

Abstract

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About the Author

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THE IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT ON WOMEN'S WORK AND STATUS: A CASE STUDY FROM TAIWAN¹

The publication of a special volume on development and the sexual division of labor by Signs in 1981 speaks to the increasing interest in and significance of the impact of development on women's work and status (see Safa and Leacock, 1981). Articles in the volume highlight two questions that figure importantly in discussions of the issue: What is the effect of the structure of world capitalism on the division of labor and women's status? What is the relationship between patriarchy and women's work and status? This paper presents material that may contribute to the ongoing effort to answer these questions.

The paper is about women from a Taiwanese (Chinese) community which, over the past 20 years, has changed from an economic system based almost purely on agriculture to one founded predominantly on off-farm employment. During this period, women have moved from the domestic sector to join the men of their families in the public sector.² Yet, their participation in work outside the home has not been accompanied by a significant redefinition of their status. It is argued in this paper that these women's failure to achieve personal autonomy and authority on the basis of their "productive" labor derives from a system of "patriarchal capitalism" (Leacock, 1981:482) in which traditional ideology maintains and reinforces the subordination of women to the interests of the family, the state, and the international market economy.

The paper begins with a brief description of development planning in Taiwan. Next, the nature of the traditional Chinese family is discussed. Following this discussion, a history of development and women in the village of Hsin Hsing is presented. Finally, in a summary section, the reasons for the lack of improvement in the women's position within the social structure are explored.

Development in Taiwan

When the Chinese Nationalist government retreated to Taiwan in 1949, it found a primarily agricultural island marked by conditions not all favorable to development. The strategies adopted by the government to foster economic growth there have been documented in detail elsewhere (Ho, 1978; Lin, 1973). Thus, suffice it to say that agriculture was strengthened as a base for industrialization; a strategy of import substitution was instituted for a brief period in the 1950s; and in the 1960s a policy was adopted of industrialization through export with heavy reliance on foreign capital and technology. In consequence, as Amsden (1979:372) has noted:

Taiwan's political economy is a tableau of petty and profound maneuvers of international diplomacy. Taiwan is a popular place for the investment of foreign capital. Of all Third World countries, Taiwan's economy is also perhaps the most open to foreign trade....[D]evelopment and unequal exchange have occurred simultaneously in Taiwan, if unequal trade is operationalized as adverse movements in the terms of trade. In only three years between 1953 and 1973 did the net terms of trade turn in Taiwan's favor.

To attract foreign capital, the government introduced numerous tax incentives and established export processing zones that combine "the advantages of an industrial estate with those of a free port" (Ho, 1978: 197). Nevertheless, although these measures undoubtedly helped to create a favorable investment climate in Taiwan, the political stability (financed by massive U.S. aid) that ensured low wage rates there was more important to foreign investors (Ho, 1978: 107-108, 239). Ho, in fact, believes that two of the primary reasons for Taiwan's successful economic development have been: (1) a cheap and elastic labor supply (1978:205, 258); and (2) foreign capital (ibid.:111, 117, 249).

The adoption of an export-oriented industrialization strategy produced dramatic changes in Taiwan's economic structure: Agriculture's share in national output declined and industry's rose.

By the mid-1960s, manufacturing accounted for over 20 percent of Taiwan's GDP, and in 1973, 43 percent. The share of agriculture in the GDP, on the other hand, declined sharply. Agriculture, which contributed 35 percent of the real GDP in 1952, accounted for only 11 percent of the real GDP in 1973. By the early 1970s Taiwan was no longer an agrarian economy, although agriculture still played a vital role (Ho, 1978:130).

As might be expected, industrialization brought about rapid urbanization. Migration accounted for a major part of this urban growth because the economic incentives to take off-farm jobs were powerful. Pressures of population on the land had resulted in farms too small to support family members. Additionally, differences in income derived from the agricultural and industrial sectors were considerable.

Industrialization, however, was not restricted to only a few urban centers. During the 1960s industry began to disperse to the countryside to be near sources of low-cost labor as well as raw materials, and by 1971, 50 percent of the industrial and commercial establishments and 55 percent of the manufacturing establishments in Taiwan were located in rural areas (Ho, 1976:17).³ This boom in rural industrialization accelerated the shift of labor from agriculture, and the proportion of farm households with members working off-farm in rural areas grew. From 1960 to 1970 the percentage of rural-based households that relied exclusively on their farms for income decreased from 45 percent to 30 percent and the percentage that earned more income from off-farm activities than from their farms increased from 23 percent to 29 percent (Ho, 1979:88).

