

Most people accepted the increasing role of law in the growing complexity of city life. However, they still valued the importance of the legal processes in terms of family and moral traditions. The law was therefore used to perpetrate and bolster traditional family and moral practices. Sometimes, even institutional agencies adopted this view of law, thus encouraging the prevalent conservative attitude towards law.

*General Awareness*

In the 1920s, Chinese society in the three cities
displayed a degree of sensitivity to the need for laws. Political developments during this period convinced the people that harsh laws and law-enforcement were necessary to keep an otherwise chaotic society under control. Especially in Shanghai and Tientsin, communist-inspired workers' movements were spreading. The Chinese government thus tried to legislate them out of existence with various laws, which ranged from prohibiting public assembly to declaring a state of emergency. In Hong Kong, the crippling 1922 Seamen's Strike and the 1925 General Strike frightened the British administrators into similar, though not as severe, actions. Most people on the whole accepted these laws on the basis that stringent laws were the only effective means to control an unstable society — 肩乱世用信典

The increase of opportunities, and of conflicts, in the cities alerted many people to the importance of law and its application. In fact, there were many signs that the interest and consciousness of law were enhanced. In the newspapers, there were many notices and declarations which gave the legal justification for the setting up of business contracts and partnerships, the invalidating of lost documents, the warning served to people who tried to defame others or to women who deserted their husbands. People were reminded of their legal responsibility. In the many cases which involved the breaching of contracts, the underlying principle was that the days of "gentlemen's agreement" and verbal trust had passed. Law reports gave a clear indication of the specific offence. In Shanghai, an
arson suspect was specifically sued under article 186/2 of the *Ta-li-yüan p'an-li* for his act which affected other people's lives and property.\(^{17}\) Even matters which were previously at the judge's discretion became statutorily enforceable. Despite attempts at reconciliation by their mutual friends, Ts'ao Yüan-feng 蔡元豐 sued Ch'en Wen-t'ao 陳文藻 for slander in accordance with article 180 of the Civil Codes.\(^{18}\)

Many people were able to adjust to and take advantage of these legal developments. Some Chinese merchants tried to obtain a favourable verdict in civil cases by claiming the nationality of a foreign Power. This was because they realized that there were specific restrictions on the enforcing of Chinese laws in the Concessions. It is interesting to note that Chinese law-courts sometimes rejected their claims, saying that as they were still Chinese by birth, they were subject to Chinese laws. In Shanghai, a company under Chinese ownership was prevented by the Chinese law-court from seeking registration with the British administration and was required to indemnify Hsü Shih-min 許士敏.\(^{19}\) Indeed, after 1927, in line with the government's policy to pursue an administration based on a set of uniform laws, Chinese authorities in Shanghai and Tientsin sought to enforce judicial decisions in the Concessions. Offices were also set up to review appeals against legal decisions which were made by the mixed-court.\(^{20}\) To certain extent, the numerous appeals -- mostly by offenders of traffic rules and smugglers -- showed that some people began to believe that the authority was sincere about
the revocability of law.

Some advertisements in the newspapers mentioned that a sound knowledge of law would give protection to one's life and property and, if there was a need, enable a person to win a lawsuit.\textsuperscript{21} That many people in the three cities fell victim to swindlers, who promised to avert an impending lawsuit or to swing a favourable verdict, was an indication that most people were still bewildered by the complexity of the legal process.\textsuperscript{22} In the 1920s, many lawyers therefore advertised themselves as advisers or consultants, giving expertise service to those clients who needed protection for their name, or money, or lives.

Indeed, when a lawsuit became absolutely unavoidable, it was considered a proper tactic to employ the service of a lawyer. Significantly, most lawyers, though being recognized as having a respectable and reputable profession, were likened to the traditional sung-shih 訴師. These pettifoggers were notorious for encouraging litigations in order to gain some service fee, such as in writing the petition for an aggrieved party. In the modern version, many lawyers volunteered themselves to some maligned people (especially women over a controversy of inheritance) and represented them in civil cases. They bargained for a percentage of any potential compensation. Sometimes, the lawyers of the contending parties privately compromised to the ignorance of their clients. They were the only ones to gain something, at least financially.\textsuperscript{23}

Such practices did not improve the people's impression of the legal profession. It was, therefore, not surprising
that the morals of some lawyers were questioned. Li Ching-kuang 李景克, who practised in Tientsin, placed an advertisement in the newspaper to deny any further association with a company which had gone bankrupt. He was known to be its consultant. When questioned about his responsibility, he said that he was no more responsible to this company than to the other couple of hundreds to which he also gave advice.24 It was not difficult for the readers to reach the conclusion that Li, a successful lawyer, was bent on helping the rich and the successful.

In the same light, some attempts were made to better the people's idea of a law-officer. In Shanghai, Liang Yü-ch'eng 梁玉成, a detective who was suspected of robbery, was acquitted in court. The police department, however, asked for a re-trial. He was eventually sentenced to ten years' imprisonment.25 This definitely would convince the people that the department was not protecting its guilty members. Indeed, disciplinary measures were taken against many policemen for harassing and intimidating innocent victims.

However, the fact that many policemen were prosecuted could bring about an opposite interpretation. People readily believed that the police force had many bad elements. Most of them shunned an occupation as a policeman and spoke ill of anyone who was one. The fact that most policemen seemed to have come from a dubious background led to such mistrust. In the early 1920s, the police force in Tientsin was largely filled by former soldiers of the Chihli and Anhwei warlords, who had a record of being badly disciplined.
Their counterparts in Shanghai and Hong Kong were found to be closely connected with secret societies.

The police were still equated with the *yamen* runners of traditional China and thus not trusted as agents of law. One criticism against them was their haughty behaviour. They were often found to manhandle beggars, insult women, and even harass anyone who was dressed shabbily.\(^{26}\) A more serious accusation was that they abused their power. Chou Tzu-i 周子宜, a policeman who served in Shanghai, was accused of assaulting a peddler. The victim had been arrested by Chou for quarrelling with a customer. Upon his release, the peddler was beaten up and re-arrested by Chou, who was doing this for no apparent reason.\(^{27}\) In this case, the policeman did not bother placing a charge on the arrest and had definitely exceeded his right by attacking the victim. In another case, Yang Shang-i 楊尚義 broke into a widow's house and assaulted both the widow and her son. His victims had quarrelled with his wife. Soon after, the widow committed suicide, but Yang was let off with a ten-months' sentence.\(^{28}\) The reason for Yang's action was that he was trying to teach his victims a lesson. They should not have the temerity to challenge him (as an official) and his family.

Indeed, the police's abusive actions were often related to a denial of civil right, which was regarded as a fundamental issue in modern law. In Tientsin, a newspaper report emphasized the constitutional error of both the police and the court in detaining five persons for a period of time which exceeded the legal limit. Though the five
were suspected of corruption, the report continued, their civil right should be respected. Therefore, the authority must give them some compensation. 

Increasing complaints against the police for using torture to force confessions from the suspects and for mistreating innocent people were an indication of this dissatisfactory mood.

The image of a corrupt police force compounded the notion that the law could be bought. In 1927, the exposing of a racket involving policemen who extorted money from unlicensed hawkers became headline in Hong Kong. Many people in fact believed that they could bribe their way to freedom even when caught red-handed. Friends and relatives of offenders often tried to bribe the judiciary for a lighter sentence. In this context, it was not surprising that many swindlers and impostors were able to exploit the anxiety of the criminals and their relatives or friends. They intimated that they were able to influence the judge if the victims were prepared to pay a sum of money. In Hong Kong, for example, Yen Ming-kuang 袁明光 told Su Kuei-fang 蘇桂芳 that he could arrange for her to have a licence in order to operate as a prostitute. Yen suggested that he would make the necessary arrangement through his uncle who worked with the Secretariat for Chinese Affairs, the licensing authority. When Yen failed to fulfill his promise after Su had given him a sum of money, Su tried to sue him. But the case was dismissed in court. In this case, the victim obviously still harboured the traditional view that some advantages might be obtained if one was close to the source of the law. In fact, she also believed that she
could expedite the legal process through a middle-man.

Most people were still inclined to see the law—which was a term generalized to include the law-enforcement agency, the bureaucracy and the judiciary—as having only a binding force on the common people—lao-pai-hsing 老百姓. Many persons who worked with these institutional agencies were criticized for seeing themselves as the rulers of the people. Indeed, they tended to adopt an imperious attitude in their daily transactions with the people. More significantly, the law was still regarded as a willing collaborator with those people with power. Especially in North China under the warlords' control, the police were found to overlook the "misdemeanours" of friends, relatives and colleagues, who were associated with a powerful figure. For example, a madam of a brothel was arrested only after the police had received several complaints. It was revealed that she was backed by an important social figure. The corollary of police oversight was the exploitation of powerful connections by some people. The assumption was that they could intimidate others from interfering with their otherwise suable offence. In any case, even if the matter was brought to court, they could be easily let off through some sort of "internal" arrangement. Quite aware of the fact that his boss was a close friend of the head of police, an employee with a bath-house (yl-t'ang 洗堂) beat up a customer who crossed him. He was eventually let off with an apology. At times, it was revealed that some law-officials patronized law-breakers. The explanation was that they might stand to profit financially (in a time
of chaos) or they were trying to limit the number of uncontrollable illegal activities. At least by becoming the criminals' associates, they could prevent them from committing crimes which were too serious, thus raising doubts in their superiors' minds about their ability. In a newspaper report, an anonymous writer revealed that someone in the magistracy was covering up for five brothers who had raped a girl. Indeed, these five persons had a record of terrorizing the neighbourhood, but were never prosecuted.36

The generally poor image of the law led most people to doubt the effectiveness of the law. Some were even prepared to take law into their own hands because they did not believe that legal justice necessarily satisfied their personal wants. For example, Erh-teh-tzu forcefuly locked up a woman, whom he accused of abducting his daughter.37 It was probable that he was trying to obtain information from her in an illegal, but conceivably effective, manner.

Family Concern

In the 1920s, one of the corner-stones of Chinese law was the family tradition, which was given priority as a form of social control. Many people relied on the law to justify and strengthen family values, hierarchy and disciplines. Some judicial decisions concurred with such a view, and any promise of change was more apparent than real.

There were some legislative changes on sex relationships in the 1920s. The idea was to create a more sex-equal society. In other words, modern laws became an effective
challenge to the excesses of a traditional family system, whereby the women were often abused by the men. In Tientsin, women were encouraged to sue their husbands who sold them as prostitutes. In Hong Kong, by the late 1920s, prostitution was licensed and cruelty to maidservants (pei-nǎi 婢女) was prohibited by law. In Shanghai, Ch'en Heng 鍾行 shied away from giving evidence in court when he was sued by his lover for alimony. It was interesting to note that a woman with no legal claim to marriage took the initiative to argue for her rights. And the court accommodated her wish.

However, it was not necessary a matter of sex liberation when some women tried to improve their sex status by recourse to law. Indeed, Chou Tsu-ch'en 周祖琛, director of the Tientsin justice department, suggested that few women really knew how to utilize the law to achieve their freedom. The only exceptions were those prostitutes who sought protection from the brothel-owners, to whom they owed much money. The authority refused to prosecute these women for indebtedness.

Generally speaking, few women were really active in asserting their legal rights. To them, the law was not the immediate and most useful solution. In Shanghai, a woman finally decided to make a compromise with Wu Chien-kuang 吴鍾光, whom she intended to sue for seduction and rape. The compromise was worked out by their mutual friends. After all, the lawsuit might bring about undesirable rumours and she had apparently gotten what she asked for in the first place. The threat to sue had
prompted the man to agree to probable demands for marriage or money compensation. Some women were aware that an appeal to law would have the irrevocable consequence of permanently damaging the present relationship. In Shanghai, Ch'en Teh-yu decided to sue her sister's father-in-law only after his third attempt to rape her. It was possible that she was slow to act because she was afraid that the lawsuit would cause a rift in the relationship between the man and her sister.

Most women, who sued their husbands for desertion, or cruelty, or failure to provide economic support, were using the law to mitigate unbearable family pressures. They believed that they were forced to such unpleasant decisions. In Shanghai, Li Pi-hsia said that she was forced to sue her husband, who had been ill-treating and finally deserted her. Moreover, Li felt that it was the only way by which she could refute her husband's accusation that she was disloyal.

In the same light, some women relied on the law to protect and confirm their status within the family. This was particularly the case when she might be dissociated from the family, such as being forced to leave the house or her husband. In Tientsin, a woman and her husband were forced to leave by her father-in-law. She brought the matter to court, stressing that her father-in-law had no legal right to do what he did. Significantly, she mentioned that contemporary law had put a limit on the powers of family elders. In this case, the woman had made a bold attempt to expose the family's unreasonable decision, but it was
based on the importance she placed on her place in the family.

In the 1920s, Chinese men still jealously guarded and legitimized their positions in the family. As in the past, the law was viewed and used as a conservative force which preserved an unequal sex relationship. In Shanghai, Yen Ju-t'ang placed a statement in the newspaper, warning his wife to return home voluntarily within three days. He accused her of immoral conduct and of a record of leaving home without warning. Yen stressed that if she failed to return this time, he would deny all legal responsibilities for her actions and ask for a separation in court. It was probable that Yen and his wife had a quarrel, and she angrily left Yen. By threatening to take legal action, Yen hoped to intimidate his wife into coming back to the house. The law, according to Yen, would accept his implication that he had a right to interfere with his wife's affairs and would rule in favour of his plea to divorce.

Many men in the three cities still continued to presume that they were given unique and solitary control of their family's affairs. As such, the law helped them to prevent outside interference. In Shanghai, Lin A-hua sued his brother-in-law for breaking up his family. Lin accused the defendant of talking his wife into leaving him. The fact was that Lin had a quarrel with his wife and she left the house. As in most cases, she was probably only taking a short stay with her own family.

At the same time, the appeal to law was behind the men's powerful justification for the way they treated their women.
There was an inclination to take a lawsuit as an invitation for public judgement, thus bringing the women condemnation and winning the men sympathy. In Shanghai, Yang A-ch’iu sued his wife for desertion. He argued that she had done this several times, and each time he took her back. Now, he said, it was not possible because he would lose "face". The significance was that Yang did not elaborate on the reasons of his wife’s desertions. Indeed, some men simply used the law-court as a venue where they could criticize their wives. There was never an intention to get an arbitration. Wei Chih-ch’ang criticized his concubine for excessive gambling. He also revealed that she had been a prostitute. Significantly, he said that he would like a divorce and not envisage her contesting the case because she would be too embarrassed. The tendency to exploit the law in order to give support to the male ego could sometimes lead to quite unreasonable development. In Hong Kong, a man sued another for committing "adultery" with his fiancee. While the engagement was not legally binding, and the plaintiff was not legally married to the woman, the man obviously believed that the lawsuit was the effective way to punish the lecherous couple.

It is interesting to note how men used both traditional family controls and the law to reassert themselves over "unruly" women. In Tientsin, An Kuei-jung’s wife hid at the Women’s Association and complained that she was ill-treated. The Association tried to work out a settlement, but An sued his wife for desertion. He emphasized in court that his wife should have let the clan
intervene on her behalf instead of calling for outside help. Moreover, her desertion meant that An's widowed mother was left alone. In this case, the man considered that he had every right to use the law while his wife should not even rely on modern institutional help. He rejected a compromise on a private basis while reprimanding his wife for bringing family trouble to outsiders. In any case, his accusation was focused on a matter of family importance, which was not necessary a legal issue.

Some men used the ploy of shifting their position between tradition and modern law when their wives tried to sue them. In Hong Kong, Lin T'ai sued her husband for visiting brothels and not giving her economic support. He answered that he had rejected her because she had committed adultery. Then, realizing that such a reason had no legal support, he stressed that they had separated. The separation meant that he owed her no responsibility.

In the 1920s, the authorities in the three cities readily accepted the fact that family tradition played a more important part in sex problems than the law. They were willing to endorse the practice of using the law to support family decisions and customs. The attitude was that if the arrangement was agreeable to all parties, the law had no say in the matter. For example, the law-courts in Shanghai and Tientsin refused to make retroactive application of the new inheritance laws (1930) to cases which were settled before 1927. When some women tried to revoke the settlement by citing their newly acquired rights, they were in fact reprimanded for making unnecessary trouble.
In Hong Kong, marriage conflicts, which could have been civil cases, were generally turned over to the Secretariat for Chinese Affairs and Po Leung Kuk. These two non-statutory bodies were inclined to follow and recommend traditional means to solve these conflicts. In one case, the Secretariat granted permission to a family to burn some firecrackers. A girl from this family was married to a man as a concubine, and he falsely accused her of infidelity. The family refused to accept any form of apology or compensation unless the symbolic act of having gained a victory was permitted. By according the family the customary right, the Secretariat, which significantly was devoid of any authority to enforce its decision, had probably prevented future legal conflict between the two families. After all, the girl's family could always sue for perjury.

Many cases of bigamy were dismissed in court, and the litigants were asked to make a private compromise. This was in line with the traditional belief that a good judge would not interfere with domestic quibbles -- ch'ing-kuan nan-shen chia-t'ing-shih 清官難管家庭事. Most cases, undoubtedly, would be overlooked as those which involved the first wife suing her husband for taking a concubine. Not satisfied with playing a mediatory role, the authorities also tried to discourage lawsuits over sex relationship. By virtue of a law (article 339 of the Civil Codes), husband and wife were not permitted to sue each other. Moreover, the principle on which the court accepted a case was the existence of a threat that the family would be broken up, especially if a third party was involved
In both these laws, the aim to preserve the integrity of the established sex relationship by institutional means could be easily observed.

The conservative attitude towards law in fact covered the entire spectrum of family relationship. In the 1920s, some writers observed and criticized that a flood of radical and heterodox ideas had poisoned the minds of the younger generation, and made it susceptible to staging a family revolution to break away from traditional disciplines and practices. There were a few instances of junior members taking legal action against their seniors whom they felt had acted unreasonably towards them. In Shanghai, Chang Hsing-chao sued his clan for ousting him. He accused it of deliberately and unreasonably expelling him in order to deprive him of his right to inheriting some property. In this context, junior members of the family often believed in and relied on contemporary laws to support them in their claims. When her father declared that he would sever all relationships with her because of her illegal marriage, Ch'en Fu-t'ung asserted that she still had the right of inheritance according to the contemporary law.

These young challengers, however, realized that the efficacy of the law to settle disputes was sometimes based on a respect for tradition. In order to take better advantage of this conservatism, they often framed their requests in the context of traditional family relationships and ideals. In Shanghai, Lu Ch'un-lan was sued by her father for not giving him any economic support. She defended her act by pointing to the fact that her father had
sold her many times for profit. Indeed, she did not intend to recognize him as her father, and wished to sever relationship with him. In Tientsin, Wang Wen-hsiung sued her father for not supporting her education. She argued that she was entitled to some money for her education in accordance with contemporary laws. More significantly, she considered that her father did not have the proper attitude when discussing the problem with her. She referred to this as unfatherly. Indeed, quoting the Confucian philosophy regarding parents-children relationship, Wang said that she took action because it would be wrong for her to acquiesce in her father's ways. In any case, she had attempted to make a compromise, but was rejected. In both cases, the women tried to use contemporary laws to protect their interests. But they also tried to make their lawsuits more palatable by implying that they had done their best to preserve the family's integrity. Their fathers, on the contrary, had neglected their family obligations.

In general, most people in the 1920s still considered that law was less effective than family disciplines in resolving family problems. As a result, some individuals, in fact, hung on to their superior status within the family and exerted an unfair amount of pressure on other members. When being prosecuted for ill-treating her daughter-in-law, a women intimidated her son in court and prevented him from testifying against her. Obviously, she believed that a son must obey his mother's every word. In some instances, there was a refusal to let the law intervene altogether.
In Hong Kong, Wu Sung-t'i tried to force his wife to return to China with him. He said that he preferred to punish her for some offences in accordance to his family's laws.\(^{57}\)

Despite the view that the law was less effective, people were occasionally forced to call upon it to help solving problems. This was especially true in cases in which family disciplines had failed. After exhausting all means available within the family, many parents asked legal authorities to exert extraneous control over deviant members. And most of the time, the police or the law-court obliged by reprimanding unfilial sons or unruly members of the clan. In Hong Kong, Huang Ch'ing continued to go out with some ruffians in spite of his parents' advice. So his parents brought him to the police. They asked that Huang be caned as a disciplinary measure; and, if he still refused to repent, the police was to prosecute him as a bad element of society.\(^{58}\)

Offenders were not necessarily brought to the attention of the law agencies by immediate members of the family. A man started to ill-treat his father after tricking him to hand over the family's fortunes. His father became mad and his mother died from grief. The man's clansmen sent him to the police because they believed that he must be severely punished for behaving contrary to the family tradition.\(^{59}\) It was regarded as everyone's right in the society to expose an unfilial son. The law undoubtedly would support such a move. After all, ordinary people did not have the legal right to interfere with the family affairs of other people.
Sometimes, the threat of a lawsuit or legal penalty was considered as enough to coerce a correct behaviour within the family. In Shanghai, Ch'eng Shih-ch'ün 程師俊 was brought to court for hitting his father, driving away his mother and grandmother, and causing much damage to the house. He was also criticized for doing badly at university, thus disappointing his parents. Ch'eng was told by his uncle that his parents would not press charges of unfilial conduct against him if he apologized to them. In fact, most parents who sued their children did not really intend them to be punished according to law. In Shanghai, a woman sued his son for showing disrespect towards her. He threatened her to give him some money. In court, however, she asked the judge to be lenient.

Undoubtedly, many people were still haunted by the fear of communicating family scandal to other people outside -- chia-oh'ou pu-oh'u wai-oh'uan 家醜不出外傳. The primary motive, therefore, of inviting public judgement was to place pressure on the wrong doers. In Tientsin, An T'ai-lai 安泰來 placed an advertisement in the newspaper, requesting legal protection and social justice. He accused Liu Shu-huai 劉書懷 of beating him up, and being indirectly responsible for his daughter's death and his wife's madness. All these started when An asked Liu's niece, who was married to An's son, to leave because she was quarrelsome, idle, disrespectful. Significantly, An emphasized that he was prepared to disclose his bitter experience.

Elders in the family were more likely to solicit the
help of the law in order to establish their righteousness. In Tientsin, Yang Ch'un-yen openly accused her adopted son of forcing her to leave the house after hearing some bad advice. She announced that she would like all the family's relatives and friends to know that her son had dishonoured her. In turn, Yang's adopted son defended his act by saying that it was his grandmother's wish. This was because Yang's improper conduct could not be condoned by the older woman. In this case, the idea that the law would support the decision of the elders was implicit.

Junior members could also ask for open judgement by making a legal statement or a lawsuit. However, such attempts were mainly carried out in order to show that they had not deviated from the family tradition, and the punishment which was imposed on them was probably unreasonable. In Shanghai, Hsieh Feng-ts'ao criticized his third son for giving up his education, adopting bad habits, and encouraging his wife and Hsieh's eldest daughter to carry out some "unhuman" acts. Therefore, he advised his relatives and friends not to lend any money to his son, to whom he now owed no responsibility. Hsieh's third son placed a legal notice in the newspaper and opposed his father's decision. He emphasized that he had been a filial son to his parents. If there was any wrong, his step-mother had treated him badly. He asked all who knew the family to give their judgements.

It was recognized by some people that the law provided the binding effect on family decisions. In Shanghai, Ting Ssu-fan made a public statement, saying that he
had legally severed relationship from his youngest brother on the grounds that he failed to seek a decent job. Ting suggested that he had done all he could to help him; in fact, Ting had given his youngest brother a last $500 before making the decision to oust him from the family.65 Besides announcing and explaining the family's intention, the decision carried with it certain legal justification in order to forestall possible problems. Ch'en Ping-ch'ien 鍾培謙 denied any responsibility for his fifth son, who he had disinherited. He specifically declared that he would not repay any of his debts.66 It was customary for potential inheritors to raise money on account of their right to inheritance. In this case, the father realized that it was not enough to simply send his son away from home. He must clearly show that he was no longer a member of the family, which would be made responsible for his actions.

In the 1920s, the law was considered as useful in ensuring the stability of existing family relationships. One could not rely on ideals alone: a system of statutory laws and punishment must be enforced. In Tientsin, Wang Hsiu-han 王琇漢 accused her son of denying her economic support after her husband died. Moreover, upon the encouragement of her brother-in-law, her son tried to sue for the control of the family's money. Therefore, she decided to sue her son for unfilial conduct and her brother-in-law for endangering her family's harmony.67 In this case, the lawsuit was regarded as having a preemptive effect on the son's action. The traditional practices of
a son supporting his widowed mother and of a brother-in-law respecting and aiding his sister-in-law must be observed. Indeed, some cases showed that people were concerned with legitimizing their family status. In Tientsin, Hsü Shao-t'ang refused to let his step-mother read the family's accounts because he regarded her as his late father's concubine. The woman, in turn, said that she was the legally wedded second wife and Hsü's own mother was a concubine. In this case, the law-court was asked to determine the legal status of two women within a family. There were obviously some advantages to be won by being acknowledged a superior position.

In fact, disputes over the distribution and settlement of family fortunes, and contests over the authenticity of wills, led to many lawsuits. Previously, most people preferred to solve and keep these matters within the family. The ultimate was to invite members of the clan to give their advice and judgement. By the 1920s, there appeared to be at least a change in the three cities. Many people openly and unabashedly challenged others for what they regarded as their rightful and lawful inheritance. They were not afraid of bad publicity and seeking third-party arbitration. In Shanghai, Li Ning-fu sued his brother Lin-ch'uan over the distribution of family property. Although his case had once been dismissed due to lack of substantial evidence, he was undeterred and sued again. Indeed, one important reason for an increase in litigations of this kind was the people's growing familiarity with the new inheritance laws, which were ostensibly quite egalitarian.
Thus, sons were pitted against mothers/fathers; sisters against brothers. It appeared, therefore, that many individuals were encouraged by changes in the law to challenge the family. An extreme case happened in Shanghai. A woman brought her entire clan to court, saying that she had a legal right to a piece of land on which a temple was erected. It was significant that the woman challenged the clan, which was the higher authority in family tradition. Moreover, even if she had a right to common land, the case would ordinarily be settled according to clan rules, which would probably reject her claim. Thus, she sought arbitration in court.

That there were conflicts of principles on which these new laws were viewed was an indication of a conservative attitude at work. Many people began to draw up wills in order to forestall bickering amongst family members when the estate was divided up. In the past, it was regarded as an abhorrent practice to make a will before one's death. In fact, everything was arranged either at the death-bed or according to customary ways of distribution. In Hong Kong, Yū Ts'ui-kao and her two sons went to court, having a dispute over the authenticity of her late husband's two wills. Her sons suggested that only the one drawn up with a lawyer was valid. Yū contested their suggestion by saying that her husband's death-wish (oral will) had equal binding effect. The judge, in fact, accepted her argument and ruled in her favour.

Indeed, many inheritance lawsuits were cases which involved fairly traditional claims.
issues was a person's status within the family. This would affect the right to inheritance. And the law was asked to recognize the right by determining the status. A woman's inferior position in the family often aroused much controversy. In Shanghai, the grandson, on the maternal side, of Sheng Hsuan-huai sued for his share of inheritance. He said that as his grandfather died before 1927, the new inheritance laws were effectively excluded from operating on Sheng's vast fortunes. In accordance with the old laws, which recognized the Chinese custom of not giving the women any substantial inheritance, Sheng's grandson suggested that his grandmother was only a trustee, and she must now give back all the money. In this light, a woman's marital status was also a bone of contention. In Shanghai, two women both claimed to be the legal trustee of a man's estate. Each claimed herself to be the wife and the other to be the concubine. Only the wife was acknowledged as the legal trustee. It was significant that one of the women pointed out that her husband's signature did not appear on the will in the other woman's possession. Whereas in the will given to her safe-keeping, her husband's signature and a witness' signature could be easily seen. The obvious intention was to substantiate her claim by legal means.

Sometimes, the law was called upon to legitimize the customary practices in inheritance matters. In Shanghai, Jen Wei-hsien stressed that with his grandmother's permission, he had taken charge of the family's money. He also said that his grandmother as the family's eldest
member had the requisite authority, and this authority was recognized in both Ta-Ch'ing lu-li and the Civil Codes. In this case, he strengthened his claim by referring to legal sanction, which showed itself predisposed to recognize such traditional practice. When two men challenged Li Feng-nien's step-mother for her right to manage the family's money, Li said that these two men had no right to do so because they were not members of the Li family. As a kind of evidence, Li pointed out that their surname was not Li, and their names were not printed in his uncle's obituary. The law-court accepted his argument. It was an accepted part of Chinese family tradition that only those persons who were considered as members of the family -- and therefore entitled to inheritance -- would be allowed to put down their names in an obituary.

When a lawsuit became unavoidable, legal judgement was invited on the basis that it would be made within the framework of family tradition. In Hong Kong, Chang T'ai-ken sued his step-mother for his late father's fortunes. He called upon the Secretary for Chinese Affairs as a witness to support his argument that his step-mother, who was married as a concubine, could only act as a trustee. In effect raising a new issue, the woman pointed out that Chang was not the rightful heir. She asked the court to take note of the fact that Chang's father did not attend Chang's meng-ylleh (first-month) party, and that Chang was not called upon to preside at his father's funeral. These facts showed that Chang lacked the family's recognition of his being the heir.
On the whole, however, there was a predilection to resolve inheritance conflicts in the context of family tradition. In Tientsin, the wife of Chang Yü-chen 張毓芬 said that her late father-in-law had asked her to take control of the family's money because Chang was incapacitated. Therefore, when someone forced her to give up the control, she refused, saying that she received it under the witness of the whole clan. She specified that only the tsu-chang （head of the clan) had the traditional -- and legal -- right to remove her control and to divide up the estate. Indeed, family rules often had precedence over the law. In Hong Kong, Ho Chün-shen 何俊臣 stated that according to Ta-Ch'ing lü-li, he should have two shares of the inheritance because he was the eldest son. His assertion was opposed on the grounds that the Ch'ing Codes were by no means applicable everywhere. It was suggested that the matter should be arbitrated by the clan leaders.

The law -- in so much as it represented the official policy -- was acutely aware of the influence of law on the family system. The judges were inclined to respect the authority of the family over the individual. In their decisions, they often upheld and bolstered the family tradition. In many cases, the law-court preferred to lecture the culprits on the importance of filial piety when they were sued by their parents for failing to provide economic support, or ill-treatment. Then these persons were sent home rather than to jail. The rationale was that the parents should be given the first opportunity to
discipline their children.

Undoubtedly, modern Chinese laws prevented angry parents from giving their children too vigorous a lesson. But the judges often advised that the parents and children to compromise when the children sued their parents for cruel treatment. In Shanghai, Ni Chin-lung sued his father for divorcing his mother and expelling him. The judge refused to rule on this and asked them to settle out of court. Indeed, even if convicted, parents were at most being fined and the custody of their children temporarily removed. In Hong Kong, Huang Yuan-cheng was sued for whipping her four-years old daughter. In order to save her husband from further embarrassment and to ensure the relationship between the mother and her daughter, the judge released Huang on bail. Indeed, the law-courts were concerned that legal judgement would polarize the family and widen the rift.

In many cases, both judges and the police refused to interfere with those conflicts which they classified as family problems. In Shanghai, Chang A-mao accused his mother-in-law of hiding away his wife. His wife had disappeared after quarrelling with him. The court emphasized that this was a family affair and gave the two litigants two days to find a compromise. This was quite a common happening which involved an angry husband trying to coerce his wife to return home. The court tried not to side with either party.

When a lawsuit was deemed necessary and was unavoidable, the law tried to mediate rather than arbitrate in family
conflicts. The general principle was that litigation should be discouraged and a compromise be reached. In Shanghai, Hu Shan-shan sued her brother a second time for her share of inheritance. This was because she was dissatisfied with the original award of $5,000. This time the judge asked her to make a compromise with her brother. He stressed that it was improper for a brother and a sister to be embroiled in a lawsuit. While not denying the girl's legal right to inheritance, the judge was equally concerned with the lawsuit setting a bad example.

Moral Concern

A second cultural and psychological influence on the people's attitudes towards law was the concept of morality. This concept pervaded both private and public behaviour. In the 1920s, many cases showed that the efficacy of law was dependent on the people's sense of shame -- a feeling being brought about by the accusation of immorality. A lawsuit was interpreted as a person's integrity on trial. Legal authorities were inclined to see their role as one of enforcing public morality. In one of its declarations, the National Lawyers' Congress described the symbiotic relationship between morality and law:

The Chinese government has always tried to create [and preferred] a rule of morality. Harsh laws are implemented only when the principles of 礼 are violated. ... The official policy is, therefore, to encourage moral education and to lay down inviolable laws.

In the 1920s, it was still regarded as morally reprehensible for a person's name to be linked with a legal
problem. Small wonder the names of many offenders of crimes were often withheld from the news report. Indeed, even if a person was the victim, there was also the tendency to avoid being dragged into a complicated legal process in order to seek justice. In Shanghai, Mao Hsiao-shan 繆筱珊 asked the newspapers to retract a report. It said that Mao was blackmailed and was consequently interviewed by the police. Mao argued that the report had caused him great embarrassment. In this case, Mao was probably trying to stem rumours that he was being blackmailed for some unmentionable behaviour.

In some instances, some people who were remotely connected with persons being involved in a legal problem feared that they would be implicated. In Tientsin, when one of its bodyguards was accidentally shot by his colleague, the Ni 倪 family expressed that the family had nothing to do with the whole affair, and it would sue anyone who tried to implicate it. Such an aversion to entangling with the law sometimes led to people deliberately refusing to cooperate with the legal agencies. When called upon as a witness, the concubine of an important person refused to give evidence in a smuggling case. She said that she was too frightened to face the judge. In this case, it was more probable that the woman's husband forbade her to appear in court because he wanted to protect his own reputation.

A lawsuit would no doubt eventually prove a person's righteousness in the context of public judgement. However, most people were still expected to seek private compromise rather than resort to litigation. In Shanghai, Wang Chiu-chang 王九章, an accountant, sued his employer for
blackmail and fraud. He was forced to repay many times the actual loss as a result of his carelessness with some figures. His employer said that he only learnt about the lawsuit on the morning that hearing would start.87 Obviously, in this case, the defendant did not expect a confrontation in court. In some cases, even people who felt that they would be awarded a favourable verdict were inclined to compromise. Ch'en Chung-hua 陈仲华 sued Fang Hsiang-shen 方翔森 and Li Ping-hua 李炳华 for swindling. They promised to find Ch'en's daughter a job for some money. Fang was absent from the hearing, and said that Ch'en had asked him to stay away because Ch'en was willing to settle out of court.88

Indeed, some people suggested that they were prepared to compromise because their conscience would not allow them to bring other people to court. In Shanghai, a company sued another for infringement of its trademark. Then it decided to withdraw the case. Its argument was that it was the moral thing to do.89 Interestingly, the idea that a conscientious person would refuse to involve others in a legal matter was only a pretext. Wang Yu-chen 王玉辰 advertised that he had lost some valuable items, but he had not reported the loss to the authorities. Rather, he merely asked them to be returned so that no one would be punished for the theft. On the surface, Wang seemed to be doing the thief a good deed. However, it was later found out that he had received an anonymous letter which asked him to forget about the matter.90 In this case, Wang was probably intimidated. But equally probable, he knew the culprit and tried to give him a chance.
When a lawsuit became inevitable, many litigants tried to emphasize that they were forced into such a decision. In Tientsin, Yang Tzu-chan stated that he was forced to hire the service of a lawyer in order to protect his property. Some local ruffians threatened to take it away from him. Some people in fact deplored the fact that they had to go to court for a judgement. In Shanghai, Kuo Chia-ho sued his mother for not supporting his education and showing favour towards his step-brother. He admitted to knowing the moral gravity of bringing his mother to court, but said that he had no choice. Kuo was aware that his action would be considered as morally reprehensible though he was within his legal right to protect his interest. At times, the unwillingness to go through a lawsuit was due to the concern for the moral effects on both litigants. Chiang Wu said that he was forced to sue his brother for interfering with his plan to save the family from bankruptcy. If his plan worked, the family would not be sued by its creditors. In this case, a person's moral obligation was given firstly to the family rather than to his brother. This was despite his understanding that the lawsuit would damage his relationship with his brother.

In the 1920s, the law was sometimes regarded as necessary in order to enforce traditional morality and sanction an immoral act. In Shanghai, Tai Hsün-chen was discovered to be involved in a racket which sold women to the brothels. A gentry member of his clan turned him over to the police. This act was regarded as the moral right of the community to get rid of an evil member. The
authority was asked to punish the culprit. T'ao Jung 陶鏘 was sued by his daughter-in-law for rape. His family considered this as a scandal and said that his death was not an end to the blemish he put on the family's honour. In fact, the entire clan tried to expel him with the court's permission. In this case, an attempt to legitimize a moral penalty was made.

The threat of a lawsuit and the binding effect of the legal judgement were felt by most people as a kind of moral discipline and censure. It was not surprising that fathers sued their sons for unfilial conduct, or husbands sued their wives for unchaste behaviour. The presumption was that legal punishment and public exposure would coerce the deviant into adopting a more proper behaviour. After endless negotiations, Cheng T'ing-fu 鄭廷甫 failed to make Ts'ao A-po 曹亞伯 agree to a financial matter. So Cheng issued a warning to Ts'ao, suggesting that they "should meet in court" in order to find the ultimate decision. In this case, one person was probably taking advantage of another's aversion to lawsuit in order to obtain a favourable settlement.

In the three cities, there were many lawsuits over defamation and slander. People still felt morally compelled to take legal action in order to protect or to recoup their honour. In Shanghai, Cheng I-liu 鄭尋六 denied that his clothes were stolen while he was sleeping with a prostitute. He threatened to sue anyone for persisting to spread this rumour which would ruin his reputation as a merchant. Similarly, a money-changer stated that he never engaged in
handling stolen goods, nor was he questioned by the police for this matter. In both these cases, the person's continued prosperity was dependent on his ability to prove his moral integrity. Again, some people tried to display extreme reluctance to go to court. In a public notice, Ts'ai Peng-fei 蔡鵬飛 warned Hua Wei-yang 華維揚 not to persist in slandering him, otherwise he would sue Hua. It was explained that Hua had lost his case against Ts'ai. In this case, Ts'ai was hoping to forestall future litigation by issuing a stern warning.

A favourable verdict was considered as a vindication of a person's moral righteousness. For this reason, Liu Hsi-kuei 劉喜季 refused to compromise with her uncle and sued him for slander. He accused her of having an illicit love affair. In some cases, the notion was to castigate the malefactor. Besides incurring pecuniary losses, a person's immoral deed was revealed during the trial, and he was subjected to public judgement as a result. Wang Ching-hsiang 王慶祥 was accused by someone of theft. He was acquitted in court, and soon after he sued that person for perjury. Obviously, legal justice was not enough to satisfy Wang. He tried to score a moral victory as well. Indeed, many people only asked for legal arbitration after they failed to secure moral sanction. Chu Ai-chen 車愛真 decided to sue Huang T'ing-pin 黃廷斌 for rape after the Kwangtung hui-kuan failed to carry out its resolution to expel him. The expulsion would have been a kind of punishment for his disgrace to the community.

Many litigants tried to win the court's sympathy by
moralizing the issue at stake. A widow sued a proprietor of a theatre for indirectly causing her husband's suicide. He refused to help her husband to carry out a contract, thus causing him great financial loss. When the hearing started, the woman appeared in court in her mourning dress. She was trying to create the impression that she was a pitiful widow who wanted justice. Some people argued that they must be righteous or innocent because of a record of good moral behaviour. In Shanghai, Yang Ta-san-tzu was accused of forcefully searching a person. He said that he was innocent because it could be shown that in the past ten years he did not commit a crime. In the same light, some people were condemned because they were suspected of immoral behaviour. Yü Ta-fa was searched, and a pawn-ticket, which was taken out on a piece of stolen goods, was found on him. The newspaper report stated that there was no substantial evidence against him, but commented that he should be sent to jail.

Particularly indicative of the moralism in the law, the concept of collective responsibility -- which pertained to a person being morally responsible for the conduct of another in his family or community -- was still widely and rigorously endorsed in the 1920s. People who were associated with a suspect of a crime were also suspected of immoral tendencies. With a conviction, these people were stigmatized. In a newspaper, it was reported that a woman had got herself involved in a crime when she tried to hide away her uncle. He was wanted by the police for theft. More importantly, the report continued, the woman had
dishonoured herself.\textsuperscript{105}

The moral pressure on people to behave in order to save others from humiliation and legal implication was the greatest on members of the same family. When P'ai Jun-yǎn 白潤元 failed to return a loan, his creditors brought his father and brother to the police.\textsuperscript{106} On many occasions, the wives and concubines of criminals, who successfully eluded arrest, were forcefully detained in order to force the criminals to turn themselves in. It was, therefore, not surprising that many women advertised that they were seeking a divorce from their husbands, who were suspected or convicted of a crime. Such action was an attempt to nullify both moral and legal responsibility for their spouses' conduct.

Friends were expected to vouch for the honesty of one another. In Hong Kong, Wang Ch'iu 王秋 vouched for the honesty of Mo Hung 莫洪, who was sued for theft. Wang said that Mo had always been a good man and never committed a crime. Mo was eventually released.\textsuperscript{107} In this case, it was significant that the legal judgement was based on a man's character reference. In this context, a person was also considered morally responsible for his friend's behaviour. After all, it was assumed that a friend's conduct reflected one's moral qualities. When his friend whom he recommended for a job disappeared with his employer's money, Chang Teh 張德 was requested to indemnify the employer. Significantly, the report on this incident stressed that Chang's friend had neglected his moral obligations to a friend.\textsuperscript{108}
Indeed, the ultimate development of collective responsibility was that many people were made to account for persons whom they rarely knew. In Shanghai, when Hsü Hsien-sheng was wanted by the police in connection with a narcotics case, Lu Ch'eng-hsiang, his landlord, was asked to find him or to face prosecution because Hsü used the rented premises for manufacturing heroin.

Generally speaking, law-courts in the three cities acknowledged and fortified the primacy of morality in social control. Judges were apt to dismiss many cases and advised the litigants to make a compromise. In Shanghai, the court agreed to let Ch'en Wei-chang drop his case against Hsü Ti-kuei, whom he then bailed out. Hsü was originally sued for blackmail, but his relatives asked Ch'en for a settlement out of court. In this case, the culprit could have been charged with a criminal offence. But the court was satisfied that both parties agreed to a private compromise.

According to the official view, the law should give precedence to its moral effect on human relationships -- 義法不外人情. In Shanghai, Weng Shui-mu sued his brother-in-law for embezzlement. But he then asked the court to be lenient with the defendant. The judge obliged with his request. In this case, the court acceded with the plaintiff's wish because this act of forgiveness would help to preserve, if not better, the relationship between the two persons. After all, the aim was to impose moral censure rather than
severe legal retribution on the offender.

Interesting enough, private mediation and compromise must have been extremely popular with most people as an acceptable solution to social conflicts that legal authorities were forced to intervene at times. This was in order to ensure that there was no corruption of legal justice. In Shanghai, the court insisted on putting Pai Li-wen on trial for murdering his brother-in-law. Pai had attempted to make a compromise with his sister. In this case, the court realized that it could not afford to drop the case. In a certain sense, the court had the moral obligation to discourage similar offence by punishing the murderer.

In all three cities, the moral right of elderly people and persons of seniority to discipline -- sometimes by physical means -- younger people was sanctioned by legal authorities. Again, it was regarded as a natural and more effective form of social control. Parents were in fact asked to take child culprits home and punish them accordingly. In Shanghai, a judge dismissed the case in which a woman sued her mother-in-law for forcefully cutting off her hair after he found out that she had unaccountably left her husband many times. Most judges accepted that the shih-fu (instructor) had the right to teach the t'u-ti (apprentice) a lesson when the latter failed to carry out the instruction or to listen to advice. Thus, cases in which instructors were sued for ill-treatment rarely ended with a conviction.

Law agencies often tried to exemplify the importance
of morality. There was a tendency to see some lawsuits as a kind of moral problem. In the 1920s, the general practice of clearing the court of general audience during the hearing for a case of rape was based on the consideration that sordid details, which were necessary according to the law, might have an ill effect on the morality of the society. Sometimes, the authorities exceeded the legal limit in supporting the claim of moral righteousness. In Shanghai, a judge ruled that Hsü Sheng-ken's wife was not guilty of adultery, but at the same time advised Hsü that he could divorce her according to civil law. While there was no incriminating evidence against the woman, the judge apparently believed in the woman's guilt. Thus, he exercised his moral right to advise a divorce.

It was also recognized that the efficacy of law-enforcement and prevention of crime depended on certain moral principles. One of them was the people's sense of shame. In Shanghai, the pictures of persons convicted of a petty crime were publicly displayed. The effect was the same as having them pilloried, therefore experiencing public ridicule.

Another significant principle was to encourage people to treasure their moral integrity. In Hong Kong, Ch'en Yü-wen was sued for breaching a contract. In court, he asked to prove his innocence by cutting off the head of a rooster. The judge agreed to preside at the ceremony. Eventually, Ch'en failed to appear at the ceremony, and he was regarded as having admitted his guilt. As part of its obligation to defend morality, the court
sometimes gave its verdict in terms of a moral lesson. In Shanghai, Wang P'u-shen and his accomplice were prosecuted for arson. The prosecution stated that they were brought to trial for their lack of conscience and they would be punished in order to set an example to likely offenders. 116

Indeed, legal judgement was often clouded by a concern with the people's moral stature. There was evident bias against people who were regarded as having criminal tendencies. In Shanghai, many persons of dubious character -- the common term was fei shan-lei -- were invariably arrested, jailed and expelled even though they could not be linked with any crime. For example, Li Erh and his group of friends were jailed and expelled when the authorities concluded that they must be bad elements simply because they were unemployed. 117

The law assumed that a person who vouched for another's innocence put his own moral integrity on trial. In this light, many of the legal decisions of the 1920s were still formed on the basis of collective responsibility. In Shanghai, a mother was also punished after her son was found guilty of rape. 118 The sentence was based on the consideration that the woman had failed to carry out her moral duty to educate her son.

Attitudes towards Crime in Modern Chinese Cities

In the 1920s, there was still the traditional belief that the ideal society was one in which a person could recover property lost on the street and had no need to latch one's
door at night. This society was possible if the rigidity of Chinese family and moral traditions succeeded in discouraging bad habits and misdemeanours. Moreover, an increasing rate of crime was associated with the failure of family discipline and moral discipline. Therefore, the law was required to subdue criminal tendencies and to punish actual offence. All in all, crime represented a spurning of certain aspects of a stable society. It also meant that greater degree of control was required to arrest this change.

There were relatively few reports on petty crimes such as larceny and theft in the early 1920s, especially in the newspapers of North China. This was largely the effect of censorship by the warlord governments in an attempt to present an image of a stable society. Towards the end of the 1920s, crime reports were printed in a less conspicuous place in the newspapers. This was not because the standard of law-enforcement had improved drastically. The people, on the whole, had become insensitive to the increasing number of crimes as a result of a poor economy under an unstable government.

For that matter, the conservative attitude that people must not be incited to join criminal activities by divulging too much information on specific crimes was shared by both the people and the government. Most people treated gambling, opium-smoking and prostitution as bad habits. Even when the authorities decided to put offenders on trial, the aim was to control the excesses of these habits, not to punish people for criminal offences. Offenders were often released after being reprimanded for disturbing public peace. Stiff
sentences were reserved for more serious statutory crimes.

In the three cities, there was a tendency to deport the convicts after they had served their sentence. This additional penalty was imposed in the belief that these people represented the bad and unstable elements of society. By excluding them from the cities, the task of social control was easier and the society would undergo change in a better direction. Small wonder that in Hong Kong many people were arrested and prosecuted for illegal re-entry.

During this period, it was generally recognized that the phenomenal growth in the crime rate could be attributed to disturbing social changes in the cities. Many people failed to adjust themselves to city life and turned to crime in order to survive. On the contrary, some others understood and exploited the complex urban changes. But the ways by which they benefited were not necessarily legitimate. In the light of using the law to arrest and direct rapid changes, many crimes were characterized as family or moral problems, which entailed formal legal control.

Social Disorganization

In the 1920s, people accepted tacitly that some crimes were unique to the contemporary social development. These crimes were induced by a frustration at a change in the social situation -- such as a famine, a war, or widowhood -- which put a person's life and livelihood at stake. Therefore, it was understood that these crimes had nothing to do with a person's nature and integrity.

One of the favourite "social" interpretations of crime
in modern Chinese cities was related to the idea of striking but discordant growth within the three cities. In Shanghai and Tientsin, the influx of people from other parts of China created a heterogeneous population. In many instances, moving into the city by himself, each person became an individual in the expansive city. He would lose the close ties and the support of his family and village members. And at the same time, his family and community lost control over his behaviour. In a typical case, he would have to rely on traditional associations, such as the hui-kuan, or modern charity organizations, such as the Y.M.C.A. or Po Leung Kuk, to render help when he ran into problems of survival. Unfortunately, the hui-kuan gradually lost much of its former pre-eminence as it lacked the funds and the drive to develop. Modern charities were largely philanthropic institutions with specific goals. It was often complained that each person who approached the charity for help was treated as a critical case, thus it lacked the personal warmth and sympathy which the hui-kuan once provided.

In order to overcome his difficulties, a person might thoughtlessly accept another person's help. A report commented that the flourishing commercial port of Shanghai had attracted many bad elements who took advantage of people being strangers in the city. In Shanghai, both Ku Weip'ing 顧威平 and Chu Sui-hsüan 朱遂玄 were arrested for swindling many job-seekers. Ku pretended that he was a lawyer and an officer with the tax bureau. Chu pretended that he was a department head of Chao-shang ch'ih 招商局 (China Merchants' Steam Navigation Company). Another way to help
oneself in the pitiless city was to become a criminal. The decision might have been made on the realization that close family and communal supervision was lacking in the big city, where each person became an anonymous individual. In Shanghai, Yang Wen-ping 杨文炳, who was from Soochow, was arrested for stealing some jewellery and escaping to Soochow. During his trial, Yang complained that he was forced to become a thief because he could not find a job or help while in Shanghai.122

The Concessions in Shanghai and Tientsin were blamed for the increase in crime. In fact, the colonial aura of the Concessions was regarded as especially conducive to encouraging criminal activities. Moreover, the uncooperative attitude of the Concession authorities towards Chinese law-enforcement agencies was also responsible for creating certain areas within the cities which became a haven for refugees from the law.123 The crime rate was the highest in the Concessions.124

In the 1920s, there was a growing awareness that crimes had reached a magnitude with the serious consequence of threatening social stability. To a certain extent, people blamed the increase in the numbers of armed robbery, kidnap and murder on a weak and unprofessional police force. For example, the Hong Kong government and the Canton government failed to work out an effective policy to stop piracy during the early 1920s. Armed robbers disguised themselves as passengers on ships which travelled between the two cities, and they robbed everyone on board when the ships were in international waters. Sometimes people were killed in the
process. Armed robbers would also forcefully get on board fishing-boats and rob the fishermen. By the late 1920s, better sea-patrol and cooperation between the two authorities saw a reduction in these crimes. 125

A lack of confidence in the police developed in the three cities, and people began to seek various means to ensure their own safety. An Association for the Prevention of Crimes was set up in the International Settlement of Shanghai in 1927. In Hong Kong, people were advised to set up patrol groups and arm themselves for self-defence. 126 Indeed, wealthy and important persons in the society had bodyguards.

In Shanghai and Tientsin -- and to a lesser extent in Hong Kong -- suspicious-looking persons were stopped on the street and searched for weapons. This was particularly enforced after 1927 when both the KMT and the Concession authorities adopted an anti-union (-communist) stance. In this context, people readily associated social disorder with political deviance. Crime rate was an indication of the quality of government. As much as banditry reflected the breakdown of the regime in traditional China, the profusion of armed robbery symbolized the inadequacy and instability of administration in the warlord and the post-warlord period.

Armed robbers mostly operated as a gang. In the early years of the 1920s, a typical armed robbery involved several armed men forcing their way into a person's house, threatened everyone inside, and simply ransacked the place. Such a crime usually took place at night when most people were asleep or early in the morning when the men had left
for work. By the late 1920s, armed robbers became more organized and daring. In Shanghai, a shop -- which had been robbed many times before -- was again held up at 8 o'clock at night, a time when many people were on the street. It was possible that the same gang was responsible for the crime. In Hong Kong, it was 11 o'clock in the morning when Ch'en Teh-chien took a tram. He was carrying a large sum of money on him. Five armed men suddenly got onto the tram, intimidated the other passengers, and forcefully dragged Ch'en off the tram to rob him. Previously, the victims were just gagged and tied up. Now not only did robbers operate in broad day-light, but they did not hesitate to use violence. Victims who refused to "cooperate" or resisted were often killed. Gun-fights between armed robbers and the police were not infrequent. There were numerous reports on policemen who were killed in the line of duty. In Tientsin, a bank in the French Concession was held up by five men in the afternoon. When one of them was arrested, he confessed to killing a policeman during an earlier robbery.

To most people, the outburst and intensifying of violence had a fairly conventional explanation. This was based on the traditional notion that adverse political fortunes turned many aspirants into criminals -- pai-che wei k'ou . In the 1920s, many armed robbers were in fact former soldiers of the warlord or the Revolutionary armies.

Before their defeats, most warlords were not known to discipline their staff and troops. Such inaction encouraged
some outrageous and unlawful activities. As a result, the people became dissatisfied with as well as fearful of the military, which they associated with social disorder. In one case, when the police was informed that some robbers were in fact soldiers of the Chihli-Fengtien clique, they became reluctant in taking action. Indeed, most of the armed robbers were reported as speaking with a northern accent. As it turned out, they were invariably warlord soldiers from North China and Manchuria.

After the failure of the Second Revolution, many KMT soldiers, besides having a lost cause, were hard pressed for a living. Some formed themselves into a "bomb gang" in Shanghai. Relying on their knowledge of explosives, they threatened to blow up the building if their victims failed to give them money. Similarly, after the Northern Expedition, many soldiers found themselves suddenly out of a job. With an easy access to firearms, and the expertise in using them, many former soldiers turned into armed robbers. Small wonder that many of the culprits were found to be from Chiang-pei, that is northern Kiangsu, one of the strongholds of the Revolutionary Army. In Hong Kong, a similar development took place. The political instability of Kwangtung drove many soldiers and politicians into the Colony. The suspects spoke different Kwangtung dialects.

The unrelenting pressure of economic needs was also recognized as a significant contributory factor of crime. Thus, the numbers of theft and robbery reached a peak during the period of time before the Chinese New Year.
were forced to find money to celebrate the festivities, or to repay all the debts. The authorities in the three cities in fact issued warning to the people to take special care during this period.\textsuperscript{133} To a certain extent, society-at-large tolerated petty crimes which were committed for economic reason. A certain degree of sympathy was occasionally displayed towards those persons who took such risk.

Modern economic life in the cities was regarded as extremely complex and thus vulnerable to manipulation. Not many persons were knowledgeable of the rapid but essential economic changes. It was not surprising that there was a spate of embezzlement, forgery, counterfeiting, and arson (to defraud insurance companies). In Hong Kong, many money-changers were defrauded when they redeemed certificates of deposit, which originated from Canton. They had accepted these papers in good faith without counter-checking. This had been the standard and traditional practice within their profession. When the crimes reached an alarming proportion, they worked out a scheme of marking the certificates.\textsuperscript{134} Obviously, the notion of mutual trust had been exploited and proven unsuitable in an expanding economy.

\textit{Family Problems}

In the 1920s, many crimes were interpreted as a family problem. Crimes were considered as a blatant rejection of the family tradition on the part of those people who opposed the rigidity of this tradition. Prompted by this conservative attitude towards crime, many offences were reported and prosecuted in order to reinstate the reverence
for the family tradition. Indeed, many crimes showed that they were the result of criminals exploiting the people's penchant for tradition.

In the three cities, an unequal sex relationship still persisted, and this was reflected in some typical crimes. The increases in the number of cases which involved young girls being abducted or seduced and then forced to become prostitutes was not a new development. It highlighted an existing evil phenomenon, which partly illustrated the attitude towards sex and partly underlined the disparity in the population structure. It was still quite acceptable for men to seek premarital and extra-marital sex enjoyment. For that matter, the authorities recognized this need by licensing prostitution. The male population was growing together with the cities, and this meant that many men would be unable to find a suitable marriage partner. It was not surprising that many of them tried to satisfy their sexual urge by visiting a brothel.

The strict segregation of the sexes paradoxically was open to manipulation. Many men still had to rely on matchmakers to find them a wife. Consequently, many women, who lacked financial support and independence, were enticed to enter into a fraudulent marriage. Such a crime typically involved a woman being introduced and eventually married to a man of some means. Soon after the wedding, the bride disappeared and took with her some valuables from the man's house. In Hong Kong, Liang Jui-ch'uan wished to take a concubine. Someone introduced him to a widowed woman. Liang paid the person some money and then married
the woman. Shortly afterwards, she disappeared. 135

Women were still considered as inferior to men, and this drastically affected a woman's economic status and ability to find a job. As a result, many women, who believed that the expanding city would provide them with ample opportunities, were swindled when they sought support from persons who claimed that they could help. In Tientsin, a man and a woman pretended that they could recommend their nephew's daughter to a job with a firm. Actually, they planned to sell her into a brothel. 136 In many cases, those women who were caught as thieves were mainly criticized as materialistic and extravagant. The oppressing economic inequality of society was rarely mentioned, especially with regards to the difficulties confronting a widow who must find her own living. In a report on the rate of larceny, it was found that many female offenders were widows. 137

Many women were prosecuted for desertion, abscondment, elopement and adultery. These cases were based on the legal principle that the offence was a criminal negligence of family responsibilities, sometimes even causing the family economic losses. However, the fact that these crimes increased in number in the 1920s showed that more women were prepared to challenge the family tradition, which otherwise shackled them to an irreversible fate. Wives and concubines tried to get away from violent husbands, daughters from authoritarian fathers, daughters-in-law from overbearing mothers-in-law, maids from wilful mistresses, and prostitutes from pitiless pimps and brothel-keepers.

As reflected by some crimes, the women's sense of
fatalism was still very pronounced. Some were prepared to accept an inferior and abused position to men. In Shanghai, Shih Ching-hua eventually made up her mind to sue two men for raping her sister and causing her death. The two men then forced Shih to live with them and cancelled her engagement to another person. According to her, their crime was that they had ruined the two girls' future. It was significant that she decided to expose this crime only when the men abandoned her. In this case, it was probable that the girl had originally chosen to remain silent because the men provided her with means of support. In this light, many women only reported crimes which violated their legal rights after long period of deliberation. Tai Chung-wen's sister-in-law sued Tai for raping her many times in the past year. She said that Tai had forbidden her to spread the scandal. Indeed, women were extremely wary of the impact of sex crime on their reputation. So such crimes were reported only when they felt an unbearable pressure. Ting Hsiu-ying was driven to exasperation by the double humiliation of being raped and then blackmailed by her molester's brother-in-law. She reported the crimes to the authorities. In this case, the woman considered that it was more important to punish a crime against her honour rather than her body.

Men were subjected to no less family pressure than women. Many thefts and robberies were committed by men who believed that they must find some means to support their families. Moreover, that men were made the targets of most crimes was an indication of their predominant role in...
The primacy of the family was secured by the preservation and extension of the line of male descendants. The preoccupation with offspring and heir explained the large number of abduction. Lured away from their homes, many boys were sold to childless couples. In Shanghai, there was an exceptionally large number of such crimes in 1932. It was found that several syndicates took advantage of the chaos after the Japanese invasion which had broken up many families. The preconception of a marriage ensuring the continuity of the family line also led to many abductions. In Hong Kong, many young girls were abducted and carried across the border into China, where the custom of taking child-brides was still very strong. 141

The health and safety of the male members were of great concern to the family. Realizing this, many kidnappers operated on the assumption that a ransom would be willingly paid for the lives of their male victims. Boys, especially if they were the only son in the family, were favourite targets for kidnapping. In this context, many male victims were from wealthier families, especially in Shanghai and Tientsin. Wu Tung-wen, a bank manager, was kidnapped while on his way to work. The report stressed that he was the son-in-law of a wealthy gentry member. 142

Many families preferred to pay the ransom as it was not unknown that the victims could be maimed or even murdered if the demands were not met. In Tientsin, Ch'en
Kuang-yüan, a former tu-chün (military commander) of Kiangsi, was kidnapped by some members of his staff. Besides paying a ransom as agreed, his family did not report the matter to the police. Indeed, an overly concern with the safety of the victim sometimes led to a failure to cooperate with the authorities. An important consequence was merely to encourage these crimes. After Ch'en Chu-ling, a comprador, was kidnapped, his family refused to divulge any information in order to stop putting pressure on the kidnappers who might cause some harm to Ch'en.

For that matter, many victims were murdered after the ransom was paid because they knew their kidnappers. In this light, the kidnapping of one's relatives was regarded as a most serious crime, and the punishment was the heaviest. In Shanghai, Li Ching-lun was kidnapped by his relative. When the culprit was caught, he tried to mitigate some of his crime by saying that he was forced to do so because Li refused him a loan. By this, he tried to shift the attention to his victim's apparent denial of responsibility to a relative.

Since a person's social conduct was often regarded as the product of family education, Chinese families tended to cover up misdemeanours or even crimes of their members. They were wary of a crime besmirching the entire family or clan. Therefore, when the painful decision of exposing a crime was made, the main purpose was to censure the deed. Women criminals were especially susceptible to such treatment. In Shanghai, Fan Hsiao-mei, a widow, was sued...
by her mother-in-law for absconding after being seduced by an outsider. It was stressed that her crime was being an unchaste widow.\textsuperscript{146} In this case, the woman's conduct was reported to the authorities because she had violated the family's requirement that she should remain a widow.

\textit{Moral Problems}

Many people still adhered to a fundamental belief in and respect for a moral order in society. In Hong Kong, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce advised the Chinese community to come together and insure themselves -- by forming patrols at night -- against robbers and thieves. This advice emphasized the moral obligation to protect each other in the community. Even the official position was hinged upon a moralistic view of social control. It was considered that law-abiding persons would not wander at night as they must have a proper living-place. In this light, the police's anti-crime efforts in Shanghai and Tientsin were significant. With an increasing rate of crimes, the police searched for suspicious-looking strangers in hotels and inns, and instituted curfews at night. The rationale was to separate \textit{liang-min} (good people) from \textit{fei-lei} (evildoers). It was perhaps their anxiety to carry out their work which led to confrontation with some people. In Shanghai, the people of Tsa Pei reacted with hostility to a police search.\textsuperscript{147} Apparently, it was regarded as a violation of the community's sanctity. In this light, lynching and racketeering by secret societies were more than legal offences. The former was a determination to seek
social and moral justice. The latter demonstrated a rejection of modern social organizations and control. Both crimes, however, were influenced by the notion that each community was morally responsible for its own well-being and should not invite outside intervention.

In the 1920s, some crimes were interpreted as an attempt to destroy the moral status quo. In some comments, the inundation of materialism and the corresponding bankruptcy of morality were linked to the enormous increase in crimes. The traditionally effective moral sanction proved to be inadequate in controlling deviances. Moreover, this collapse of the moral order could not be arrested and reversed simply by law though deviants must be punished accordingly. In some quarters, a programme of moral re-education was put forward as the complete remedy. 148

As much as social relationship was a set of moral obligations, social misconduct was judged and punished according to moral principles. In the late 1920s, many public notices, which had the effect of reminding other persons the legal obligation to fulfill a contract, appeared in the newspapers. The main emphasis was that the defaulting of an agreement was a blemish on a person's name as well as a crime. It was not unusual for people to associate criminal offence with immoral conduct. In Hong Kong, Huang Ching-wen was prosecuted for fraud. She was labelled by the press as an undisciplined and uncouth girl. 149 The implication was that she was liable to immoral behaviour. Indeed, many persons were sued and punished for crimes which were regarded of serious moral consequence.
A merchant was convicted of deliberately giving his customers counterfeit coins. It was, however, emphasized that his punishment was necessary to maintain the professional ethics amongst his colleagues.\textsuperscript{150}

Even the authorities in the three cities tried to maintain control with a moralistic perspective. The most severe punishment was used in crimes which involved violence. This was because such a crime often resulted in maiming or death. The preservation of a man's health and life was considered as a moral act: it was taught long ago that a man's body was bestowed by his parents; he must do nothing to damage a hair or to rupture the skin. In this light, people who inflicted physical pain on others were subjected to harsh sentences. In Shanghai, Shen Kuei-t'ang was arrested for robbery. He had threatened his victim with a knife. Though he had not robbed much of value nor injured his victim, Shen was sentenced to fifteen years of imprisonment.\textsuperscript{151}

Some crimes showed the contradiction between the inertia of moral beliefs and the dynamics of a changing society. Persons betrayed an old-fashioned trust in their moral rectitude when they were hard-pressed for making a living. There were many cases, especially in Tientsin and Hong Kong, which involved people stealing or pawning valuable items entrusted to them by their friends or relatives. Servants were found to conspire with outsiders to break in and steal from their masters. Many shop-owners still followed the customary practice of allowing their managers and accountants to use the company's seal. They suffered
the consequence of embezzlement. While there was a realization of the economic motive, culprits were significantly condemned for their unethical behaviour in betraying the victims' trust in them. Sometimes, even referees were regarded as responsible for this breach of faith.

In this light, most people's keen sense of maintaining a moral obligation to help others was exploited by some criminals. Sometimes, criminals tried to claim to have particular relationships with their victims in order to oblige them to help. In Tientsin, Tung Hai-p'eng asked a person for a loan. He said that he knew the person's relative and he had also graduated from the Whampoo Military Academy, which was the person's alma mater.152 In this case, the man was suggesting that his potential victim was obliged to help him because of the friendship and the professional association. Also, many people were cheated when they falsely believed that they were donating money to victims of a natural disaster in their own province, or to help their t'ung-hsiang. In Shanghai, Ch'eng Chieh tried to make people believe that he was collecting relief-money for a disaster in Anhwei.153 A corollary of such exploitation was that many victims eventually decided not to sue the offenders or asked the court to be lenient in its sentence. The reason was invariably because they knew the offenders as a friend, or a relative, or a t'ung-hsiang. In Shanghai, Ts'ai Hsiao-feng decided not to sue a thief simply because he came from Ts'ai's province.154
The people's moral inclination to avoid entanglement with the law was an inducement to many criminals. In all three cities, there were many cases of shop-lifting, pickpocketing, snatching, and way-laying. Considering these as petty crimes, most victims -- being women and children -- did not pursue the matter. In any case, the amount of loss was regarded as too insignificant to be worth the trouble of reporting to the police. An interesting example took place in Tientsin. Kung Ch'eng-yü was arrested for theft. He admitted to the crime, but at the same time showed surprise that it was reported.155

Blackmailers manipulated some people's desire to protect their reputation. The victims were confronted with the threat of having their scandalous behaviour exposed. In Shanghai, a widow was blackmailed by her cousin with whom she slept for the past four years. The threat was based on the woman's fear of being exposed as an unchaste woman.156 Indeed, many victims refused to report blackmailers because they were aware of their own misdemeanours. In Shanghai, Chin Lin-ch'ing was arrested for blackmailing Wang Ch'u-chai on four different occasions. Chin said that he was merely reminding Wang who had made a promise to help him to gain control of his family estate.157 It was significant that Wang had not taken action at once. This was probably because Wang was wary that it was regarded as morally reprehensible for a person to advise others on splitting up the family.

While policemen had been warned not to use their authority to gain advantage,158 many people still persisted
in the belief that the law could be bought. Thus, they were easily swindled by persons who claimed to have a good relationship with the legal authorities. Merchants, who traditionally had a difficult relationship with officialdom, fell easy prey to people who claimed an ability to expedite the legal process. More significantly, when a person had committed a crime, he might try some extra-legal means to mitigate its seriousness. In Shanghai, Chang Chi-pu said that he was wanted by the police for a crime. But Chang could work for Wu's acquittal. In fact, in many gambling and narcotics offences, the culprits were threatened by imposters who posed as law-enforcement agents. Obviously, the victims' sense of guilt as well as fear of the law was exploited.

Many crimes, in fact, involved the question of the correctness of a person's moral conduct. Crimes which were related to matters of sex relationship were an obvious example. In Hong Kong, a man and a woman were blackmailed when they were caught embracing in a park. They failed to take action. The blackmailers were caught by some British soldiers who passed by. In this case, the couple was aware that their act would be subject to a moralistic interpretation. In this light, the reluctance to report rapes was understandable. It was not surprising that both the rapist and the victim were subject to harsh moral scrutiny. Rapists indeed sometimes took advantage of such negative attitude. In Shanghai, Fan Chin-ken was prosecuted for raping Yao Ch'iao-jung.
Fan stressed that Yao had consented to the sexual act, but she sued him because they had a disagreement.\textsuperscript{161} Occasionally, the victim's integrity was subject to cynical judgement. Ch'en Hua's wife only reported that she was raped by her husband's friend after four times.\textsuperscript{162} It would be most probable that she would be queried about her delayed action.

In the 1920s, some crimes were an expression of moral dissatisfaction with the political development. There was an anti-Japanese feeling building up since the May Fourth Movement. As a kind of gesture against Japanese interference in the Chinese affairs, there were many acts of violence against people who had Japanese connections. In Hong Kong, Yuan Ning was arrested for blackmailing a prominent social figure. He argued that he was engaging in a patriotic act to warn his victim of having further commercial ties with the Japanese.\textsuperscript{163}

Typical of a society besieged by political chaos, many persons tried to gain economic advantage. Some people were accused of pursuing anti-national interests, and blackmailed. This was a manipulation of the victims' sense of guilt and shame. In Shanghai, many shops which sold Japanese goods were asked to "contribute" to the national cause or to pay some redemption money. The blackmailers used high-sounding name such as "bold avengers against the traitors". In many instances, the accusation was false and there were many innocent victims. When by a coincidence that many people who collaborated with the Japanese invaders in Shanghai were from Chiang-pei, many
persons from this area were labelled as traitors and blackmailed -- or physically assaulted. Indeed, an innocent person who spoke with a Chiang-pei accent was blackmailed. 164

Conclusion

In the 1920s, Chinese society in the three cities undoubtedly realized that the law might help to improve the quality of life. For example, extraterritoriality could be abolished; women were legally given greater freedom and equality; dangerous political elements (such as the CCP and the labour unions) were outlawed.

But these developments made few people trust the wisdom and objectivity of the law. Almost unchanged was the suspicion of the law-officer's integrity, and there was ample evidence to confirm this suspicion. There were also few assurances that the law had succeeded in making crucial adjustments in the social sphere. That political and economic growth remained unbalanced was interpreted by many people that the law still served the rich and the powerful. The tendency to discriminate against the women disappointed many people, who continued to witness the elders and men in the family being allowed to treat the women in a rather "feudalistic" manner. This mode of behaviour was also quite popular in contemporary society. As such, the idea that the spirit of modern law was individual rights and equality became a sonority.

It still appeared to most Chinese that a society which was controlled by the instruments of law -- even if they
were upright judges and uncorrupt policemen -- was only a necessity. There were two aspects of this need. On the positive side, the law coerced the continuous observation of social and moral disciplines. On the negative side, it meted out punishment to those persons who dared to disrupt the social and moral order. The law was only called upon at a critical time when social harmony and moral propriety were being challenged and fast disappearing.

Family rules and moral censures were considered as more effective forms of social control. This consideration led to a general unwillingness to compromise the sanctity of family tradition and the fortitude of moral beliefs. Most people therefore tried to avoid any implication with a legal problem. Even the contemporary legal authorities discouraged litigation amongst the people. In many instances, besides giving precedence to Chinese customs, judges sought to play a role in mediation rather than in arbitration. Litigants were asked to settle out of court.

Broadly speaking, Chinese society in the 1920s recognized the fact that some persons turned to crime because of difficult political and economic changes. However, it was also believed that crimes became phenomenal because more people were prepared to repudiate the traditional social and moral philosophy. Fundamentally, criminals were renegades who flouted family tradition and adopted immoral traits. As a paradox, the persistent attachment to social and moral principles of the past abetted many crimes, especially those in which the family and morality were at stake.
Taken as a kind of formal social control, the law was viewed and practised by the Chinese in the 1920s to prevent the rejection, to coerce the observation, and to punish the violation of traditions. This conservative attitude towards the law was associated with the institutional failure to create new social and moral worlds, in which each individual's rights and responsibilities were re-defined. As a result, Chinese society failed to make the necessary attitudinal transition towards a coherent programme of change. Individuals were still caught in a web of intricate traditional relationships and organizations. This problem created many problems which might not be solved easily even by law.
Notes to Chapter Four


3. This analysis is based on E. Durkheim's concept of the normalcy of crime. The rate of crimes reflects the existing state of morality and law. Recognizing the disparity between expressed social values and actual social conduct, the society could make changes accordingly. In this sense, crime serves a useful function. See E. Durkheim, "The Normal and the Pathological" in E.H. Mizruchi (ed.), The Substance of Sociology: Codes, Conduct and Consequences (New York, 1967), p. 244. See also Raab & Selznick, op. cit., p. 138; H. Mannheim, Comparative Criminology (London, 1965), pp. 421-2.


5. According to Broom & Selznick, op. cit., p. 447: "Historically, the law has been mainly concerned with upholding constituted authority, controlling disorder and crime, and protecting property." Bottomore identifies two kinds of law, both playing a conservative role: in a static society, it is repressive; in a progressive society, it is restitutive. See Bottomore, op. cit., p. 235. Indeed, the tendency to rely on moral, conventional and traditional norms to increase its effectiveness marks the law with certain conservative traits. See P.W. Tappan "Who is the Criminal?" in D. Dressler (ed.), Readings in Criminology and Penology (New York, 1964), p. 17.


8. Though in theory the imperial edict commanded the highest respect in the realm, its efficacy was in practice limited by the local governments' autonomy. See Yang Hung-lieh, *Chung-kuo fa-lü fa-ta shih* (Shanghai, 1933), vol. 1, p. 2.

9. This echoed the Confucian utopian wish that there should not be any litigation. See Chan Heng-chü, *op. cit.*, p. 10.


11. The pretext was invariably that Chinese law was inadequate to offer protection to an individual. See *TK*: 19/5/1930 (7).

12. The Mixed-court system operated in the following cases: (1) those which took place in the Concessions; (2) those which involved western and Chinese litigants; (3) those which were tried in the Chinese municipality but involved suspects extradited from the Concessions. Thus, Chinese persons who claimed the nationality of a foreign country would not be tried according to Chinese law if he was residing in a Concession. This system was instituted in the International Settlement of Shanghai in 1869 and in the French Concession of Shanghai in 1870. Theoretically, the system was ended in 1926. The system was introduced in Tientsin in 1870 and was still under review by 1930. See Shang-hai-shih nien-chien wei-yüan-hui, *Shang-hai-shih nien-chien* (Shanghai, 1935), "Judiciary", p. G-1; Sung Wan-p'u, *Ho-pei sheng T'ien-chin chih-lidh* (Taipei, 1969 reprint), p. 61.


15. See Ho Dzu-fang, *"A hundred years of Hong Kong"* (Unpub. doctoral thesis, Princeton University, 1948), Chapter III.
16. See Ching-wang, "Ch'ü-t'i kung-hui" (To prohibit the trade unions), HJ: 3/5/1922 (1). The 1925 General Strike affected the entire South China, including Canton and Macau. This was in protest against alleged British and French atrocities against the workers of Shameen in Canton.

17. See SP: 16/3/1917 (6).

18. See SH: 13/12/1932 (10).

19. See SH: 30/12/27 (16).

20. See the reports on the state of negotiation between Chinese and Concession authorities in SH: 8/1/1927 (13); 14/3/1927 (11); 2/4/1927 (15); TK: 19/11/1929 (2). In Shanghai, the issue was resolved in the establishing of a temporary court, followed by the first and second special district-court of Kiangsu. In Tientsin, the discussion was still under way in 1930.

21. See, for example, the advertisements asking people to buy a law-guide in order to triumph in a lawsuit -- SH: 17/8/1923 (8) -- and to solicit professional legal aid in order to give protection to one's life and property -- SH: 22/9/1932 (2).

22. See the comment on the people's ignorance of the law in TK: 24/8/1930 (4).

23. There was a tendency for the lawyers of the litigants to try finding a compromise which often involved money settlement. In fact, many lawyers were found to encourage people to go to court in cases of family dispute, divorce, bigamy, inheritance, and rape. The aim was not to seek justice but a percentage of the compensation. Such practice was labelled as t'ieh-shu k'ai-hua (making an iron tree blossom), which meant making things out of the impossible. See the analysis in Pao T'ien-hsiao, Ch'uan-ying-lou hui-i-lu. HsiU-pien (Hong Kong, 1973), p. 113.


26. See ST: 29/9/1917 (7); 11/11/1922 (7); TK: 27/9/1932 (9).


30. In Shanghai, a suspect denied his confession, which was made in the police station, when he was tried in court. He implied that he was forced to make the confession. See SH: 26/5/1927 (11). In Hong Kong, a woman asked the court to investigate her husband's death. He died while being held in custody by the police for gambling. See HJ: 14/3/1918 (1).

31. See HJ: 26/9/1927 (2); 14/10/1927 (2).

32. See HJ: 13/7/1927 (3).

33. See ST: 22/8/1917 (7).

34. See ST: 30/8/1922 (7).

35. See ST: 16/1/1922 (3).

36. See ST: 1/7/1917 (3).


38. See SH: 30/7/1932 (15).


42. See SH: 4/5/1932 (5).

43. See TK: 24/12/1929 (8).

44. See SH: 4/5/1932 (5).

45. See SH: 27/7/1932 (16).

46. See SH: 1/12/1923 (15).

47. See SH: 4/12/1932 (14).

48. See HJ: 29/9/1927 (2).

49. See TK: 28/2/1930 (9).

50. See HJ: 13/7/1932 (2).

51. See HJ: 13/11/1922 (1).

52. See SP: 14/9/1917 (6).


54. See SH: 29/6/1932 (15).
55. See TK: 19/1/1930 (9).
56. See ST: 2/3/1922 (7).
57. See HJ: 26/5/1927 (2).
58. See HJ: 17/9/1927 (3).
59. See ST: 26/10/1922 (7).
60. See SH: 13/5/1932 (10).
61. See SH: 20/12/1932 (7).
63. See TK: 4/11/1929 (12); 15/11/1929 (11).
64. See SH: 3/11/1927 (3).
65. See SH: 10/2/1923 (2).
66. See SH: 27/1/1923 (2).
67. See TK: 12/10/1932 (7).
68. See TK: 14/1/1932 (2).
69. See SP: 16/2/1917 (6).
70. See SH: 9/9/1932 (15).
71. See HJ: 31/5/1932 (3); 2/6/1932 (3).
72. See SH: 29/1/1932 (11).
73. See SP: 28/2/1917 (6).
74. See SH: 14/9/1932 (5).
75. See ST: 23/1/1922 (1).
76. See HJ: 11/1/1922 (1).
77. See TK: 8/4/1932 (1).
78. See HJ: 3/7/1918 (1).
79. See SH: 28/7/1927 (15).
80. See HJ: 11/7/1922 (1).
81. See SP: 12/9/1917 (6).
82. See SH: 8/5/1932 (10).
83. See TK: 7/6/1932 (2).
84. See SP: 7/1/1917 (1).
85. See TK: 14/1/1932 (2).
86. See ST: 4/8/1922 (7).
87. See SP: 4/11/1917 (6).
88. See SP: 22/6/1917 (6).
89. In an advertisement, the company says that it was forbidden by its conscience to bring another company to court. This advertisement also had the additional purpose of showing that the company did not withdraw the case because the chance of winning it was regarded as small. See SP: 1/2/1917 (1).
90. See ST: 3/12/1922 (7).
91. See TK: 2/11/1929 (7).
92. See SP: 20/12/1917 (6).
93. See ST: 9/10/1917 (7).
94. See SP: 27/12/1917 (6).
95. See ST: 23/11/1922 (7).
96. See SP: 23/8/1917 (1).
97. See SP: 26/2/1917 (7); SP: 30/1/1917 (6).
98. See SP: 14/11/1917 (1).
99. See ST: 11/12/1917 (7).
100. See ST: 27/9/1922 (7).
102. See ST: 24/1/1922 (7).
103. See SP: 12/11/1917 (6).
104. See SP: 16/3/1917 (6).
105. See ST: 6/12/1922 (7).
106. See ST: 29/7/1922 (7).
108. See ST: 24/6/1922 (7).
110. See SP: 9/9/1917 (6).

111. See SP: 5/7/1917 (6).

112. See SP: 31/7/1917 (6).


114. See SH: 26/6/1927 (15).

115. See HJ: 14/9/1918 (1).

116. See SP: 15/2/1917 (6).

117. See SP: 2/2/1917 (6).


119. It is interesting to find that particular parts of Shanghai were more likely than others to give rise to criminal activities. Indeed, criminal groups were invariably associated with Pu Tung, Nan Shih, and Tsa Pei. They called themselves a pang (mutual-helping group). For example, in Pu Tung was the Hung (red) pang and the Ch'ing (green) pang. Based on sworn brotherhood, elaborate rites and set of hierarchies, these groups offered organization and protection to their members, who might be from the same place and doing the same trade. The notion was that they could preclude outside intervention and make life easier in the city. Often enough, stiff competition from other groups invited unlawful and violent reactions. See SP: 9/1/1917 (6); 15/4/1917 (6). Some of these groups turned to robbery rather than staying as a secret society. In Nan Shih, a gang frequently snatched away the passengers' luggage when they disembarked from the arriving ships. Another gang made a name for itself by simply snatching away jewellery that people were wearing. And a third gang indulged in robbing pawn-shops. See SP: 12/1/1917 (6); 6/5/1917 (9); 9/5/1917 (5). It was, therefore, not uncommon for the police to maintain a cordial and tolerant attitude towards these mutual groups in order to keep the outbreak of crimes within a "reasonable" limit. Many constables in fact held membership of the secret societies. See SP: 6/3/1917 (5).

120. See SP: 25/6/1917 (6). In Hong Kong, newspaper reports revealed that many members of secret societies were arrested and prosecuted for forcing persons -- most of them having just arrived from outside the Colony -- to join them. These persons were told that they would receive protection by the secret society. For example, Li Fu came from Canton to study in Hong Kong. He was threatened by Cheng Ta-chao. 
to join a secret society. See HJ: 28/10/1922 (2); See also HJ: 20/5/1927 (2); 23/6/1927 (3) on incidents of similar nature. Interestingly, economic and psychological differences between the local community (pen-ти 地) and the outsiders (k'0-chia 象) led to many street-fights. Such conflicts not only reflected violent competition in the city, such as between the various groups of rickshawmen from Kwangtung, but also suggested a keen awareness of maintaining communal identity in a vast city. See HJ: 10/12/1918 (1); 28/12/1918 (1); 17/5/1927 (3); 30/5/1927 (3); 9/8/1927 (2).

121. See SH: 14/11/1932 (16); 23/12/1932 (14).

122. See SP: 10/6/1917 (6).

123. See TK: 28/9/1930 (9). The area which lay between Tsa-pei and the International Settlement of Shanghai was regarded as problematic. This was because the authorities on both sides refused to recognize its responsibility for this buffer area. See SP: 28/10/1917 (5). There were many instances of Concession authorities refusing to cooperate with the Chinese administration. See SP: 14/2/1917 (5); 6/3/1917 (5).

124. This was because they were economically attractive. See TK: 7/2/1930 (11).

125. See HJ: 19/9/1927 (2).

126. See SH: 4/5/1932 (10); HJ: 4/9/1922 (1).

127. See SH: 15/9/1927 (15).

128. See HJ: 23/10/1922 (1).

129. See TK: 29/11/1932 (7); 18/12/1932 (7).

130. See ST: 28/4/1922 (7).

131. See, for example, how one of them blackmailed a shop-owner by this means. SP: 14/7/1917 (5).

132. See the analyses in SH: 5/2/1927 (14); ST: 16/2/1922 (3); HJ: 18/1/1922 (2).

133. There were schemes such as increasing the number of patrol, nightly curfews, and stopping and searching suspicious-looking persons. See SH: 24/1/1927 (11); TK: 15/11/1929 (11); 5/2/1932 (7).

134. See HJ: 16/9/1927 (2); 10/10/1927 (2).

135. See HJ: 22/11/1932 (2).

136. See TK: 12/12/1929 (9).
137. Yen Ching-yueh suggests that widows were forced mainly by economic reason to become thieves. On the one hand, there was the promise of equal economic opportunities. On the other, women still faced tremendous difficulty when finding a job. For a widow, this could be an oppressing and trying situation. See Yen Ching-yueh, _loc. cit._, p. 303. For a contemporary conservative view on women criminals, see _ST_: 9/10/1922 (3).

138. See _SH_: 5/10/1932 (11).

139. See _SH_: 15/7/1932 (15).


141. See the reports on the increasing rate of young girls disappearing. While some were abducted to become prostitutes, many were sold to wealthy families in Canton. _HJ_: 8/9/1922 (2); 16/5/1927 (supplement).

142. See _SH_: 4/5/1927 (14).

143. See _TK_: 21/9/1930 (3).

144. See _TK_: 1/11/1929 (9).

145. See _SH_: 1/10/1927 (15).

146. See _SH_: 18/6/1927 (15).

147. See _SP_: 15/10/1917 (5).

148. See _TK_: 7/6/1932 (2).

149. See _HJ_: 1/10/1918 (1).

150. See _ST_: 5/3/1922 (7).

151. See _SH_: 28/5/1927 (15).

152. See _TK_: 7/2/1930 (9).

153. See _SP_: 19/3/1917 (6).

154. See _SP_: 15/1/1917 (6).

155. See _TK_: 23/6/1930 (7).

156. See _SH_: 9/9/1927 (15).

157. See _SH_: 12/1/1927 (11).

158. There were repeated warnings to policemen not to promote an impression of "powerfulness" in public and to resort to extortion. See _ST_: 15/2/1922 (7); 16/6/1922 (7).
159. See SH: 17/1/1932 (15).
161. See SH: 14/10/1927 (15).
162. See SH: 26/12/1927 (15).
163. See HJ: 18/5/1932 (3).
164. See SH: 12/4/1932 (5).
CHAPTER FIVE

*Suicide and Homicide in Modern Chinese Cities*

This chapter discusses the social phenomena of suicide and homicide in the three Chinese cities of the 1920s. With reference to certain cases, it will be shown that Chinese individuals were still bound to and dominated by the society. Suicide and homicide were the products as well as the expression of this conservative attitude. Such conservatism was also explicable in terms of institutional failure. The consciousness and experience of social changes within the cities were often not matched by institutional support for changes. As a result, some persons became confused and they were liable to make a violent individual decision on the problem of survival in the city.

The 1920s could perhaps be interpreted as a period of transition in Chinese society when old values conflicted with new ones, and many persons in the cities were caught in the fray. Amidst the confusion, the natural response was to measure individual responses within the framework of traditional social and moral systems.

The trend towards an increasing number of deaths due to suicide and homicide can be largely explained as a pathological problem of a growing city. But this discussion will emphasize these problems as the response to rigid family and moral values. While setting the standards for social stability and control, these values underplayed and undermined the importance of the individual vis-à-vis society. Many persons who committed suicide or homicide were the...
victims of a prevailing conservative attitude. They were committed to and daunted by the traditional family and moral values. So the crimes were really an expression of unwillingness to change and forsake the traditions. In this light, the phenomena of suicide and homicide were signs of ill-adjustment in the city. For a suicide, it was often the perpetual fear of being stigmatized as an anti-social person that forced him taking his own life. For a homicide, the act of killing another person was justified in that it gave the ultimate protection to one's social status.

As a corollary, the consolidation and resilience of these values as a traditional force proved to be a frustrating experience to some persons who believed that institutional changes had provided for some liberation. These people were disillusioned and were driven to either suicide or homicide. These anti-social crimes assumed the form of a protest against the falsity of change in the city. By placing a premium on human lives, these acts were deliberate outbursts of violence to demonstrate a rejection of the traditional system by a single individual.²

*Traditional Chinese Attitudes towards Suicide and Homicide*

In traditional China, the people were taught to place an intrinsic and ultimate value on the life of a person. According to Chinese cosmology, Heaven, Earth and Man formed an eternal relationship in the universe; and a man's life was of utmost concern to Heaven -- the Supreme Being.³ To respect and protect lives on earth was considered as Heaven's virtue (*shang-t'ien yu hao-sheng*)
and this dictum should be followed by every person. Thus, to kill oneself or another person was regarded as an act which violated the principles of Heaven -- an act of grave consequence. Such philosophical argument was not only written into more tangible laws against suicide and homicide, but it also affected the people's attitude.

Influenced by the cosmic view on men and society, the Chinese frowned at suicide and homicide as negative solutions to human problems. Both kinds of anti-social behaviour were deemed controllable if there was an improvement and sustaining of family and moral values. Various teachings were in fact supportive of this attitude. In Confucianism, a person was cautioned not to lose even a hair or to have a scratch on his skin because his body was bequeathed by his parents. Buddhist philosophy categorically forbade a person to kill any living creature on earth. According to its theory of transmigration (lun-hui 轉廻), anyone who killed would be thrown into hell after death and would be turned into an animal in his second life.4

Generally speaking, Chinese society was fearful and suspicious of death by unnatural causes. Whether be it by suicide or homicide, violent deaths -- that is, those which involved immense physical pain and loss of blood -- were considered to turn victims into vengeful ghosts. They would return to haunt those persons whom they considered responsible for their deaths. In this light, suicide and homicide often created tremendous interests and speculations in the victims' background and experience. That these
activities were viewed to have family and moral implications was an indication that individual personality was considered to be of lesser significance.

It was believed that the rigidity of the Chinese family relationships had given many women the notion of suicide as the only relief. They became the victims of some typical family problems because they were expected to play docile and secondary roles in the family. Some committed suicide to oppose pre-arranged marriage; others killed themselves to escape from an unhappy marriage. After quarrelling with their parents, husbands or relatives, many women committed suicide to demonstrate their grievances. Sometimes, jealousy of another woman, who had gained the husband's love and affection, could induce the wife or concubine to kill herself. Generally speaking, most women believed that a suicide constituted a protest against the irrationalities of the family system. Indeed, some attempts at suicide represented a threat for better treatment. Most cases which were due to family pressures were found at home, or at least in its vicinity. This had the psychological effect of suggesting that the family was responsible for the tragic decision of one of its members. Suicides of this nature often brought no sympathy to the family, with which other people avoided further contact if it was believed that the family was wrong. It was therefore not surprising that some families deliberately invented an explanation for a suicide other than giving the one which they regarded as disgraceful. Many victims were simply reported as mad.

There were few instances of men committing suicide
as a result of family problems. Men were not subjected to the same kind of pressures which confronted women in the family. After all, they realized that their families' survival was contingent upon their own. In this light, economic pressures were perhaps the only form of family problem which might force some men to commit suicide. Typically, the victims were those who were utterly impoverished or merchants who had gone bankrupt. Their common feeling was that they had failed to support their families, and this feeling of inadequacy drove them to desperate measures. Many of them chose a place far away from home -- such as the room of an inn -- and killed themselves. They did not wish to add to the family's misery. In this context, many women committed suicide after their husbands' death on account of having lost their economic support.

In traditional China, a suicide was interpreted as a matter of moral concern to both the victim and the persons around him. Thus, to kill oneself could be an expression of either righteousness or guilt. So some victims were praised while others were condemned after death. For example, some ministers -- such as Ch'ü Yüan -- who committed suicide rather than served another dynasty were commended for their loyalty. Emperors -- such as Emperor Ch'ung-chen of Ming -- who committed suicide when rebel forces threatened to take over the dynasty were regarded to have admitted their guilt of misrule.

On a more popular level, when a person felt grave injustice with no course for redress, he might commit suicide. By doing so, a person's innocence would be vindicated and
the act would hopefully invite legal intervention. The ultimate aim was to cause embarrassment to the victim's "enemy" and perhaps to subject him to moral criticism. Some persons committed suicide when they felt that their misdemeanour or crime had ruined the reputation of their relatives and friends besides their own. The suicide was therefore an act of redeeming their sin.

In the context of Heaven being the only arbiter of Man's fate, it was a fundamental precept of traditional Chinese law that no person on earth had the right to kill another one. The only exception was the emperor, who was Heaven's representative on earth. And with Heaven's vindictive yet just attribute, he must take precaution against unnecessary and wrongful executions. While it was accepted that a murderer deserved to die (sha-jen-che su)

殺人者死), the emperor would only approve a death sentence after deliberating over the serious nature of the crime. Disloyal ministers, traitors, murderous bandits were summarily executed; but there was a fine distinction between premeditated murder and manslaughter. Occasionally, culprits of the lesser offence were imprisoned or exiled.

That people killed each other was taken as a sign of political disorder, social breakdown and moral collapse in traditional China. Thus, many cases of homicide were related to the inability of the family and moral systems to contain unwarranted aggression. Indeed, the kind of conflicts which were typical of the Chinese family system could lead to violent solutions. When the situation was deemed intolerable, some wives would murder their oppressive
husbands or the concubines who had won their husbands' affection. In this context, the culprits of those killings who were deemed to have challenged the family and moral stability were punished most severely. While the law made some allowances for the temperament of the people, it frequently imposed the strictest sentence on a homicide case which occurred in a family. Junior members of the family could be executed even though they had only accidentally injured or killed the elders. On the contrary, parents who were found to have caused their children's death might be treated leniently if they could prove that they had accidentally killed them while disciplining the victims.

Persons who were accused of homicide were viewed with suspicion. Their moral integrity was cast in doubt. As a matter of fact, many people tried to kill others in order to prevent revelation of their misdeeds or crimes. In some cases, it was the fear of moral condemnation, rather than legal prosecution, which forced them to kill those persons who knew their secrets. For example, many people who had committed adultery were sometimes forced to murder likely informers. Victims of a homicide case were also sometimes viewed with apprehension. It was suspected that they brought about their own death by having done their murderer a gross injustice. As an adage suggested, the death of such an immoral character was not enough to expiate all his crimes -- *szu yu y"l-ku* 眼有餘辜 . Investigations of revenge killing often disclosed that both the murderer and his victim had done each other some wrong.

An important traditional attitude was that a homicide
was sometimes morally justifiable. When some persons believed that they were being denied a fair judgement, they would take it upon themselves to redress justice. This moral sense of justice could lead to violence against the real wrong-doer. There were many examples of gentry members and local magistrates delivering partisan views on a local conflict. Invariably, the aggrieved party considered that they were being oppressed to an unbearable extent. Significantly, when these oppressed persons killed their victims, they often justified the act in the name of Heaven -- *t'i T'ien hsing-tao* 天行道. After all, the ultimate moral judge was Heaven.

An exaggerated sense of moral justice influenced the decision of some murderers. In traditional China, the killing of a person was sometimes expected and demanded according to the principle of "a tooth for a tooth". In retaliation for a murder, the practice was to seek out the murderer and kill him. However, this was sometimes not possible. The culprit might have hidden away or died of a natural cause before his pursuers caught up with him. Consequently, one of his relatives or friends might be murdered in his place. This was based on the notion of collective responsibility. Moreover, in some instances, it gave the avenger the satisfaction of "repaying" the culprit with a sense of loss.

*Attitudes towards Suicide in Modern Chinese Cities*

In the 1920s, there was increasing concern with suicide as a social problem. After 1928, the Chinese government
ordered all provincial Bureaux of Public Safety to compile and submit statistics on suicide. In some newspaper articles, it was pointed out that to commit suicide was a foolish and rash decision. Significantly, it was asserted that most of the victims were youths and intellectuals. In this context, they were the people who were most inclined to be emotive about and intolerant of the present society. Indeed, these suicides were regarded as anti-social acts and they would set a bad example to individuals.

Such criticism was indicative of the contemporary Chinese social milieu. Chinese people of the three cities were still influenced by family and moral values which emphasized an individual's responsibility and obedience to the larger and superior entity of society. Many of them felt that they were being denied equality and justice by the rigid hierarchical family and moral systems. The failure of institutional and legal support for individual rights aggravated the feeling. Therefore, suicide became the radical solution to family and moral problems.

Family Problems

In the 1920s, the family continued to be the centre of social activities for an individual living in the Chinese cities. And a stable and harmonious family was strongly valued by the Chinese. In subscribing to this ideal, each member within the family was expected and required to play a specific role and to accept a particular position in the hierarchy. Obviously, equality amongst the individuals and between the sexes did not form the integral parts of Chinese
family philosophy and training. Generally speaking, the men had superior roles compared to the women. The elders in the family commanded the respect as well as demanded absolute obedience from junior members. The rigid family structure gave rise to three major forms of pressure, which had considerable bearing on the nature and rate of suicide.

The first of these constant complaints was over sex inequality. The newspaper reports of Shanghai and Tientsin gave an impression that family problem accounted for the largest number of suicide; and the fact that many of these involved women was a fair indication of the plight of women in modern Chinese cities. According to the letter of the law, a woman was supposedly an independent person: she had free choice over marriage and divorce, and freedom of vocation. She was also to lead her own life and to have her own opinions. To many of them, these were wild promises. In Tientsin, Fan Fu-kuei's wife was permitted to work outside because of the economic needs of the family. However, she was constantly criticized by her mother-in-law for dressing-up. In fact, she was frequently faulted on one pretext or another. Her husband did not say anything for her. When a male friend came to visit her, she was accused of having an affair with him and was beaten up. She committed suicide instead of trying to prove her innocence. In this case, that the woman was allowed to work was neither an established privilege nor a sign of equality. She was still expected to behave according to the family's requirements and to accept its interpretation of her conduct.
A woman was not expected to remonstrate with other members of the family. There was still a strong bias against those women who attempted to vindicate their position by arguing with their parents-in-law, husbands, or even other in-laws. They would be regarded as garrulous and would get little sympathy. Some of them committed suicide after quarrelling with their family members because they realized that they had opened themselves to criticism. Others committed suicide because they were too inhibited to state their views even though it could be proved that they were right.

In fact, women were not allowed to air their grievances and dissatisfactions, especially over emotional problems, too openly and actively. For example, in Shanghai, a woman suspected that her husband had another woman outside when he failed to give her some money. She became jealous. But instead of finding out the truth, she committed suicide. This case was typical of many similar ones in which the wives committed suicide when they felt neglected by their husbands, who left them for another woman. Yet they tried not to show any sign of jealousy and, to some of them, a divorce was unthinkable.

On the surface, it appeared that many women committed suicide for apparently flimsy reasons, such as being reprimanded by their husbands or parents-in-law for very minor mistakes. In one of such cases, the wife of Hsu Ping-chih was scolded by her mother-in-law for serving dinner late. Her husband did not intervene on her behalf. Feeling upset, she committed suicide. This
case illustrated a typical mother-in-law to daughter-in-law relationship. The daughter-in-law was expected to put up with her mother-in-law's supercilious attitude. After all, the older woman had once been subjected to the same treatment by her own mother-in-law. Many people would perhaps regard the suicide as an over-exaggerated response. Her husband's silence would be viewed as the "correct" behaviour of a filial son.

Actually, a woman's position in the family was still very weak and much abused. Indeed, during her life time, a woman had many bitter experiences with some imperious, insulting and unreasonable members of the family. She needed to summon all her virtues -- of filial piety, docility, forebearance, and generosity -- to make living within the family tolerable. In this context, a suicide assumed the psychological significance of a personal act to escape from the oppressive family and to protest against its irrationalities. Whether it was by swallowing poison, hanging or drowning, suicide for this reason invariably took place in the family's house or in its vicinity. This was a symbolic act to identify the cause of the suicide. In Tientsin, a woman was continuously ill-treated by her jealous and spiteful sister-in-law, especially after she became a widow. When she was driven out of the house a second time (the first time the family's relatives intervened on her behalf), the woman drowned herself and her son in the river nearby. Consequently, her family sued the sister-in-law. In its petition, it emphasized that the victim had always been praised by her parents-in-law and neighbours as a
This case was typical of the conflict between sisters-in-law. It also showed the lowly family position which befell a widow. The victim displayed extreme patience and probably respect towards her sister-in-law. Moreover, she chose to remain with her husband's family after his death though she might ask to leave it. Indeed, her virtues were emphasized by her own family, which partly avenged her death by bringing a lawsuit against the sister-in-law. In the light of seeing the husband's family as responsible for her death, the act of bringing her son to death had special meaning. It would be denied an heir as its punishment.

By virtue of the unequal attitude towards sex, men enjoyed comparatively superior positions in the family, but this did not mean that they were not confronted with particular family problems. Precisely because they assumed a central position in the family, they were burdened with a concern for the stability and continuity of the family. In Shanghai, Liu Szu-ken committed suicide for having no heir. In this case, the victim realized that he had failed in his most important sex role: he did not become the father to a line of male descendants.

The self-esteem also provided the men in the family with a sense of unassailable authority and righteousness. This attitude explained why some men committed suicide after quarrelling with their wives or concubines. They were suffering from a bruised male ego. The fact that there were domestic quibbles could be easily interpreted as the men's failure to control their families.
In the 1920s, there seemed to be some institutional changes on sex inequality. In some instances, an attempt to commit suicide would incur official interest in the woman's fate. Members of the family were sometimes warned to treat the victim better after she recovered. 20

However, the legislative change of woman status without a concrete institutional provision for independence and a corresponding shift in sex attitude created a set of new problems. For example, prostitution gradually came under government control in the three cities, but at the same time there was an increasing number of suicides amongst unlicensed prostitutes. 21 These women were facing a hopeless future. The various Women's Association in Shanghai and Tientsin, and the Po Leung Kuk in Hong Kong were charity organizations which were set up to take care of and "rehabilitate" some of these women. Unfortunately, they lacked government fundings and social recognition. Indeed, women who were "released" from these institutions were marked as those with a dubious background. They were not easily re-integrated into society.

The newspaper reports also gave an impression of a great number of suicides amongst maid-servants and t'ung-yang-hsi. Undoubtedly, there were legislations (such as in Hong Kong) against the ill-treating or keeping of maid-servants. That many of them committed suicide to escape their fate was an indication of the practices being continued and the laws being ignored. In fact, the institutional approval for adopting child-brides contributed to the tragedy. Some child-brides were treated as domestic servants and subjected to the same abuse.
A second source of problem arising from the rigid family structure was its emphasis on a set of hierarchical relationships. The principle was that every member of the family must conduct himself/herself in accordance with his/her position within the hierarchy. As such, most of the time it was the junior members who felt the greatest pressure emanating from family relationship. In the 1920s, proverbial cases of passive sons committing suicide after being scolded by their authoritative fathers were still plenty. Similarly, there were many cases of concubines committing suicide because they were ill-treated by the wives. They were the victims of the belief in sustaining the difference between a wife and a concubine in the family.

While they might have the correct view on a particular issue, junior members who quarrelled with their seniors were readily condemned as constituting a threat to the sanctity of family authority. This was a serious accusation and led to many suicides. As a corollary, many senior members of the family were particularly sensitive to all sorts of family conflict. They realized that these would affect other people's assessment of their ability to lead the family. In Tientsin, Wang Kuei-lin felt that his younger brother was unreasonable in asking for some money. However, any attempt by him to refuse, and therefore to assert authority over his brother, was compromised by the fact that his mother did not display an active support for his decision. Caught in an embarrassing position, he committed suicide. In this case, the victim felt that his brother's continuous pester him with request for money might lead to a family
scandal. However, he was not fully empowered and supported to stop this from happening. After all, he might be accused of violating his mother's wish, which was to give the younger brother some money.

Some parents and parents-in-law committed suicide after a quarrel with junior members of the family. They were perturbed by the challenge, and some cases were actually of them being ill-treated. In Tientsin, Ma Kuei-shan complained that his eldest daughter-in-law was a shrew. She ill-treated Ma, and forced both his second son and daughter-in-law to go away. Subsequently, his second son died in Peking. Confronted by his second daughter-in-law's family which asked for the return of the woman, Ma felt hopeless and tried to drown himself and his grandson.

In this case, the victim believed that his family was broken up by a woman. Her domestic behaviour challenged both his and his son's authority. Ironically, he was still recognized as the responsible head of the family, and this increased the painful experience.

Elders who committed suicide were also trying to seek a psychological triumph over disobedient children. That many comments were sympathetic probably proved that these suicides were not worthless. When the wife of a former Ch'ing official committed suicide, the newspaper report revealed that she was forced to make the decision after quarrelling with the son of the official's concubine. He criticized her for making daily prayers to the Buddha. The report categorically condemned his behaviour as unfilial and thoroughly disgusting.
Significantly, contemporary institutional agencies were inclined to support a rigid family hierarchy. This attitude helped to perpetuate the various kinds of family pressure on junior members while encouraging older members to solicit outside judgement and intervention. In the former case, a suicide was a relief and a protest; in the latter case, a suicide was a deliberate act to force the issue. Take for example, in Shanghai, a concubine tried to commit suicide after being ill-treated by her husband's wife. She failed to do so, and was brought before a judge. While not sued for suicide, she was reprimanded for taking life so lightly. There was no attempt to remedy the cause of her trouble. In another case, an elderly woman was rescued when she tried to kill herself. The judge learnt that she was troubled by family matters, so he advised members of her family to treat her better.

The desire to show an ascription to proper behaviour was the third family characteristic which influenced the trend of suicides. When a person believed that he had failed in performing his role in the family, he might be prompted to commit suicide. One typical case was the anxiety to be regarded as a filial child. In one example, Li Hung-kuei hanged himself because he was too poor to support his mother. The victim apparently would be forgiven by his mother, but he was too self-conscious of his failure as a son. In many instances, the failure to subscribe to a certain mode of behaviour within the family was regarded as deliberate. Some persons committed suicide consequent upon the revelation of such negligence because
they feared the punishments which might follow. In one case, a man drowned himself when he learnt that his mother was going to hand him over to the police. She would sue him for his unfilial conduct. 32

It must however be understood that the concern with a proper family role was relative. Thus, elders were in fact demanded to play their family roles even more carefully than the juniors. Some of them committed suicide when they realized that they had failed in this. In Shanghai, Li Chiu-lin 莉九林 tracked down the man who seduced his elder daughter. He refused to accept the man's proposal to marry her daughter, but tried to suppress information on the incident. When his wife and younger daughter tried to settle the issue with the man, the whole scandal was revealed. Li committed suicide. 33 In this case, the victim was bothered by several things. He might be criticized as an incompetent father who failed to educate his elder daughter, to control the aggressive behaviour of the women in the family, and to protect the family's name.

Male members of the family were especially susceptible to the pressure of maintaining the family's good stature. If anything should happen which might tarnish the family's honour, they felt themselves being responsible, and some of them committed suicide. In this context, the act was an admission of inadequacy as well as a symbolic gesture to redeem his errors. Ma Jung 馬榮, an official in Peking's ministry of agriculture, had arranged for his son to get married. However, his son refused to return from France where he was studying and, in fact, married a girl there.
The family of his son's intended wife openly made a complaint. In the process, it was revealed that Ma had gone bankrupt. Ma committed suicide as a result of the revelation. In this case, the victim was considered as responsible for his son's breaking of a marriage promise. Moreover, the fact that his son married overseas without his approval was not only a challenge to his authority, but, according to conventional view, a family scandal. His bankruptcy added to doubts about his ability to sustain the family.

In some cases, even when there was no legal attempt to implicate a parent in the dishonourable behaviour of his children, he somehow forced himself to believe that he was involved. In Tientsin, Chou Chin-ch'ān had legally absolved himself from all responsibilities for his son. However, he was constantly pestered by his son's debtors. Chou eventually committed suicide because he was afraid that his son might bring him more troubles. In the light of this example, many suicides were in fact an attempt to coerce disrespectful members of the family to behave. In Hong Kong, Hou Chin committed suicide when she failed to advise her son not to keep on womanizing, gambling, drinking and smoking. To a certain extent, junior members of the family were also apt to employ this "method" in order to force their seniors to listen to them. This attitude towards suicide resembled the traditional idea of szu-chien (remonstrance by death), which was staged by a filial son against an unreasonable father or a loyal minister against a tyrannical emperor.
Economic Problems

The 1920s was a decade of political difficulties, some of which were outside the control of the three cities. Precisely because the three cities were the nodal points of modern Chinese politics, they were subject to the political vagaries of the times -- warlordism, anti-imperialism, communism. Under the circumstances, their apparent prosperity and growth were not easily sustained. Thus, the modern urban economy proved illusory to those people who believed that the cities provided ample opportunities for economic gains. There were many cases of destituted persons who were driven to suicide by impoverishment and unemployment. That most suicides took place around the time of the Chinese New Year was an indication that most people had a fairly traditional outlook towards their economic position. At this time of the year, they must have some money to enjoy the festivities with their families.

The highly competitive and opportunistic economic environment of the city aggravated some of these problems. For example, the process of industrialization displaced a fair number of manual workers -- such as artisans and craftsmen -- and cast them into great despair. Significantly, the decline of the kung-so (trade councils) coincided with this development and any institutional aid for these persons was found lacking. Many of them committed suicide. At the same time, the commercial sector of the urban economy also created some problems. It continuously weeded out people who were less competitive. Troubled by a sense of failure and without the adequate
resource to start afresh, many of these people committed suicide. 38

Economic suicides were basically an expression of helplessness and hopelessness. This form of relief from dire poverty acquired special significance in Chinese society. The Chinese social philosophy was such that an individual played a subordinate role in the social system. There were few alternatives for a person but to accept practically all social changes as natural and irreversible happenings. Thus, suicide was a kind of escape when it was discovered that all actions proved futile against the overwhelming social adversity. The pinch of helpless and hopeless feeling was especially severe in the impersonal urban environment. A person was likely to be an anonymous individual with lesser family and communal support. In this light, economic suicides in the three cities could be interpreted as "family" problems. They indicated that many people still clung on conservatively to an economic relationship with close-knit family-type institutions. Yet the new institutions, which were being set up in the cities, did not necessarily provide the anticipated personal aid and support.

Chinese men still considered themselves to be the economic force of the family and society. They were under the greatest pressure to provide for the family. Many who failed to do so committed suicide. In Shanghai, Hsü Chin-mei and his eldest son were both out of work. As a result, the entire family's livelihood depended on the meagre income of the younger son. The two unemployed men
committed suicide. In this case, the victims recognized that they had failed in their economic responsibility to the family, and they tried to lift the burden off the younger son by killing themselves. Indeed, some people believed that only the men were able to give economic support for the family. In an investigation of a suicide, it was found that a man killed himself after having buried all his children alive. This tragedy was the result of the victim's assumption that after his death his children would have no chance to survive.

A parallel development of this male-oriented economic attitude was to commit the women to depending on the men for their economic well-being. Consequently, many women committed suicide when they believed that they would no longer be provided for. In Shanghai, a woman tried to kill herself when her husband deserted her. She said that she was given no other economic choice. In another case, a woman committed suicide after her husband was unemployed for a long time. In both cases, the victims had adopted a solely passive response to an economic problem. Obviously, it did not occur to them that they might help themselves by trying to find a job. In the second example, the woman was probably trying to reduce her husband's burden by the suicide. Indeed, the women's utter reliance on the men's economic support was indicated by a great number of suicides which involved a woman killing herself after her husband had died. In Hong Kong, a young woman tried to drown herself. When rescued, she said that she committed suicide because her husband had just died. There were
also cases of a man and his wife committing suicide together in order to escape from the economic pressure. These could be more easily explained in terms of the psychology of economic dependence than the emotional urge to die together.

In the three cities, there were many people who committed suicide because they had been without a job for a long time or had contracted a disease -- such as deafness or blindness -- which prevented them from seeking a job. Understandably, these were not economic problems typical of the city. However, these suicides had certain characteristics which showed the tendency towards family support in the city.

Characteristically, many suicides for economic reasons took place away from the victim's home, such as in a hotel-room. One explanation is that few of them wanted to cause further embarrassment to the family, having already been an economic failure. Another is that these victims were forced to die away from home and in anonymity because they were alone in the large expansive city. Ma Chiu travelled from Canton to Hong Kong, and was expected to join his brother in Singapore. However, he was cheated of his travel expenses. Penniless and knowing no one in Hong Kong, Ma committed suicide.

Indeed, an impression which is formed after reading the newspapers is that many victims of economic suicide were from outside Shanghai and Hong Kong. Shanghai as the most important economic city definitely had its attraction to the outside population. That Hong Kong was situated
near Canton and was relatively free of the political turmoils of South China were the economic factors which influenced the decision of many people -- especially the Cantonese -- to seek job and refuge in the Colony. These groups of inspired immigrants to the cities might be disappointed. Some failed to find a much-needed job and others did not make contact with friends or relatives, on whom they relied to extend initial help. Feeling helpless and hopeless, they committed suicide. 46

Many of these victims were already quite poor when they travelled to the cities. So when their expectations were further unfulfilled, they could not afford to go back. In Tientsin, Wang Hsü-tung was a former soldier of the Chihli clique. When the warlords were defeated, he moved to Tientsin and tried to make a living as a shop-keeper. He did not do well and was sometimes criticized by his wife for his failure. Succumbing to the pressures, he committed suicide. 47 In this case, the victim obviously had no chance of recovering his former glory and his sense of failure was compounded by his wife's constant bickering.

Psychologically, many victims were wary of the consequence of travelling back home. They were probably too ashamed to face their families. In Hong Kong, Ch'iu Chih-fang from Ningpo was a government official in Canton. When there was a change in government in Kwangtung, he was forced to resign. Instead of returning to Ningpo, he travelled to Hong Kong and tried to re-establish himself. He failed to do so and committed suicide. His
last wish was to have his body sent back to Ningpo. In this case, the victim was too wary of his failure. His family probably contributed to the additional pressure on him by showing great expectation in his achievements. His death-wish was a symbolization of his intimate relationship with his family.

In this light, the lack of family and institutional support for an individual confronting economic problems in the city could account for a person's decision to die by his own hands. Ostensibly, the various traditional communal organizations -- such as t'ung-hsiang hui -- which were also set up in the cities would provide economic and emotional support for these despondant individuals. To certain extent, even the official policy was to rely on this institutional support to alleviate some of the economic problems. In Shanghai, after learning about the economic reason of Wang San-mao and of Ts'ai Pi-yu for committing suicide, the authorities sent them to the Anhwei and the Ch'ao-chou hui-kuan respectively.

However, by the 1920s, these institutions were gradually displaced by newer urban institutions -- such as the various chih-liang so (poor-houses) -- which purported to take care of social problems in the city. These new developments could only deal with the problems on a temporary and impersonal basis, and they did not receive popular and government support. After all, there was a tendency to re-create a sense of identity within a particular community with limited membership. For example, chambers of commerce were invariably associated with wealthy elitist
merchants. The government, in fact, tried to limit the influence of these organizations.\(^5\)

**Moral Problems**

Morality was a powerful agent of social control in China. Operating on the people's sense of shame and guilt, it ensured that each person played one's expected social role. One should try to avoid being labelled as an immoral person, and any sort of misdemeanour or crime would threaten to destroy a person's good name as a result of moral censure or legal punishment. Moreover, as part of the syndrome of collective responsibility, a person's relatives and friends could also be implicated. In this context, a personal concern with the higher moral expectation of society formed a sort of pressure on most individuals. Some suicides were thus a result of succumbing to this pressure.

Many individuals were influenced by the society's view of their moral stature. An unfavourable impression thus became an important factor behind some suicides. In Shanghai, Hsü A-ch'iao had taken vows of celibacy. However, she was discovered to have secretly cohabited with a man when she reported to the police that she had her savings stolen. Actually, she was swindled by her lover. When the truth surfaced, she committed suicide.\(^5\) In this case, the victim realized that the revelation would discredit her as a chaste woman. This was more important than the loss of money.

As a personal decision requesting social recognition,
a suicide was sometimes a statement of a person's moral rectitude. As such, it gave two kinds of message. Firstly, a suicide was an honorable act to affirm a person's virtues and high moral principles. For example, in traditional China, many women committed suicide after their husbands' death in order to demonstrate their loyalty to the men. In the 1920s, the practice of *husn-fu* (to be buried with one's husband) was still being adopted. In Shanghai, a woman declared that she intended to commit suicide because her husband had recently died. Her relatives tried to dissuade her. However, after observing the traditionally required period of mourning (for 100 days), the woman swallowed poison. A memorial service was held for her, and she was praised for her chastity. Indeed, people were sometimes expected to commit suicide for a cause which was greater than personal concern. During the 1932 crisis in Shanghai, many young men committed suicide after leaving messages which invariably suggested that the act was an expression of loyalty to China and a denial of alien control. Again, these patriotic sentiments was fairly traditional.

Secondly, a suicide was a desperate attempt to correct some misguided views of a person's moral behaviour. The victim felt that these views were insulting and intolerable. Significantly, many of the suicides involved women. The rigid moral code of society still confined them to be paragons of virtues; and they were easily accused of immoral conduct on account of a slight indecorum. Some of these accusations could seriously affect the women's moral
position, yet they had few resources to protect it. In Shanghai, a woman was falsely accused by her husband and mother-in-law of adultery. As a kind of silent protest, she cut off a length of her hair and then drowned herself.\textsuperscript{54} In traditional China, a woman took great care over her hair, which she cherished as a symbol of chastity. If she deliberately cut it off, she was suggesting that someone had cast doubt on her chastity. In the cited example, the victim obviously believed that the symbolic act was not enough to vindicate her innocence. Thus, she killed herself as an ultimate solution.

Moreover, some of these suicides were also an act of retaliation. The victim hoped to arouse sufficient interest and sympathy so that the false charge was cleared and the accuser had to face the consequence of moral, and possibly legal, sanction. The victim thus gained moral and/or legal justice. For example, the daughter of a former Ch'ing official was falsely accused of theft. To show her innocence, she committed suicide by slashing her throat. After her death, her family sued the accuser.\textsuperscript{55} In this case, the woman's decision to commit suicide was probably due to the pressure on her to protect the name of a good family. Indeed, her family accepted the correctness of her act by taking out a lawsuit against her accuser. The way she chose to die was also significant. She would die from a tremendous loss of blood, and it was believed that such a violent death would transform the victim into a frightful ghost. As a ghost, the victim could haunt the accuser for revenge.
In the three cities, many persons committed suicide when their crimes were exposed. Such an act was not only prompted by a fear of legal punishment, but was sometimes due to an even greater fear of moral censure. The pressure was real in the light of the society's tendency to see crimes as immoral behaviour. In Tientsin, Sun Wei-wu, manager of an emporium which was closed down due to bankruptcy, committed suicide before the court's hearing on his role in the bankruptcy. He had been repeatedly called a fraud by the unsympathetic press. In this case, the victim succumbed to the pressure of moral accusation. While he might have been associated with the failure of the business in some ways, the court had yet to rule on his crime of mismanagement. He killed himself because he was wary of the moral consequence which would befall him once he was proven guilty.

Indeed, a suicide was sometimes taken as an admission of guilt, especially over moral crimes. A typical case was after the discovery of adultery. In Shanghai, Liu Hsi-kuei called upon a witness to show that his wife committed suicide after she was discovered to have an extra-marital affair. In this case, the victim's husband tried to show that the decision to commit suicide was voluntary and was attributed to the woman's guilty feeling. In this light, a suicide was a way to redeem one's past errors. This sense of culpability sometimes formed a kind of pressure on those people who were not actually responsible for certain crimes. They believed that their error in judgement or miscarried responsibility had given
a chance for the crime to happen. Liang Hui-ch'ing was placed in charge of a shop. When someone whom he had hired made a mistake and incurred a loss to the business, Liang hanged himself. He died facing the wall. The news report on this suicide commented that he felt too ashamed to face the owner of the shop. This case can be interpreted as the result of pressure on a person who believed that he had betrayed somebody's trust in him.

The influence of moral stigmatization affected not only the culprits, but also their relatives and friends. When it was discovered that a member of the family had committed a misdemeanour or a crime, other members felt humiliated, implicated and responsible. It was therefore not surprising that some of them committed suicide when they could not stand up to the pressure. In this context, a suicide by a criminal could mean an attempt to prevent moral pressure falling on other members of his community.

An indication that an individual was accountable to a higher moral order for his conduct was the deliberate attempt to hide the real cause of suicide. It was believed that many people besides the victim would suffer from the adverse moral effect. Yeh Ping-hsiung's wife committed suicide when she was blackmailed by someone who claimed to have evidence that she had committed adultery. Yeh denied that his wife died under this pressure. According to him, she had always been a virtuous woman. Significantly, he said that the family had no money to be worth blackmailing. In this case, the victim's husband tried to protect the family's name by emphasizing his wife's
innocence. His statement that he had no money to pay the blackmailer was interesting. It might be interpreted that he would pay to cover up the scandal if only he could afford to do so.

In fact, many cases of suicide in the 1920s were subsumed under causes such as "unknown" or "due to mental disorder". After all, the circumstances under which a mad person committed suicide might be suspicious, but this explanation was sometimes preferred to revealing the real causes which could be morally reprehensible. For that matter, in the first half of the 1920s, suicides were rarely reported in the newspapers of Tientsin and Hong Kong. Most reported cases seemed to involve persons who were from a poor social background. It might be suggested that people of better social standing in the three cities were reluctant to have these misfortunes widely publicized. They were susceptible to the pressures of moral implication.

"Love Suicide": Reflections on Modern Attitudes towards Suicide

In the 1920s, there was an increasing number of suicides which involved men and women, either singly or together, killing themselves in order to overcome the pressure of a difficult love relationship. Specifically, the reason was either the objection to a fixed marriage, or the tension of an unhappy marriage, or the disappointment of an unwilling separation of two persons truly in love. In the news reports, these cases were invariably labelled as "love suicide" (wei-oh'ing tsu-sha 爱情自杀). There seemed to be a determination to die for the sake of romantic love,
thereby liberating a person's emotions from family and moral control. In Shanghai, many young couples jumped into Whampoo River at night. In Hong Kong, many leaped into the water from ferry-boats on which they were travelling. As the vessel was in motion, it was difficult to rescue them.

However, these suicides were not considered as an unique development during this period and not assessed in a manner different from other cases. As an act of self-destruction, "love suicide" was regarded as an indication of emotional weakness, and therefore discouraged. Indeed, some deaths of this nature were criticized as worthless. In Shanghai, P'an Lien-shan committed suicide when his fiancee broke off the engagement. She despised his poverty. The comment on this suicide was cynical: the victim had no need to die for a vain woman.

The victim of a "love suicide" was seldom viewed with understanding and sympathy. The perspective of a self-abnegating individual dominated by society was the basis for the general appraisal of this social problem. Such dominance came in two forms.

Firstly, the family still exerted tremendous pressure on a person's love life. Many people committed suicide in order to avoid a fixed marriage. Ostensibly, they succeeded to make their escape and to protest against the family's arbitrariness. However, this was only a negative response. The victims preferred not to resort to legal arbitration, which might give them more freedom. In this light, there were numerous suicides which were the result of the family
forcing together two emotionally incompatible persons. In Tientsin, for example, Ho Yü-ch'in was forced to marry, but she already had someone she loved. Actually, her husband also had his true love. Both of them, however, were too timid to fight against the marriage. They made a secret agreement to keep the marriage in name and to sleep apart. This went on for some time. Finally, when Chang's husband was dying from an incurable disease, Chang committed suicide. This case was typical of those in which two persons sacrificed their emotional want in order to please their families. For this particular woman, her husband's death would only condemn her to further emotional trouble. She probably committed suicide in fear of remaining in widowhood for the rest of her life. It was quite possible that the man's family would expect her to remain a chaste widow. Significantly, it did not appear that the couple had contemplated to overcome this emotional problem by a divorce which, after all, had family implications.

A persisting unequal sex relationship was reflected by this phenomenon of "love suicide". Many women killed themselves after their husbands died, and this time-honoured practice of demonstrating one's loyalty and chastity was invariably praised by the newspapers. In Shanghai, a woman tried to kill herself when a relative attempted to sell her after her husband's death. She was rescued and stressed that she preferred to remain in widowhood. There seemed to be a new dimension to this practice. Some cases were reported to be an expression of a woman's love for the man. In Shanghai, when a woman committed suicide after her
husband died, the newspaper said that the reason was "emotional distress". Indeed, the term used in another case was *hsüan-ch'ing* (to die for love). However, there were few reports on men committing suicide for this particular reason. One explanation was that after his wife died, a man was quite eligible for remarriage, and was not subjected to the pressure of widowhood. In this light, the case of Li Pen of Tientsin was significant. Deeply in love with his wife who was dying from an incurable disease, Li tried to kill himself by swallowing poison. It was reported in the newspaper that this was a rare happening. In fact, Li's elder brother put a notice in the newspaper, stating that Li had not committed suicide out of love for his wife: he did it because of certain family problems. In this case, the victim's family tried to deny that he had died for his wife probably because it was still considered as not a manly thing to do.

The second form of social influence on individual behaviour as reflected in "love suicide" was morality. Many victims chose to die in anonymity and away from home. In many cases, a person rented a hotel-room under a false name, and committed suicide. The desire was to protect personal name and the family's honour. In this context, there was a tendency on the part of relatives and friends of the victim to hide information on the suicide. This was because the details might show a scandalous love-life, which could be embarrassing to the living members of the family. In Shanghai, Chien Ch'ing-man, the son of the owner of Nanyang Tobacco Company (the largest Chinese-owned
tobacco factory in China at that time), was already married. He was driven to suicide by the problems of an illicit love affair. After his death, his family refused to give much details about the suicide. After all, the family had a reputation to protect.71

Many victims of "love suicide" were in fact viewed with suspicion, and their moral integrity was doubted. The report in the newspapers often adopted an unsympathetic tone. In one case, for example, a prostitute wanted to back out of a suicide pact with a man. He forced her to drink poison and then stabbed her. The emphasis of the report was on the woman's background rather than on the man's unreasonable behaviour.72 In this case, the fact that she was a prostitute would create doubt in most people's minds whether she really would kill herself for love.

Even the law took a moralistic interpretation of "love suicide" and tried to discourage it as a harmful fad. In Tientsin, a girl Chin Chi-ts'ung was brought to court by Pai Tsung-wei's family for being responsible for Pai's suicide. During the hearing, it was revealed that Chin had made a suicide pact with Pai, but then backed out of it. Pai, however, jumped to his death. Moreover, she had an affair with another man. In her own defence, Chin said that the pledge to commit "love suicide" was made in jest -- a common-talk amongst young people. She was acquitted, but the attorney-general appealed to the higher court and demanded a second trial.73 In this case, the authorities obviously believed that the girl owed ultimate responsibility for the victim's death. Indeed,
they were probably trying to make an example of the girl, who was deemed to take a suicide too lightly.

In the above short discussion on "love suicide", the passive role of an individual in Chinese society was reaffirmed. Continuous social pressure on a person's emotions led to many suicides. Even in death, a person's emotions were not entirely liberated. "Love suicide" was no more than a passive response to individual emotional problems.

*Attitudes towards Homicide in Modern Chinese Cities*

As a psychological explanation, aggression against another person is the release of personal tension in the context of stimulated response. One of the stimuli is inter-personal conflicts. For example, the congested area of Shanghai -- the Chinese municipality -- had the greatest number of homicide. This was because it manufactured a greater degree of personal frustration (such as over economic difficulties) and hostility amongst the people. In this light, it was not surprising that small disagreements such as over the dumping of rubbish in front of someone's door or the accidental splashing of water on somebody could easily lead to fist-fights and serious injury. The poor living conditions of the surrounding environment contributed a lot of opportunities for these conflicts, and the significant factor was that both the people and the authorities tended to ignore these as petty issues. As a result, constant bickerings helped to build up the tension until it burst out in violence.
In the 1920s, most comments on the trend of increasing violent deaths in China considered it to be an indication of a society in disarray. In one of these comments, with specific reference to homicide, the writer points out that many people died of unnatural causes at a time when political stability and law were both wanting in society.76

Indeed, many cases of homicide -- including manslaughter and murder -- could be the results of social disorganization in an urban area. The proliferation of different sub-cultural communities, each with its own habits and standard of values, in the city increased the potentials for violent confrontation. Bias on the basis of provincial identity could lead to exclusionist activities in matters of actual interests. In Hong Kong, there were frequent reports of pen-ti 他 (local) people quarrelling with Ch'ao-chou (actually also of Kwangtung) people. In most cases, they were conflicts between two groups of rickshawmen.77 Thus, this phenomenon also showed the effect of intense economic competition in a modernizing city.

The competitive economic development easily led to inevitable conflicts. Some homicides were the results of criminal intent to overcome economic hardship. There was an increasing number of armed robberies, and many victims and policemen were killed because they challenged the robbers.78 In some instances, the victims were murdered because they knew the robbers. In Hong Kong, an old woman whose house was robbed was found strangled. Later, the police arrested one of the servants in the house.79 These cases were significant in that individuals -- even those
who were not anonymous to their victims -- seemed not adverse to challenging the stability of the community.

Intense economic competition easily led to personal jealousy and quarrels. Many of these quarrels resulted in fights and killings. In Shanghai, Wang Chien-kuo set up his own tailoring business, and this aroused his former employer's suspicion that Wang was stealing away his customers. In a fit of rage, he stabbed Wang. Moreover, quarrels over money matters became a major cause of violent conflict. One common form was the disagreement over distribution of profits. Another form was the refusing or the defaulting of a loan. All these cases showed that two conflicting economic attitudes were at work. On the one hand, the reality of urban economy established the individual as the pivot of success or failure. On the other, many people still believed that individuals within the community were obliged to help each other. Unfortunately, the charity-like communal organizations were no longer effectively operative so as to provide aid to the less fortunate members of society. Consequently, lack of understanding, sympathy and help could induce these people to harbour murderous feelings against the fortunate ones.

All in all, the promise and the actual need of a more independent individual vis-à-vis Chinese society of the 1920s created many tensions. The failure of the society to provide the changes as well as the opportunities for some individuals to survive in the cities led to many aggressions. Upon analysis, many homicide cases are the result of a sub-conscious recognition of the importance of family and
moral values to an individual.

Family Problems

In the 1920s, while the modern laws tried to de-emphasize the notion and the implementation of status and hierarchy within Chinese family, some tensions which were attributable to family tradition had not altogether disappeared. Many of these typical problems -- such as the conflict between husband and wife, wife and concubine, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law -- represented a forceful attempt to maintain tradition on the one hand and a conscious rejection of the irrationalities on the other. Sometimes, those differences in attitude led to physical confrontation. An individual was subjected to three major kinds of family pressure.

Firstly, the persisting unequal sex relationship helped to build up an enormous amount of pressure between men and women, especially if they were members of the same family. Many men still possessed an attitude of superiority over their wives and concubines. They could not tolerate any sign of disagreement, and they sometimes took physical action to "discipline" dissenting women. Very often, scolding turned into brutality and domestic quarrel resulted in bloodshed. In one case, a man got extremely angry with his wife who argued with him, and he stabbed her. He did not report the stabbing to the police. In this case, the fact that his wife also did not report him would encourage him to persist in his violent display of emotions.

Many men insisted that their wives or concubines
conformed to certain mode of behaviour within the family. If these women failed to subscribe to this view, they regarded it as their prerogatives to mete out punishment. In Shanghai, Chang Shao-ch'ing 張少慶 said that he stabbed his wife because she had abandoned her duties. He lost his temper when he found out that she had sold some household goods and used the money for her own enjoyment. In this case, the woman victim was punished for not taking care of the family's welfare (ch'i-h-chia 特家), and for being extravagant. In many cases, the women victims were in fact attacked as people without virtues. In Shanghai, Ko Ping-fu 葛炳福 and Ni Shu-chin倪書金 stabbed their wives when the latter refused to give them any money. Ko said that his wife was disloyal in not helping him in times of economic difficulties. Ni was more specific. He stated that the victim was his former wife, who left him when he was poor. He called her a disloyal and promiscuous woman. In these cases, the emphasis was on the women's failure to support and stay within the family. Thus, they were criticized and punished for their betrayal of their husbands, who were the head of the family.

In this context, some homicides which occurred in the family were attributed to the women's failure in their responsibilities. It was often argued by the male culprits that the women's deeds had affected the integrity of the family, and this created unsurmountable psychological pressure on them. In other words, the homicide was an expression of dissatisfaction as well as a release of tension. In Shanghai, Shui Ch'ing-an 水慶安 said that his wife's
adultery infuriated him. He became so emotionally disturbed that he tried to drown his two-year-old daughter. In Hong Kong, Feng Pao-yün was prosecuted for trying to drown his son. He defended his act, saying that he was aggrieved by his concubine's adultery and her refusal to return their child. His sick wife refused to intervene. In this case, the man succumbed to the pressures of having an adulterous wife, losing a child, and being an unsupported head of the family. The two women in his family were considered as responsible for his emotional act.

The promise of sex equality was not recognized and fulfilled by men. In some of their acts, they showed that they rarely concerned themselves with the women's feelings or rights. In Hong Kong, Chang Ching-fu killed his wife of many years after they had a quarrel. Chang said that she was being unreasonably jealous about his taking a concubine. In this case, the man expected his wife to accept the fact that he wanted another woman in the family. In another case, it was alleged that a woman was strangled by her estranged husband. She left him after his violent temper had caused her a job. Apparently, what upset the man so much was that after leaving him the woman had many affairs. He felt dishonoured. In this case, the culprit failed to take into account his own problem and the woman's feelings. Actually, he had deserted the woman and his son before the victim made her own decision.

Indeed, many homicides illustrated the unreasonable behaviour of men towards women. They still believed that they had an undisputable control over the women's lives.
In Shanghai, both Chang Yü-hsiu and Ts'ao K'ai-shan were guilty of stabbing their wives when the victims refused to become prostitutes in order to give support to the family.92

There were many jealous husbands who tried to regain their honour and killed their wives in a fit of rage when they discovered that women had committed adultery. Hou Mou-nien stabbed his wife on the mere suspicion that she had committed adultery. He had no concrete proof.93 There were also many cases of enraged husbands trying to kill another man whom they suspected or proved to have committed adultery with their wives.94 In Shanghai, Huang Tsung-o killed a man whom he accused of acting as the go-between in his wife's illicit love affair.95 This was significant because the culprit probably failed to do something about the adulterous couple. Therefore, he showed his wrath at someone whom he regarded to be equally responsible for making him a cuckold. In these cases, there was still the belief that family tradition had empowered individuals to punish unfaithful wives and irresponsible persons who broke up the family. A resort to legal arbitration was neglected.

A man realized that there were certain limitations on his superior role in the family. However, an arbitrary attempt to enforce their decisions could lead to violence. In Shanghai, Ko Ch'eng-jung planned to murder his wife. She refused to let Ko take home a woman with whom he lived outside. In Hong Kong, Lin Hsien-chin disappeared when his wife was found strangled.
The newspaper reported that Lin was rumoured to have killed his wife because of a woman outside. In both these cases, the men realized that they could not forcefully bring home a woman without their wives' permission. In accordance with family tradition, the wife had a say in another woman's acceptability as a concubine. Therefore, these two men probably killed their wives while arguing with them over the issue.

In a contemporary report, it was observed that the great number of homicides which involved a wife poisoning her husband was an indication of the breakdown of family morality. In other words, some women were trying to free themselves from an oppressive family system in which the men dominated the women.

In the 1920s, many women were still suffering from an unequal sex relationship. However, a woman was not expected to take the initiative in expressing her emotional discontent. Such an expectation created enormous pressure on the individual woman. Many unhappy marriages led to the wives committing adultery. As a psychological urge to keep her new-found freedom, many women plotted with their illicit lovers to kill their husbands. Significantly, many newspaper reports on homicide of this nature invariably labelled the murderess as "adulterous", "wanton", "immoral". There was no attempt to understand the specific motives of the women. This attitude indicated the persistent belief in a woman's secondary role in the family.

Many women tended to tolerate some situations in which they were exploited and abused because they did not
question their inferior roles. The hallowed family tradition created many tensions which might ultimately lead to violence. For a woman, marrying into a family and being rejected by its female members either out of spite or jealousy was a trying experience. In Tientsin, K'ang Hung-tsaо 廖鴻藻 was accused by her sister-in-law as a thief. In fact, K'ang's actual mistake was to make use of some household goods without mentioning it. When other members of the family remained non-committal, she felt maligned, poisoned the entire family, and then committed suicide. This tragedy was typical amongst bickering sisters-in-law. In this case, the woman was the victim of a family which was more prepared to accept the words of its own member rather than of someone from outside. The fact that her forgetfulness was exaggerated as a crime was an indication that a woman's behaviour was under strict surveillance by the family.

The continued practice of concubinage not only aroused jealousy amongst some women, but also produced conflicts over status within the family hierarchy. In Shanghai, Wang Pu-lou's 王步樓 concubine poisoned the eldest son by the first wife. She had a quarrel with the wife. In this case, the first wife had probably tried to assert her authority over the concubine by emphasizing that she was the mother of the heir. Thus, the concubine's act was more than a revenge: it removed the wife's leverage against her.

There were limited social, moral and legal options open to a woman who wished to disengage herself from an
unhappy relationship. As the psychological pressure mounted, she might find herself committed to murder as a real means to liberate herself. A divorce was frowned upon, especially if it was initiated by the woman. Unless her late husband's family agreed to (and arranged for) a remarriage, a woman was expected to remain in widowhood. In Shanghai, a widow secretly kept a lover and had him employed in her late husband's shop. He started to behave as if he was the owner, and the woman's relatives forced him to go away. The two of them kept on seeing each other, using her son as the go-between. The unwary child accidentally talked about the affair, and she plotted to kill him. According to her, part of the reason was to forestall the revelation; and the other part was to take control of the family fortunes. 101 In this case, the woman was concerned that her unchaste behaviour would bring about her expulsion from the family, on which she relied for economic support. Therefore, she tried to prevent her son from testifying against her unwomanly conduct. Moreover, his death would make her the rightful heiress to the family fortunes.

The second strong family influence on individual behaviour was the yearning to keep the family's integrity. In this context, individuals were organized in a hierarchy and each was expected to conform to his/her assigned role within the family. With every effort being made to present a facade of a harmonious family, many persons felt that they were unreasonably treated by the rigid family system. Indeed, constant bickerings between members of the same
family helped to build up tension. As a result, pent-up emotions could ultimately give way to violent responses. In Tientsin, Wang Ch'üan stabbed his elder brother and his wife after having a quarrel with them. Similarly, in Hong Kong, Chang Huo-sheng stabbed his elder brother when the latter forbade him to go to Canton. In these two cases, the homicide victims were probably assaulted because they over-exerted their authority on the junior members of the family.

As a corollary, the family or the kinship system represented the higher authority and judge of individual conduct. Any deviance was therefore considered to be punishable, sometimes by physical means. In Shanghai, T'ang Jung-chih showed that he was too timid to discipline his wife, who was regarded by his relatives and friends as a shrew and a wanton woman. When she boldly invited a man to live in the same house, T'ang's nephew planned her death. In this case, the woman had disgraced everyone in the family by her intolerable behaviour. Therefore, the nephew tried to remove the blemish on the family's honour. He did this on behalf of the husband who failed to exercise his prerogatives.

Individuals were sometimes subjected to the pressure of moral responsibility to the family. In Tientsin, Ch'ang T'ai-jui was removed from his position when his employer found out that he was in love with a prostitute. Impoverished, yet dreading to return home in the countryside, he killed his lover and then committed suicide. In this case, the man was on the one hand desperate to keep his
lover, but on the other he felt ashamed of being forced to return home because he had lost his job for being with a woman of dubious character. The resultant tension drove him to this double expression of despair. The homicide was a symbolic act of keeping the woman to the exclusion of further moral pressure from the family.

The third element of control of the family over the individual was its economic strength. The family was still considered by many people to be the economic unit of society. Therefore, individuals in the family were expected to play different economic roles. In one case, a woman suspected that her daughter-in-law of trying to stop her son from supporting her. After attempting to kill her daughter-in-law, she committed suicide. In this case, the culprit believed that she must punish the victim for not letting his son play the role of a filial son.

The rigid family structure led to many conflicts over distribution of wealth. The philosophy of male dominance and the hierarchy of status were attacked by some persons as unfair, and the ensuing quarrels could lead to violent physical actions. In Shanghai, Chang Ch'ing-hsiang 張慶祥 and his mother hired a professional killer, who was his maternal uncle, to murder his eldest and second brother by the first wife. His mother was the concubine. In this case, the man behind the murder expressed a wish to become the sole and rightful heir to the family fortunes. As a concubine's child, he would only receive a small inheritance. In this light, some parents attempted to forestall domestic quarrels by dividing up the family estate.
in an ostensibly fair manner before their death. However, conflicts still took place in the family, and this illustrated some people's adherence to family tradition. In Shanghai, Ku Pao-ken was the eldest son in the family. His father had already given him his share of inheritance. He did not try to hold on to a job, but instead spent all his money. When his father refused to give him any more money, Ku tried to shoot him. His father did not report the matter to the police. In this case, the culprit was probably encouraged in what he did by the notion that he was the eldest son. His father's inaction seemed to be an affirmation of his privileged position in the family.

Fundamentally, according to the ideal arrangement, individuals were required to extend economic help to other members within the same family. In Shanghai, Wang Teh-liang was sued for his attempt to kill his father-in-law's youngest son. He said that he was angry at his father-in-law who refused to give him the much needed help. Wang was especially upset by the fact that his father had once unconditionally extended his father-in-law some help. In this case, the man tried to justify his homicidal act by accusing the victim's father of not reciprocating his obligations. Moreover, he tried to make the man suffer the loss of a son, just as his own financial failure would make his own father suffer.

Indeed, some people were killed because they were judged to have miscarried their responsibility to other family members. In Hong Kong, Ch'en Lin-fu shot
his uncle and nephew. When Ch'en's father died, the victims were allegedly asked to take care of Ch'en's financial well-being. He accused them of misappropriating his funds. ¹⁰⁹

In the 1920s, the law's tendency to acknowledge and to support family values confined individuals to family pressure. Sometimes, the law's refusal to intervene on behalf of an individual and request for a family to solve its own problems created and maintained much tension amongst family members. In Hong Kong, Ch'en Chin-ts'ai 陳金彩 tried to poison her husband's first wife; Hsü Ch'i 徐壹 tried to throw corrosive fluid in the face of her husband's concubine. Significantly, the culprits and their victims had many quarrels before the incident happened, and were sent before the Secretariat for Chinese Affairs. ¹¹⁰ However, the institution had not and could not put an end to the bickerings. As a result of its lack of authority, personal tension built up to an intolerable extent.

Specific law and legal judgement on homicide which happened in the family were supportive of family stability and integrity. Article 272 of the Civil Code, which was practised in Shanghai and Tientsin, categorically gave the death sentence to those people who murdered their family elders. In Shanghai, Ma Jen-pao 馬仁寶 was Ma Fu-chang's 馬福昌 adopted daughter. She was arranged to marry a man, who was married into the family as a chui-fu 贞夫 (lived-in son-in-law). However, shortly after the marriage, her husband left for Chekiang to do some business. In order to satisfy her own emotional and sexual needs, she had
an affair with a swindler. The neighbours began to gossip amongst themselves, and Ma Fu-chang learnt about the affair. Ma's wife scolded the woman. When her mother-in-law fell ill, the woman fed her poison. The older woman died, and Ma Jen-pao tried to commit suicide but was saved. In the newspaper report, she was described as an adulterous woman. In the court, despite her showing of repentence, she was sentenced to death by the Chinese magistrate, who said that she must be judged according to the principles of Chinese family relationships (lun-\textit{li}伦理). The western judge of the International Settlement however granted her clemency, saying that she was the victim of an unhappy marriage and was too young to know her responsibilities. In this case, the woman was given the death sentence because she was deemed to have violated the sanctity and propriety of family relationships. The Chinese law-court concurred with the social opinion of her conduct, and there was no attempt to consider the mitigating circumstances of her offence. The western judge's verdict was significant in that it probably represented an unacceptable concession to individual behaviour \textit{vis-à-vis} the family.

Realizing the law's penchant to protect family tradition, some people in fact tried to suggest that their decision to kill was influenced by family consideration. In Shanghai, a woman persuaded her new lover to murder the former one. When brought to court, she argued that the victim was a salt-smuggler and this sort of background made him a violent man. He often threatened to kill her. Therefore, she arranged for him to be killed as an act of
self-defence, which was made a pardonable offence according to article 311 of the Civil Code. More significantly, the woman alleged that the victim had murdered her husband, whose father asked her to avenge his son's death. (Actually, the truth was that her husband had died of grief after learning about his wife's infidelity.) She also accused the victim of raping her, trying to sell her to a brothel, and abducting her son. In this case, the woman tried to shift attention from her promiscuity, and justified her act of self-defence in terms of family responsibilities. She stressed her obedience to her father-in-law, her wish to avenge her husband's death, her need to protect her honour and future, and her anguish to get back her child. Indeed, the man's crime constituted a challenge to break up her family. She hoped that the law-court would accept the explanation of her motives as those which aimed at satisfying and stabilizing the family.

Moral Problems

In the 1920s, individual behaviour was still judged according to certain moral principles which were prevalent in society. Personal conflicts were to be resolved within this moral order, and some people believed that appropriate punishment was morally justifiable. Many cases of homicide were characterized by this consideration.

One of the principles was that a person must take care to protect his name. Indeed, the feeling of being disgraced by other people so enraged some persons that they committed murder. In Shanghai, Wang Kuo-hsiang and his
brother tried to stab the supervisor of a granary. They said that they were extremely poor people, who habitually picked up rice-grains which were scattered around the storage-houses. On one of these occasions, the victim not only prohibited them from doing so, but verbally abused and physically assaulted the two brothers.\textsuperscript{113} In this case, it was possible that the victim had alluded to the culprits as thieves and thus hurt their pride. In this context, the moral issue of losing "face" was the cause for many murders, and this had nothing to do with one's correctness. In Shanghai, Chao Yao-ken 趙耀根 was scolded by his uncle for blackmailing people in the neighbourhood as a living, and was then expelled by his aunt. A local bully who was extremely conscious of his stature in the community, Chao murdered his aunt on account of his wounded pride. His uncle was not home when Chao stealthily returned to murder his victim.\textsuperscript{114}

Many people interpreted that they were bound by a moral duty to protect the honour of other persons who were related to them. In Shanghai, Li Pu-yün 李溥云 attacked Wang Tzu-ch'iang with a cleaver. Li accused Wang of laughing at the lowly position of his father. Wang's own father was an accountant. Li then tried to commit suicide.\textsuperscript{115} In this case, the culprit tried to show that he was a son who could not tolerate the victim's attitude towards his father.

In the newspaper reports on some homicide cases, the emphasis was on the moral character of the personalities who were involved. It was consciously believed that murder
victims had a dubious moral background. In Shanghai, Sung Tzu-kao had his throat slit while walking on the street. During the investigation, he was revealed to have a criminal record. Indeed, there was a tendency to associate violent death with immoral behaviour. In one case, for example, a man was murdered in his sleep. The newspaper commented that the victim had failed to escape his fate of being a man with a criminal record. In this case, there was the recognition that death was the ultimate punishment for a crime -- T'ien-wang hui-hui (the Heavenly dragnet was all-embracing).

In this light, some homicides were considered as justified because the victims had done some specific moral wrongs. In Shanghai, Ni Ch'i-lang, a local bully, was murdered by several people. The police found out that Ni was suspected to have raped the wife of one of his murderers. In Hong Kong, Huang Yü-hsi was stabbed to death while taking a stroll with his illicit lover. The woman was a pimp's wife. Huang was accused of having committed a "foul deed" before he was attacked. In these two cases, the murderers operated under the impression that they had a moral right to punish their victims. In any case, the killing was probably the more effective method of punishment.

The second principle was the moral right of an individual to seek justice. The concern with moral righteousness in the eyes of other people led to many personal arguments and conflicts. Often, the ensuing fights ended in bloodshed. While these cases could be
explained as personal tension leading to violence, they were also the influence of the general ignorance and distrust of the impersonal laws. Within the limits of seeking personal justice, a moral method acceptable to society was sometimes preferred. In Shanghai, Ku Ch'ing-pao had a quarrel with another person during gambling. They decided to settle their differences in a duel. Ku was shot to death. In this case, the two persons believed that the duel was a more effective way to find out who was right.

Many individuals realized that they were in an inferior position in society, and there was strong moral expectation of them to remain passive. As a result, psychological pressure mounted to such an intolerable extent that it produced an aggressive response. In Shanghai, Hsüeh Chen-i was a vice-captain in the Red Cross. He tried to shoot the captain whom he accused of constantly scolding him. Similarly, in Tientsin, Hsü An-yen was an assistant-cook. The cook often verbally abused him. When this became intolerable, Hsü killed the cook while the latter was sleeping. In these two cases, the culprits were undoubtedly upset by the abusive attitude of their seniors, but they were equally concerned with keeping their jobs.

Some persons took action against those people whom they considered to have placed them in an impossible position. This easily led to violence. In Hong Kong, Ho Lun killed his colleague in a rage. He accused his victim of making him appear a very lazy man. As a result, Ho was
constantly scolded by the employer. In this case, the murder was committed probably because the culprit had failed to correct the bad impression of himself. In this context, many homicides were guided by a moral sense of retribution. When a person felt that someone had inflicted irredeemable losses on him, he might take revenge. The idea was that the victim should taste the bitter experience. In Shanghai, Shih Szü-ming tried to kill a woman. He blamed her for losing his job. In this case, the man believed that he could take away the woman's life because she had taken away his livelihood.

Revenge killings were still popular in the 1920s. In fact, it was generally expected that a death should be repaid by another death. Therefore, many homicide victims were in fact murderers who had eluded legal punishment. In Shanghai, Ts'ao A-k'un was shot by his enemy. Before he died, he named his murderer and asked his wife to avenge his death. The significance was that Ts'ao was the head of a stevedore group which had a running rivalry with another group. In this case, the death of the victim would probably bring about a blood feud, resulting in many more deaths.

A revenge for ingratitude was regarded as morally justifiable. Indeed, the reporting of such kind of incidents invariably adopted a sympathetic tone. For example, in Tientsin, Chao Yün-ch'i killed a man's wife and his brother-in-law, and then attempted to set fire to the house. He was arrested and tried in court. During the hearing, Chao revealed that he had been looking after
the man and his sister after their mother's death. Moreover, he paid for their mother's funerary expenses. When these two persons grew up, not only did they refuse to acknowledge their indebtedness to Chao, but steadily tried to show their dislike of him. The man's brother-in-law also slandered him. Chao said that he could no longer stand such ingratitude. 125

The third principle was that an individual must observe his/her responsibility to other people in the community. For that matter, a person's behaviour was deemed to have moral implications for other members. Thus, a person's behaviour was a reflection of the moral rectitude of a community, which tried its best to exert moral control over its members. It was small wonder that some families of homicide culprits/victims refused to divulge detailed information on the case. Especially when the exact reason was related to a moral problem, they feared the moral ramifications of such revelation. Indeed, many cases were simply explained as the result of insanity, or were given no reason at all.

Individuals were expected to extend help to his relatives and friends. Refusal to do so brought about quarrels, and many persons were killed by others for neglecting their moral duty. In Shanghai, Chiang Chien-ch'iu murdered Ch'eng Hai-men's grandson when Ch'eng refused to lend him some money, which would be used to support the revolution. Moreover, Chiang said that as a wealthy merchant, Ch'eng had the moral obligation to help someone from the same province. 126 In
this case, the murder was a reprisal. It was also a warning to the victim's family that they were under the same threat.

The sense of moral obligation also prevailed amongst people without any sort of intimate relationship. In Shanghai, Pao Kuan-ch'eng 鲍观澄, a general, was murdered by his aide-de-camp. The latter asked for a loan, but was refused. In this case, the culprit obviously believed the fact that he had served under the victim obliged the latter to help him.

In the light of assuming moral responsibility, a person was also influenced by the notion of taking care of each other's mutual interest in a fair and acceptable manner. In Shanghai, Shao Erh 邵二 and Liu Szu 刘三 both came from the same province and were in the same business. Shao accused Liu of ruthlessly taking away his business, and planned to kill Liu. In this case, the murder was motivated by a desire to punish a t'ung-hsiang who was also an unethical businessman.

There was a tendency to blame other people for one's failure, and the grudge helped to create tremendous personal tension which might lead to violence. In one case, Wang Yê-lou 王铁楼 arranged to have a theatre-owner murdered. The victim was accused of ruining Wang's business plan. When Wang asked his victim to release two popular actors under contract to work for him, the victim not only refused, but also tried to convince the actors that Wang was a bad character. Indeed, the slander would perhaps once and for all prevent Wang from getting the actors to work for him.
In this light, some people were killed because they were related to the wrong-doer. In Shanghai, Li Hsiu-po was unemployed, and had to stay with his younger brother. His brother entrusted his business with his brother-in-law. When Li asked for a loan and was refused, he killed the brother-in-law because he thought the latter had made things difficult for him. Actually, it was Li's brother who had refused the loan.\(^{130}\)

That individuals were subjected to the entity of moral control was recognized to a certain extent by the law. Specifically, article 273 of the Civil Code condoned those murders which were induced by a sense of moral justice. It stated that a sentence of no more than seven years of imprisonment would be imposed. In fact, if no death resulted, the culprit might just be fined and released.\(^{131}\)

In this light, there was also the recognition of the superiority of group morality as an instrument of control. Indeed, many murders involved members of the secret societies. In these traditionally lawless organizations, the threat and the punishment of death were the most effective moral control of individual behaviour.

"Love Homicide" and "Assassination": Reflections on Modern Attitudes towards Homicide

In the 1920s, the phenomenon of "love homicide" (ch'ing-sha) was frequently mentioned in the newspapers. These outbursts of violence indicated the conflict between a traditional sex attitude and the promise of change. While some women believed that they had a
freedom of social intercourse, some men still viewed sex relationship on fairly traditional grounds. In Shanghai, a widow was courted by two men at the same time. One of them, Wang Neng-ching, tried to kill the other suitor. In this case, the woman obviously did not feel uneasy having suitors. Yet the man felt that he had the sole right to court the woman. For that matter, the contemporary society showed itself still unprepared to grant a woman much social freedom. In Hong Kong, Cheng Kuo-yu shot Feng Teh-ch'ien who was courting an actress. During the court hearing for this case, Cheng revealed that he was hired as a gunman by another of the actress' suitors. One of the court's line of inquiry was which man the woman really loved. The newspaper report in fact emphasized this and implied that the woman's irresponsible love-life led to the tragedy.

Influenced by the traditionalistic sex attitude, many men still felt superior to and possessive of their women. This invariably led to murders by jealous and disappointed lovers of their partners or a third party when the sex relationship failed to continue. In Hong Kong, Li Chin stabbed a girl who professed that she no longer loved him. Similarly, in Shanghai, a female astrologer and her mother were killed by a man. A rumour began to circulate that the woman was murdered because she had rejected the man. In both these cases, the victims thought that it was in their own right to state their emotions. The men's jealousy and sense of being rejected did not permit them to "forgive" the women.
A further indication that individuals were still influenced by an unequal sex attitude was the belief in family control. In Shanghai, Liang Hsiu-chen, a dance-hall hostess, and her entire family were murdered by a man whom Liang sent away after refusing to marry him. He returned and killed everyone in the house. The culprit in this case obviously believed that the family was behind the woman's decision.

Many people were in a tendency to treat sex relationship as a moral issue. Thus, some persons who failed to sustain a relationship interpreted it as a loss of "face". The resultant disappointment and anger could induce violent reaction. In one case, a woman was known to be a man's lover. Then she had a new lover and told the man that she would no longer want him. He became extremely angry, and asked the woman for compensation because he had lost "face" as a consequence of her "desertion". When the woman refused, he killed her. Indeed, the society contributed to keeping individuals under moral pressure by taking a moralistic view of some cases. When Hsü Hsiang-t'ing was murdered, the newspaper report stressed that he got himself killed because he had many love affairs. Thus, he became the victim of somebody's jealousy, and his own lechery was condemned. In this case, even a man's sex conduct was subject to moral criticism.

During this period, the newspapers also reported many cases of "assassination" (an-sha). Invariably, these homicides involved a person being ambushed and killed by his/her enemies because they had a strong disagreement.
over some issues. The meticulous planning which characterized these operations was an indication that the decision to kill was not made in a haste. For example, Pai Ch'eng-i, a military commander, received a telephone call, asking him to stay at home to wait for a friend. Shortly after, five armed men forced their way into Pai's house and shot Pai, his concubine and bodyguards to death. Then, the assassins calmly left in a car which was parked outside. In this case, the assassins made a phone call to ensure that the victim was there to meet them. They knew their way around the house and planned their exit in a careful manner.

On the surface, it appeared that some people hoped that the assassination of their enemies marked the end of a problem confronting an individual. In Shanghai, Wu Ken beat up a woman who asked him to repay a loan. When he learnt about her intention to report the matter to the police, Wu ambushed and axed the woman to death. In fact, he had asked her to forget about the matter. In this case, the culprit believed that he had solved an economic problem and removed the threat of arrest by arranging a murder. Even in political problems, some individuals were prone to a violent decision. In Shanghai, Hsing Sung-nien and a fellow worker kidnapped and murdered the supervisor of his factory, in which he worked. He was afraid that the victim might disclose the fact that he was a union member and he belonged to the union's assassination squad. Actually, an assassination signified more problems
than personal tension. According to one newspaper article, the bulk of assassination cases is an indication that social protection for human lives has failed -- such as in law-enforcement. More significantly, the article points out that assassinations which aim at solving personal and economic problems must not be tolerated, but those which are motivated by patriotic reason -- such as against traitors -- are morally acceptable. In this light, assassinations were understood as the cumulation of social and moral pressures, and the failure of society to relieve these tensions.

While recognizing that the assassinations could not terminate a rival group, many people with political motives killed others who held significant and responsible positions as a warning. Moreover, these assassinations revealed the failure of contemporary politics. The idea and the practice of a democratic process of government were at such divergence that individuals found much political tension amongst themselves.

Undoubtedly, assassinations with a political background reflected the state of disorganized political opinions in the 1920s. Industrial strikes were coloured by political sentiments. Especially after 1927, when the CCP was outlawed, many union workers were labelled as communists, and they met violent death. In Shanghai, Ni T'ien-sheng was shot by three men after receiving several death-threats. He had helped to organize the tram-car strike in the city in 1926. Similarly, Tseng Fu-ken, an executive member of the trade union
in a Japanese factory, was ambushed and gunned down. In these cases, the victims were killed because their beliefs and actions were contrary to the interests of their enemies.

Subsequently, partly as a tactic for survival and partly as an act of revenge, many people with pro-KMT leanings and who helped to break up the strikes were assassinated. Their murderers were allegedly communists. For example, in Tientsin, Ch'en Wen-pin, an union worker, was assassinated. However, he was revealed to be an executive member of the Standing Committee, Association of Industrial Development for National Salvation (Tientsin branch), and a special member of the Party Committee (union movement) for Shanghai and Tientsin. In this case, the victim was found to be affiliated with KMT political organizations, and his murderers probably killed him as a political agent.

For that matter, without the necessary trust in the law as an institutional means to resolving differences, the inevitable way to defeat a political opponent was to kill him. In many instances, the government, especially in Shanghai and Tientsin, refused to intervene because of its anti-communist stance. For example, in Shanghai, Chang Jung-ken was killed when he tried to stir up a strike. When he was found out to be a communist, the police stopped further investigation.

Even in Hong Kong, where labour movement was less politically orientated, economic conflicts sometimes led to violent solutions. Indeed, fierce economic competition often led to conflicts between rival trade unions.
Moreover, the lack of institutional settlement helped to build up tremendous tension which resulted in violent acts. Chang Tai 張泰 was an owner of a furniture shop. When some members of a trade union asked him for protection money, he refused. Shortly afterwards, he was murdered. The significance of this case was that people were expected to join mutual-interest groups in order to survive the economic competition. Individuals were given little chance to do well in the city. In this light, there were few attempts at legal arbitration partly because of the lack of labour legislation at that time. Thus, many wealthy merchants were assassinated for making the livelihood of their employees difficult. In 1922, there was a strike amongst restaurant workers in the Colony. Feng Ch'un-yüan, a powerful member of the Association of Restaurant-owners, discharged many employees who joined the strike. He received many death-threats, and was finally assassinated. A rumour spread, saying that he was marked for death by dissatisfied workers.

The notion that an individual owed moral responsibility to others influenced many decisions to carry out an assassination. In Shanghai, Ku Shao-shan 魁少山 and his brother worked for a Japanese factory, and they persuaded workers on strike to return to work. After failing to intimidate them from doing so, some persons murdered their father. In this case, the murderers conceived that the death of a member of the family would constitute the gravest threat to the two stubborn brothers. After all, they had a moral obligation to protect their
father.

For that matter, continuous pressure on a person to carry out his responsibility could lead to a violent response. There appeared no escape from this obligation. In Shanghai, Yang Lao-san 杨老三 tried to blackmail Yao Wan-an 喻萬安 for sending Yang's friend to jail. Yao borrowed some money from one of his friends and left Shanghai. In turn, Yang tried to blackmail Yao's debtor, who planned and killed Yang. In this case, the assassination was the consequence of a person pressing another to recompense for a friend's deed. The assassin somehow did not think in terms of legal responsibility.

In all three cities, there were numerous cases of government officials, policemen, and police informers being assassinated. Ostensibly, these murders of people in responsible positions or of those associated with the authorities represented an attempt to remove corrupt personalities from the political system and society. However, many cases upon investigation showed that the assassination was in the nature of a revenge. The assassins accused their victims of sending them to jail on a false charge, tortured them while they were imprisoned, and even continued to harass them after they were released. In Shanghai, a former detective Chi Chung-t'ang 吉忠堂 was pursued and killed by several men. When they cornered him, one of them said that they could now settle the score after three years. Similarly, when Lu Pao-sheng 賴寶生 was arrested, Chiang Hai-t'ao 鄭海桃, an employer with the law-court managed to have Lu badly tortured. After his
release, Lu hired someone to shoot Chiang. In these two cases, the assassins believed that they had a moral right to seek justice. But significantly, they had no other recourse except to kill their victims because the latter were supported by the authorities. To a certain extent, this also explained the people's distrust of the law to look after and expand individual interests.

Conclusion

In the 1920s, Chinese individuals found themselves in a society which was a rigid value-system. Two basic values still mattered most to the Chinese. The first was harmony and prosperity within a male-dominated family. The second was an impeccable image of moral rectitude. To minimize the chance of individual action leading to scandal and lawsuit, family rules and moral sanctions were regarded by most people as the most effective controlling and stabilizing factors.

The symbiotic relationship between an individual and the traditions had two important consequences. Firstly, a person's whole life would be orientated towards conforming to family and moral ideals. Secondly, these traditions had certain inherent inequities and irrationalities, which created enormous pressures amongst certain people. Both the urgency to conform and the desperation to find relief put a special meaning on human life in Chinese society. Suicide and homicide, which involved the forfeiture of a human life, assumed significance as the ultimate psychological response to the problem of adhering to or of challenging
Within the family, most women still believed and played a submissive role. They were therefore subjected to much abusive treatment. On the contrary, men assumed a superior and egoistic view of themselves. Such unequal ideas and practices produced enough personal tension to force and to justify suicide or homicide. Undoubtedly, there were promises of sex equality in the 1920s. There were also actual attempts to redress the injustice of the traditional sex attitude. However, the aspirations were often not matched and supported by legal and institutional changes. As a result, individuals still found the family or the clan as the most likely venue for the solution of a family problem. For that matter, with special reference to the "impersonal" city, a person found the greatest security in the family.

Within the society, there was still a tendency to moralize about individual behaviour. This was related to the view of Chinese society as a moral order. Therefore, individuals were responsible themselves and to others to uphold this order. This prevalence and perpetuation of moralization again created much personal tension which resulted in suicide or homicide. In the 1920s, even the spirit and the enforcement of law were not conducive to formulating individual rights and responsibilities. As such, individual sins and crimes were still judged in the context of communal morality.

All in all, suicide and homicide in Chinese society of the 1920s indicated the confusion experienced by an
individual with regards to his/her position *vis-à-vis* society. This confusion was due to the discrepancy between the promise of individuality, equality and justice, and the individual adherence to and institutional support for the conservative family and moral values. Consequently, a premium was put on human life to show acceptance or dissatisfaction with these values.
1. Durkheim's study of suicide is important for the present thesis. According to him, social development may produce three types of psychological effect on a person such that they explain the decision to commit suicide. The first one is "egotistical" which means a person faces a decrease in group cohesion, a weakening in the bonds of solidarity, and an increase in social isolation." The second one is "anomic" which means "by a disturbance in the social equilibrium, by a state of anomie, or normlessness ... the conduct of the individual ceases to be controlled by the norms set by society." The third one is "altruistic" which means a person loses himself as "a consequence of an intensification in the tendency of a society to absorb the interests of the individual to such an extent that the latter is merely part of a group without personal demands." See the summary in Koenig, op. cit., pp. 62-3. The first and the third type are opposite poles of the extent of social constraint of individual behaviour. Egoistic suicide is characterized by a rejection of social institutions; altruistic suicide is an unquestioned fulfilment of social demands and expectations. With reference to urbanization, egoistic and anomic suicides are most likely to occur. R.W. Maris in Social Forces in Urban Suicide (Homewood, Ill., 1969), p. 33 suggests that "suicide varies inversely with the degree of integration of the social groups of which the individual forms a part." Durkheim's theory is also used to explain homicide. See Johnson, op. cit., pp. 269-70. Cf. F. Wertham, A Sign for Cain. An Exploration of Human Violence (New York, 1966), p. 42: "The reason why men kill ... is always to be found in negative factors in the personality and in society. For a murder to be committed, it takes two people and their social environment." With special reference to the effect of urbanization, H.A. Bullock comments that "[the] basic ecological process of urban segregation centralizes people of like kind, throws them together at common institutions, occasions their association on levels of intimacy, and thereby paves the way for conflicts out of which homicides occur." Indeed, the city is a complex population structure whose conflicts are difficult to be resolved by communal and moral means. There is a gradual breakdown of norms which used to be accepted by and enforceable within a small community. See H.A. Bullock, "Urban Homicide in Theory and Fact", Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science 45 (January/February, 1955), p. 575.

2. According to the sociologists, Henry and Short, "suicide varies negatively and homicide positively with the strength of external restraint over behaviour." Operating from the basic human instinct of aggressiveness, the urge to kill, to be killed, and a desire to die


5. See Hsien Rin, "Suicide in Taiwan" in N.L. Farberow (ed.), *Suicide in Different Cultures* (Baltimore, 1975), p. 246.


7. This was often praised as the humanitarian aspect of Chinese law. See Bodde & Morris, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-2.


10. See the analyses in "Chung-hsüeh pi-yeh-sheng tsu-sha shih-chien" (The trend of suicides amongst secondary-school graduates), *TK*: 6/8/1930 (2); Chün-lin, "Li-pieh chih ch‘ien" (Before saying goodbye), *TK*: 10/4/1932 (9); Ching-po, "Pu chih-teh" (Not worthwhile), *TK*: 24/11/1932 (9).


12. An impression which is acquired from reading the newspapers of Hong Kong is that there was few suicides resulting from the ill-treatment of women. This was particularly the case in the early 1920s. It was not that the women were better treated than their counterparts in Shanghai and Tientsin. Rather it was because the victims' families were probably more reluctant to disclose the reason for the suicide. According to Teng Yung-ling, "Wo-kuo tsu-sha wen-t‘i ti yen-chung-hsing chi-ch‘i chieh-chiu t‘u-ching" (The seriousness of the suicide problem in China and its solution), *Hsileh-shu shih-chieh* 1:6 (1935), p. 51, more women than men committed suicide for emotional problems, which could mean family problems.

14. There were many cases of daughters-in-law who committed suicide after having a quarrel with their parents-in-law. See SH: 12/10/1927 (15); HJ: 18/5/1927 (2). For cases which involved a quarrel between husband and wife, see SH: 9/9/1927 (15); HJ: 28/10/1922 (2). In the case which happened in Hong Kong, the woman killed herself after she was scolded by her husband for being superstitious. For an example of a quarrel between sisters-in-law leading to a suicide, see SH: 1/12/1923 (15). Wang Ch'un-lan 姜春蘭 felt "grievously disappointed" after the quarrel, so she tried to drown herself.

15. See SH: 26/12/1923 (15).

16. See ST: 29/7/1922 (7).

17. See TK: 13/12/1929 (7).


19. Both Chang Chi-ch'un 張吉春 and Hsü I-t'ang 徐益萱 were reported by the newspapers to have committed suicide after quarrelling with their wives. See SH: 23/7/1927 (15); 9/10/1927 (15). In another case, Ch'iao A-fu 蕭阿福 killed himself after quarrelling with his illicit lover, who asked him for some money. See SH: 13/9/1923 (16).

20. According to Wang Hsien-en, Ta-hsüeh-sheng su-miao (Shanghai, 1932), p. 112, all persons who were rescued from a suicide attempt were sent to court. A French writer points out that many Chinese women killed themselves in the knowledge that their families would take legal action against those persons who were deemed responsible for the suicide. See A.F. Legendre (E.M. Jones, tr.), Modern Chinese Civilization (London, 1929), p. 22. Indeed, many women victims only intended to threaten their families, but ended up in killing themselves. See Chang Tzu-p'ing's satirical comment on the dramatic nature of this intention through a character in his novel Ai-li ch'üan-wai (Shanghai, 1929), pp. 252-3.

21. This is the impression given by reading the newspapers, especially from 1927 onwards when there were legislations against prostitution in the three cities.

22. For cases which involved quarrels between parents and their children, see ST: 13/8/1922 (7); SH: 5/7/1932 (16). In both these cases, the victims committed suicide after having a quarrel with their fathers, and were reported to be "bitter and disappointed".
23. See, for example, SH: 27/8/1927 (15); 18/10/1932 (16); HJ: 30/5/1932 (2). In both cases in Shanghai, the victims claimed they were bodily attacked and received injuries.

24. Both Shen Ken-mao and Yuan Li-ya committed suicide because they had a disagreement with their parents over their behaviour. See SH: 14/6/1932 (11); 23/7/1932 (15).


26. Ch'en Hsiang had a quarrel with her daughter-in-law, and committed suicide. See HJ: 28/11/1932 (3). Lu A-jung beat up his mother, who then committed suicide. Lu was condemned in the newspaper report as an unfilial son. See SP: 13/3/1917 (9).

27. See TK: 24/2/1930 (9).


30. See ST: 2/3/1922 (7).


32. See ST: 4/12/1917 (7).

33. See SH: 29/10/1923 (15).

34. See ST: 1/3/1922 (7).

35. See TK: 25/11/1929 (9).

36. See HJ: 20/10/1927 (3).

37. See the comment in ST: 3/2/1922 (7).

38. For example, see the cases in SH: 25/4/1932 (4); HJ: 4/7/1918 (1). One involved a jewellery shop, and the other involved a rice-store.

39. See SH: 18/1/1932 (11).

40. See ST: 3/9/1917 (7).

41. See SH: 29/8/1923 (16); 16/11/1927 (11).

42. See HJ: 14/6/1922 (2).

43. Ch'en Ming-k'uan and his wife tried to drown themselves when they became utterly impoverished. See ST: 28/9/1917 (7).
44. One of the reasons given for an attempt to commit suicide was a long illness. See the cases in SH: 11/8/1927 (15); ST: 13/9/1922 (7). Blindness accounted for many suicides. See SH: 25/4/1927 (11); 9/7/1932 (15); HJ: 10/9/1932 (3). Indeed, the notion of succumbing to the dual pressure of impoverishment and illness (p'in-ping chiao-pi 貧病交迫) had driven many persons to suicide. See the case of Chang Fuhsiang 福祥 in SH: 31/8/1927 (15). In another case, Ch'en Kuo 秋谷 said that he felt the future obstacles were insurmountable, so he committed suicide. See HJ: 7/10/1922 (2).

45. See HJ: 27/8/1927 (2).

46. For Shanghai, see the cases of Hu Jen-fu 胡仁福, Sun Teh-shan 孙德山, Ch'ien Chao-nien 陈朝年, and Chang Ju-sheng 张如生 in SP: 16/1/1917 (6); 17/7/1917 (6); SH: 11/1/1927 (11); 29/4/1927 (15). For Hong Kong, see HJ: 8/6/1927 (3); 14/6/1932 (2).

47. See TK: 8/12/1929 (9).


49. See SP: 2/4/1917 (6); SH: 7/9/1932 (15).


51. See SH: 4/7/1932 (15).

52. See SH: 1/12/1923 (15).

53. In their death-notes, Li Yün-p'eng 李雲鵬, T'an A-yu 譚阿友, and Ko Chu-hsiang 葛子祥 all expressed a remorse for not being able to serve their country. See SH: 8/1/1932 (15); 10/4/1932 (6); 10/11/1932 (16).

54. See SH: 22/6/1927 (15).

55. See ST: 14/10/1917 (7).

56. Many cases involved people who committed suicide after they were discovered to have stolen from their friends or employers. See SP: 10/5/1917 (6); HJ: 4/6/1927 (3); 21/11/1932 (2). Some persons killed themselves after they were found to have embezzled money put in their care. See SH: 17/8/1923 (16); 28/9/1932 (11); HJ: 31/12/1932 (2). It can be interpreted that victims of these two main kinds of suicide were escaping from a sense of shame for having betrayed the trust in them.


58. See SH: 7/9/1923 (16).
59. See ST: 14/8/1917 (7).

60. For example, in Shanghai, a woman committed suicide after her husband was arrested for possessing opium. She was probably harassed by the authorities and avoided by the neighbours. See SH: 16/7/1932 (15).

61. See SH: 19/7/1927 (15).

62. In one case, a woman after being rescued from a suicide attempt refused to divulge the truth. So it was recorded as a case of mental disorder. See SP: 27/11/1917 (6). See also SH: 24/11/1923 (16) for a suicide which involved a famous actor's sister. The cause was reported as unknown.

63. See the reports on the increasing number of these suicides in SH: 18/7/1932 (11); 19/7/1932 (11).

64. See HJ: 19/9/1927 (2).

65. See SH: 14/9/1932 (15).

66. Hsieh Chi-wu 謝紀武 and Liang Tzu-hua 梁楚華 both left death-notes which said that their parents intervened with their marriage. See SH: 11/5/1932 (10); HJ: 20/9/1927 (2).

67. See TK: 16/12/1929 (9).

68. See SH: 25/10/1927 (11).

69. After Chang Chu-ch'ing 張楚青 died from tuberculosis, his wife committed suicide. The newspaper reported this as hsin-ch'ing. See SH: 7/4/1932 (5). See also similar cases in SH: 19/10/1927 (1); ST: 17/10/1917 (7).

70. See TK: 7/4/1930 (9).

71. See SH: 29/10/1932 (15).

72. See ST: 6/1/1922 (7).

73. See TK: 8/11/1929 (9); 12/4/1930 (9).


75. In one case in Shanghai, Ko Heng-ming 葉恒明 was stabbed to death when he quarrelled with some rascals on the street. See SH: 19/10/1923 (15). See also SH: 14/9/1923 (15); 6/6/1927 (11); HJ: 10/7/1922 (2) for other examples.
76. See Kung-chen, "Sheng-ming chih chien" (The worthlessness of human life), SP: 18/8/1917 (6).

77. Actually, there were also conflicts amongst the Hai-feng 海豐 and the Lu-feng 魯豐 groups (both from Ch'ao-chou), which dominated the rickshaw business. See Ch'en Shih-feng, "Hsiang-kang fang-yen ti fu-tsa" (The complexity of Hong Kong dialects) in Li Chin-wei, op. cit., p. 132. The Chinese population in Hong Kong was sensitive to the classification according to provincial origins. Even Cantonese were divided as pen-ti (born in Hong Kong), kuang-fu 廣府 (from Canton), Ch'ao-chou, and k'o-chia . In the 1920s, the first two groups, which were in control of the bulk of Hong Kong economy, tended to slight the last two groups, thus leading to much tension.

78. See, for example, SH: 31/12/1923 (14); 28/1/1927 (15); 2/12/1932 (12); TK: 16/12/1932 (7). Many policemen were shot by armed robbers when they tried to stop and search them on the street.

79. See HJ: 12/7/1927 (2).

80. See SH: 1/8/1927 (11).


82. When they were refused a loan by their relatives or friends, many felt so bitter that they killed them. See, for example, SP: 16/1/1917 (6); TK: 12/12/1929 (9). For homicide as a result of refusing to return money, see SH: 1/12/1923 (15); 11/1/1927 (11).

83. Family members are given a right to appeal the decisions made in a family council. See article 1137 on family laws in the Civil Code.

84. See, for example, ST: 7/10/1917 (7); HJ: 1/8/1932 (2). In Shanghai, Chang Shou-an 張守安 suspected his wife of adultery, quarrelled with and eventually killed her. See SH: 19/7/1932 (11).

85. See ST: 7/10/1917 (7).

86. See SP: 18/7/1917 (6).

87. See SP: 30/6/1917 (6); 31/12/1917 (6).

88. See SH: 27/1/1932 (16).

89. See HJ: 21/12/1932 (2).

90. See HJ: 9/8/1927 (2).
91. See ST: 31/8/1922 (7).
92. See SH: 12/1/1927 (11); 19/3/1927 (15).
93. See ST: 27/5/1922 (7).
94. Both Sun Kuei-sheng 陳桂生 and Chao Chiu-feng 趙九峰 planned and murdered the men who had an affair with their wives. See SH: 2/7/1932 (19); TK: 21/7/1932 (11).
95. See SP: 10/7/1917 (6).
97. See the comment in TK: 21/4/1930 (3).
98. See the newspaper reports and comments on the cases in SP: 30/11/1917 (6); SH: 4/9/1923 (15); 15/2/1927 (14).
100. See SH: 8/4/1927 (15).
101. See SH: 2/12/1932 (12).
102. See TK: 21/7/1932 (11); HJ: 9/9/1927 (3).
103. See SH: 17/6/1932 (11).
104. See TK: 23/7/1930 (7).
105. See ST: 14/12/1922 (7).
106. See SH: 27/6/1932 (11); 14/7/1932 (15).
107. See SH: 18/1/1932 (11).
108. See SH: 7/1/1932 (19).
109. See HJ: 18/6/1932 (2).
110. See HJ: 16/5/1922 (2); 23/5/1927 (supplementary).
111. See SP: 23/4/1917 (6); 14/5/1917 (5); 30/6/1917 (5).
112. See SP: 1/1/1917 (6); 12/1/1917 (6); 31/3/1917 (15).
113. See SP: 29/1/1917 (6).
114. See SH: 11/9/1923 (15).
115. See SH: 7/12/1932 (11).
117. See ST: 27/1/1922 (7).
119. See HJ: 25/7/1922 (2).
120. See SH: 13/9/1923 (14).
121. See SH: 24/4/1932 (8); TK: 28/12/1929 (9).
122. See HJ: 28/7/1927 (2).
123. See SH: 21/9/1932 (15).
125. See TK: 27/4/1930 (9).
128. See SP: 11/6/1917 (6).
129. See ST: 15/4/1922 (7); 20/4/1922 (7).
130. See SH: 25/7/1927 (11).
131. See Fu Ping-ch'ang, Tsui-hsin lu-fa ch'ulan-shu (Taipei, 1964), p. 172. The book is a re-edited volume, which contains the laws being in use since 1930. Despite the formulating and amending of new laws, the basic structure is maintained by the present Chinese government in Taiwan.
133. See HJ: 20/5/1932 (2).
134. See HJ: 20/10/1922 (2); SH: 20/7/1932 (15).
135. See SH: 20/10/1932 (15).
136. See ST: 26/8/1922 (7).
137. See ST: 13/11/1917 (7).
139. See SH: 18/8/1923 (15).
140. See SH: 3/5/1927 (15).
141. See the editorials in ST: 10/3/1922 (2); 26/3/1922 (3). In fact, the comments were inspired by the assassination of Pai Ch'eng-i, a military commander (see note 138).
142. See SH: 14/1/1927 (10); 17/3/1927 (9).
143. See TK: 19/7/1932 (7). See also the case in SH: 28/9/1927 (15).

144. See SH: 25/4/1927 (11).

145. See HJ: 16/8/1922 (2).

146. See HJ: 15/8/1922 (1).

147. See SH: 15/2/1927 (14). In another case, a woman was murdered because her husband was an inspector in a tram company, and he was involved in breaking up a strike. See SH: 19/3/1927 (15).

148. See SH: 24/10/1923 (15).

149. Wang Pin 李斌 was a superintendant in the police department. When he was assassinated, the newspaper reported that he died for some official cause. More probably, he was murdered by people whom he had antagonized. See SH: 23/4/1932 (4). In Hong Kong, Mo Jui 莫瑞 was a policeman who had been forced to retire. Hu Mei 胡梅 was a police informer in order to get rewards. Both were murdered. See HJ: 4/5/1918 (1); 11/7/1922 (2).

150. See SH: 6/5/1932 (9).

151. See SH: 16/9/1932 (11).
CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion: The Significance of Conservative Social Attitudes in the Modernization of China

In the introduction of this thesis, we have noted the difficulty of defining the term "modernization". In the specific context of China in the twentieth century, the difficulty was compounded by the non-clarity between modernization and westernization. There was often a tendency to interpose a strong sense of cultural identity when people were debating the adoption of new ideas and institutions. As such, it was difficult for people to accept the fact that they were living with changes which were of western origin.

In studying modernization as an actual historical experience in the 1920s, a further problem is to understand the nature, the direction and the implications of conceivably "modern" changes. Between 1917 and 1932 -- the period is addressed as the 1920s in this thesis -- Shanghai, Tientsin and Hong Kong witnessed and represented many significant changes in China. Politically, the warlords were defeated and the KMT fostered a semblance of unity, which appeared strongest in the cities. Economically, the new emphasis on commercial enterprise and industrial growth found a natural base in the cities. At this time, the fact that many people flocked to the cities in search of stability and wealth seemed to suggest a preparedness on the part of these aspiring immigrants to accept a new form and style of living.

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However, these changes were not comprehensive and pervasive, and the notion that the three Chinese cities possessed all the necessary attributes to make modernization a successful experience for the people in society was an illusion. Both the municipal and the judicial administration of Shanghai and Tientsin were still divided between Chinese and western authorities, with the latter sometimes playing an interfering role. Hong Kong, of course, remained a British Colony. The economic structure and development of the cities were such that they subsisted mainly as part of China's international economy rather than as an integral part of its domestic growth. Therefore, not many people benefited from the economy which was particularly prone to the influence of external forces, such as surrounding political turmoils and trade depression. As a result, economic experience within the cities was a fluctuating affair, and people were easily displaced and disappointed. All in all, there was definitely an attempt from above to create the milieu and the reality of political and economic modernization in the cities. These apparent changes rarely spilled over the countryside, and in their institutional form affected only a limited section of urban society. The effects were not necessarily appreciated by those who experienced them.

The disparity between the arrangement for changes and the actual extent of change can be explained as a lack of co-ordination amongst the various aspects and levels of modernization. This thesis works on the premise that social changes in China of the 1920s lagged behind political
and economic changes. There were few conscious attempts to modernize society-at-large, changing social behaviour and attitudes. Ideas on social change mostly remained on the level of discussion, the diversity of which indicated the difficulty to implement acceptable "progressive" changes. Indeed, many people were ignorant of the implications of modernization for their lives. We again refer to Chiang Meng-lin's observation that:

Millions of people still live quietly, going from cradle to grave. They never think about the problem of modernization. Some of them use foreign products mindlessly -- out of either convenience, or self-gratification, or sheer curiosity.

This succinct comment on the ignorance and unconsciousness of modern changes reflected two important issues: why should Chinese society undergo modernization, and in what direction should modernization go?

The answer to the first question would enable people within the society to understand the need for particular changes. The answer to the second question would shape and determine the rate of these changes. Starting out on the premise that the study of social changes is a neglected area, this thesis explains the "failure" of social modernization of China in the 1920s in the light of these two questions. Two conclusions are drawn by studying certain relevant cases from selected newspapers.

Firstly, the slowness -- or "failure" -- of complete social modernization could be attributed to the people's inclination to adhere to fundamentally familiar and traditional attitudes when they encountered new social situations. The gap between a reliance on past principles for social responses
and a milieu of rapid changes was illustrated by a set of conservative social attitudes towards specific problems. That an understanding of the relationship between social attitudes and modernization is important for the latter's success is summed up by Inkeles and Smith, two sociologists.

... the attitude and value changes defining individual modernity are accompanied by changes in behaviour precisely of the sort which ... give meaning to, and support, those changes in political and economic institutions which lead to the modernization of nations. 4

In this light, changes in political and economic institutions without changes in attitudes prevented a smooth transition. Several kinds of social problems evolved as a consequence of the sense of losing the past. As a corollary, some of these institutions in the 1920s adopted a conciliatory attitude towards traditional values, thus annulling any promise and attempt of change. In this latter case, social problems reflected a person's confusion about the outcome of his/her aspirations.

Secondly, the crux of the set of conservative social attitudes was the emphasis on family and moral values as the basic stabilizing and controlling forces of society, and the subjection of an individual to the requisites of society. Consequently, the philosophy and the institution of sex and law were concerned with perpetuating social harmony and moral order. An individual's happiness often gave way to the ideals of status and hierarchy, virtues and propriety. In the 1920s, many suicides and homicides were violent, but futile, demonstrations of individuality. In this context, one of the necessary factor for successful social modernization in China was the creation of the individual
who would be rendered equal rights and impartial justice.

All in all, the historical experience of modernization in the 1920s was marked and influenced by the disparity between the urban and rural sectors, the institutional arrangement and popular consumption of changes, and the conscious adoption and involuntary adaptation of changes. These forms of disparity polarized the response to modernization: there was the traditionalist against the modernist perspective. That the social attitudes were essentially conservative was a problem in the attempt to bridge the differences between the old and the new. In other words, the conservative social attitudes were a key to understanding the failure of modernization as an evolutionary process in China.

A Remark in Conclusion

With the downfall of the Gang of Four in 1976, the CCP advanced the idea of the Four Modernizations. Hua Kuo-feng, Mao Tse-tung's protege and heir-apparent, commented:

The socialist modernization of our agriculture, industry, national defence and science and technology is a great and unprecedented undertaking and a profound revolution, too.

Conspicuous by its absence was the modernization of the people's ideas and attitudes. This illustrated the recurrent problem of emphasizing the political and economic aspects of modernization with little deference for societal changes — unless a socialist revolution means the creation of a new society and tradition.
Notes to Chapter Six

1. See Huang Tsun-sheng, *op. cit.*, p. 372. He states that modernization in China was not equivalent to westernization because a modern civilization was not the monopoly of the West. Huang obviously tries to distinguish between the adopting of progressive elements (of the twentieth century), and western heritage. For the contemporary debate on modernization and westernization, see I. Eber, "Hu Shih and the Controversy on Chinese Culture and Western Civilization", *East Asian Occasional Papers II*, pp. 29-45.

2. See Lang, *op. cit.*, p. 333 for an identification of four necessary types of modern change for China. They are the changes in technology, in economic structure, in social and political structure, and in behaviour, attitudes and ideas.

3. Chiang Meng-lin, *op. cit.*, p. 5. Shen Nai-cheng in "The Changing Chinese Social Mind", *CSPSR* 8:1 (1924), p. 74 suggests that "[t]he sudden incoming of the worship of the new into the once most conservative country of China was largely the result of emotional and sentimental reflexion rather than that of deliberate choice or social self-consciousness." Shen's interpretation provides the psychological insight into Chiang's observation.


5. In the 1920s, some writers recognized the problem of polarizing the response in that diverse attitudes conflicted with each other over the need and the extent of modernization. See, for example, the comments in Yu Kung, "Hsin ssu-ch'ao wo-kuan" (My view on the new ideas), *Kai-teao* 3:1 (1920), pp. 36-7; Wu Mi, "Lun Hsin-wen-hua yün-tung" (On the New Culture Movement), *Hsileh-heng* 4 (1922), pp. 498-9.

### APPENDIX I

**Divorce Statistics of Shanghai**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1928</th>
<th>1929</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1932</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Desertion</td>
<td></td>
<td>17 (2.64%)</td>
<td>16 (1.87%)</td>
<td>8 (1.25%)</td>
<td>13 (3.13%)</td>
<td>54 (2.11%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infidelity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ill-Treatment</td>
<td></td>
<td>31 (8.4%)</td>
<td>16 (2.48%)</td>
<td>18 (2.11%)</td>
<td>4 (0.63%)</td>
<td>7 (1.69%)</td>
<td>11 (0.43%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elopement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immoral Behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td>43 (11.6%)</td>
<td>61 (9.46%)</td>
<td>124 (14.53%)</td>
<td>3 (0.49%)</td>
<td>8 (1.93%)</td>
<td>196 (7.68%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diseases</td>
<td></td>
<td>5 (1.3%)</td>
<td>3 (0.46%)</td>
<td>5 (0.59%)</td>
<td>2 (0.31%)</td>
<td>6 (1.45%)</td>
<td>16 (0.62%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arranged Marriage</td>
<td></td>
<td>14 (3.8%)</td>
<td>13 (2.02%)</td>
<td>11 (1.29%)</td>
<td>2 (0.31%)</td>
<td>1 (0.24%)</td>
<td>27 (1.05%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bigamy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Difficulty</td>
<td></td>
<td>13 (3.5%)</td>
<td>9 (1.39%)</td>
<td>7 (0.82%)</td>
<td>3 (0.47%)</td>
<td>4 (0.96%)</td>
<td>23 (0.90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incompatibility</td>
<td></td>
<td>247 (66.8%)</td>
<td>501 (77.67%)</td>
<td>626 (73.39%)</td>
<td>522 (86.39%)</td>
<td>359 (86.5%)</td>
<td>2,008 (78.68%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td>17 (4.6%)</td>
<td>25 (3.88%)</td>
<td>5 (0.59%)</td>
<td>14 (2.19%)</td>
<td>1 (0.24%)</td>
<td>45 (1.76%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>370</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>853</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>2,922 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: *Shang-hai she-hui t'ung-chi kai-yao* [1935], pp. 86-96)
The above chart is based on data which were collected by the Bureau of Social Affairs of the Shanghai Municipality. It must be stressed that the data for 1928 only pertain to the months August-December, and the data for 1932 exclude the months February to April (when the Japanese attacked Shanghai). These figures represented cases which were sent to the law-courts for arbitration.

Incompatibility was the single largest cause of divorce. However, it was also a general cause given by most people to cover up the specific reason. This was done for the mutual benefit of the persons asking for a divorce. This reflected the people's concern with their moral stature in a divorce. Moreover, the fact that immoral behaviour constituted the second most "popular" reason for divorce indicated that many people chose to moralize about their unhappy marriages.

Bigamy was rarely cited as a reason for divorce. The continued and muted acceptance of concubinage had been responsible for this situation. Very often, the problem was solved within the family.
## APPENDIX II

### Divorce Statistics of Tientsin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1926</th>
<th>1927</th>
<th>1928</th>
<th>1929</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Desertion</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(8.33%)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(6.66%)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ill-Treatment</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(12.50%)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(29.41%)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elopement</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(4.16%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(3.33%)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immoral Behaviour</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(20.83%)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(8.82%)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diseases</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(2.94%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(3.33%)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arranged Marriage</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(4.16%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(3.57%)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Serving Parents-in-law</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(12.50%)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(5.88%)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bigamy</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(4.16%)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(5.88%)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Difficulty</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>(25%)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>(38.23%)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forced Prostitution</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(8.33%)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(14.7%)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incompatibility</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(8.33%)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(14.7%)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ugliness of Husband</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Kuo Ch'en-i, *Chung-kuo fu-nü wen-t'i* [1938], pp. 71-2)
The above chart is based on data collected by Kuo Ch'en-i. They represented legal cases which were put before the municipal courts of Tientsin. For the year 1929, the data are only related to the months July to December.

Ill-treatment and forced prostitution were the reasons behind a large number of divorce. Both causes, which were related to women as victims, reflected the fact that some men continued to assume superior position to women. It was significant that people started to oppose fixed marriage only after 1928.

Accusation of immoral behaviour and suggestion of incompatibility were also important factors. Together, they indicated the persistence of some people to moralize or to cover-up the reason for divorce.
APPENDIX III

Crime Statistics of the Municipality of Shanghai

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offences</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1928</th>
<th>1929</th>
<th>1930</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Endangering Peace and Order</td>
<td></td>
<td>236 (7.7%)</td>
<td>39 (0.84%)</td>
<td>27 (0.56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endangering Public Safety</td>
<td></td>
<td>119 (3.88%)</td>
<td>110 (2.36%)</td>
<td>134 (2.77%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endangering Public Morality</td>
<td></td>
<td>32 (0.69%)</td>
<td>2 (0.04%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alienation of Affection/Family</td>
<td></td>
<td>216 (7.05%)</td>
<td>357 (7.67%)</td>
<td>342 (7.06%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possession of Opium</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,023 (33.39%)</td>
<td>1,678 (36.06%)</td>
<td>1,412 (29.15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambling</td>
<td></td>
<td>278 (9.07%)</td>
<td>363 (7.8%)</td>
<td>474 (9.79%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder/Bodily Injury</td>
<td></td>
<td>189 (6.17%)</td>
<td>375 (8.05%)</td>
<td>260 (5.37%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libel and Slander</td>
<td></td>
<td>33 (0.71%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larceny</td>
<td></td>
<td>552 (18.01%)</td>
<td>680 (14.61%)</td>
<td>923 (19.05%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraud and False Pretences</td>
<td></td>
<td>135 (4.41%)</td>
<td>168 (3.63%)</td>
<td>225 (4.64%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatening</td>
<td></td>
<td>11 (0.24%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>28 (0.58%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: *Shang-hai-shih t'ung-chie* [1933], "Social Affairs", p. 1)

The data in this chart is based on the reports of the Bureau of Public Safety. It must be stressed that only those items which are discussed in the main text are selected for entry. From the data, it can be seen that the main offences were what could be considered as petty crimes. Crimes which were related to family problems constituted a relatively high percentage of the cases compared with those which smacked of moral deviance.
APPENDIX IV

Crime Statistics of the International Settlement of Shanghai

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offences</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1931</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>0.55%</td>
<td>45 (0.28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodily Injury</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.32%</td>
<td>52 (0.33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape and Other Sex Crimes</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.07%</td>
<td>31 (0.19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adultery</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.06%</td>
<td>10 (0.06%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abduction/Trafficking in Females</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>0.64%</td>
<td>196 (1.23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatening Letters</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>0.55%</td>
<td>70 (0.44%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extortion/Intimidation</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>2.13%</td>
<td>230 (1.45%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed Robbery</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>4.01%</td>
<td>654 (4.11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed Kidnapping</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>0.47%</td>
<td>84 (0.53%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Gang</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>2.97%</td>
<td>301 (1.89%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>722</td>
<td>5.56%</td>
<td>675 (4.24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embezzlement/Forgery/Fraud</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>2.65%</td>
<td>507 (3.19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malicious Accusation</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0.20%</td>
<td>18 (0.11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snatching/Larceny/Pickpocketing</td>
<td>4,483</td>
<td>34.49%</td>
<td>4,946 (31.85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possession of Opium</td>
<td>2,813</td>
<td>21.65%</td>
<td>4,137 (26.01%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambling</td>
<td>1,217</td>
<td>9.29%</td>
<td>1,938 (12.18%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Sha ng-hai-shih t’ung-chi [1933], "Social Affairs", pp. 2-3)

These data represented the number of convictions for specific crimes, and only relevant ones are entered. Obviously, the number of cases would be greater. These figures were collected by the Municipal Board of the International Settlement. Significantly, the largest number was economic crimes. On the contrary, moral crimes were only of a small percentage. It must also be noted that crimes in all three administrative areas of Shanghai were classified in different ways.
APPENDIX V

Crime Statistics of the French Concession of Shanghai

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offences</th>
<th>Year 1929</th>
<th>Year 1930</th>
<th>Year 1931</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breach of Law</td>
<td>49 (1.15%)</td>
<td>33 (0.91%)</td>
<td>10 (0.33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breach of Police Regulations</td>
<td>1,428 (33.58%)</td>
<td>1,422 (39.36%)</td>
<td>1,197 (39.81%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larceny</td>
<td>1,342 (31.56%)</td>
<td>1,208 (33.43%)</td>
<td>1,023 (34.02%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed Robbery</td>
<td>270 (8.47%)</td>
<td>373 (10.32%)</td>
<td>262 (8.71%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>32 (0.76%)</td>
<td>23 (0.64%)</td>
<td>22 (0.73%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodily Injury/Insult</td>
<td>117 (2.75%)</td>
<td>110 (3.04%)</td>
<td>100 (3.33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidnapping Children/Females</td>
<td>118 (2.77%)</td>
<td>59 (1.64%)</td>
<td>56 (1.86%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraud/Intimidiation</td>
<td>154 (3.62%)</td>
<td>109 (3.02%)</td>
<td>86 (2.86%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Shang-hai-shih t'ung-ohi [1933], "Social Affairs", p. 4)

This chart is based on the data collected by the Municipal Council of the French Concession. Only relevant ones are entered for analytical purpose. In fact, it can be seen that the majority of the crimes reflected a preoccupation with statutory law.
APPENDIX VI

Kidnappings in the Municipality of Shanghai

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Victims</th>
<th>1928</th>
<th>1929</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1931</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Shang-hai she-hui t'ung-chi kai-yao [1935], pp. 124-32)

These data are based on reports compiled by the Bureau of Public Safety. As clearly shown, most of the victims were men. In a city like Shanghai, the number of such crime as shown in the chart was incredulously low. It was most probable that many cases were not reported.
## APPENDIX VII
### Suicide Statistics of Shanghai

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>Year 1928</th>
<th>Year 1929</th>
<th>Year 1930</th>
<th>Year 1931</th>
<th>Year 1932</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Problems</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>1,101</td>
<td>833</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage Problems</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ill-Treatment</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrequited Love</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Love Suicide&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Problems</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Failure</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illness</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarrels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>261</td>
<td>823</td>
<td>532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depravity</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falsely Accused</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling Shameful/Angry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim of Robbery/Fraud</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fearful of Prosecution</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>379</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,025</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,989</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,932</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,996</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,376</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Shang-hai she-hui t‘ung-chi kai-yao [1935], pp. 45-71)
The statistics represent suicide cases which were reported to the authorities of Shanghai. For the year 1928, the data only relate to the months August to December. For the year 1932, there was no data available between February and April because of the crisis of Japanese attack.

Different kinds of family and economic problems constituted the main specific causes of suicide. On the contrary, suicides which could be attributed to specific moral causes were significantly fewer. This could be the result of a failure to report on the part of the victim's family and friends. However, suicides which were labelled as *others* or *unknown* could actually be related to moral causes, but were not exposed and reported as such.

That "love suicide" accounted for only one entry was a probable indication that it was not accepted as a normal happening. In this light, the increase in the number of suicides resulting from quarrels showed the increase of personal tension in the city.
APPENDIX VIII

Homicide Statistics of Shanghai

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>1929</th>
<th>1930</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1932</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adultery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jealousy</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarrel over Money Matters</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder Motivated by Money</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenge</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Line of Duty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackmail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Shang-hai she-hui t'ung-chi kai-yao [1935], pp. 139-53)

The statistics represent homicide cases reported to the authorities of Shanghai. Causes such as adultery and blackmail were listed but had no entry because they were classifications added on after this period. During this period, most people were probably wary of the family and moral implications of such homicides. Adultery was not only an individual deviance from the family's code of sex behaviour, but subsequently a blemish on the family's honour. Similarly, blackmailers and their victims were both placed under moral scrutiny.
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[Note: Entries 20-23 are not fully transcribed, but they are likely to follow the same format as the preceding entries.]


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