In summary, the decision of the government in the 1960s to emphasize export and labor-intensive industry resulted in urban industrialization and the stagnation of agriculture. In addition, by encouraging the dispersal of industries to Taiwan's largest source of low-cost labor, the decision eventually resulted in rural industrialization. The responses of farm households to these conditions varied, but most were consonant with the traditional culture and Chinese family system.

The Traditional Chinese Family

In China, the economic family, the chia was (and is) the basic socio-economic unit, "consisting of members related to each other by blood, marriage or adoption, and having a common budget and common property" (Lang, 1946:13). Such a family can take one of three forms: conjugal, stem, or joint. The conjugal family consists of man, wife, and unmarried children, although it may be "broken" and consist of childless couples, unmarried brothers and sisters, or single persons (ibid.:14). The joint family includes parents, their unmarried children, their married sons (more than one) and the sons' wives and children (ibid.:14-15). The stem family--a form that lies somewhere between the conjugal and joint family types--consists of the parents, their unmarried children, and one married son with wife and children. The family of this type, too, can be broken, e.g., when only one of the parents is alive or the son has no children (ibid.:14-15).

Whatever form the economic family took, however, its basic features remained the same. All members of the family lived under one roof, except for a few who might work outside to supplement or to diversify the family income and, therefore, lived away from home. Ideally, the family functioned as a single cooperating unit in all its activities--economic, social, religious, and other areas of daily living. Members of the household had clearly defined tasks, primarily on the basis of their gender. The men dominated the public sector, working outside the home in the fields or elsewhere. The women presided over the domestic sector, managing the household, servicing its members, and, not infrequently, engaging in supplemental domestic industry. In other words, men and women performed different tasks and occupied different space as members of a cooperative enterprise in which all property--for example, land, business, house, equipment, or furnishings--belonged to the family as a whole.

Nevertheless, because China was (and is) a society with a patrilineal kinship structure, only male children are considered to be descent group members and to have rights to the descent group's, or family's, property.⁴ Further, when a woman marries, she leaves her natal home to live with her husband's family; postmarital residence is virilocal. In other words, at marriage a woman severs her formal ties with her father's family and becomes a member of her husband's family.

As might be expected, then, there was, and continues to be, a strong preference for male children among Chinese families. Sons ensured the security of the family through its growth and expansion and were a source of support in old age. Daughters, by contrast, were a liability, drawing resources while they grew and withdrawing any assets they held--such as domestic labor power or wage-earning power--when they joined their husband's families in marriage.

Moreover, as also might be expected, there was, and to a large extent continues to be, a strong preference for arranged marriages--rather than free-choice marriage--among the older generation. In part, control of the choice of a son's bride was preferred because marriage was a means by which additional labor power to maintain the economic unit was recruited. Thus, parents wanted to ensure that criteria of strength, skill, and conscientiousness were used in the choice rather than criteria of beauty. In part, control of the choice of a son's bride also was preferred because marriage was a means by which a family established and cultivated social relations that could serve as an important foundation for economic and political activities (see Gallin, 1960). Thus, parents wanted to ensure that familial criteria were used in the choice of a bride rather than individualistic criteria.

In short, the birth of sons and the recruitment of daughters-in-law were avenues by which the Chinese family hoped to secure its future and to achieve upward mobility. A family that included many sons was more able to diversify its economic base, through farm as well as off-farm enterprises, than a family with few sons. A family that included several daughters-in-law was more able to establish and cultivate instrumental networks--and, of course, more able to produce and service economically productive workers--than a family with few such women. The joint family, then, was the economic family par excellence and the ideal--even though it often could not be realized in practice as a result of internal family conflicts born of economically based problems and general poverty.

Whatever form the family took, however, relations within it were hierarchic, in part according to gender and, in part, according to age and position in the family. The oldest male, most usually the father, served as family head (chia-chang), managing the family "estate" and assuming ultimate authority for all members of the family. The degree of his dominance and authoritarianism, however, was influenced by the economic condition of the family. When the financial contributions of the other adult males were indispensable to the viability or functioning of the family, the chia-chang might confer with them on important decisions, and even yield to their wishes. When the family was economically secure, and the chia-chang had complete control of the family's economic assets, he was much more authoritative and domineering.

The wife of the chia-chang was responsible for managing the household. She disciplined the children, using the threat of disclosure to the father as the quintessential form of controlling behavior. (He tended to remain aloof in most dealings with family members, rarely showing overt feelings toward them.) Typically, the mother burdened her daughters with a good deal of responsibility from morning to night. In contrast, she allowed her sons much more freedom, not infrequently overlooking their misdeeds. This disparity in treatment was intentional: The mother was training her daughters for their eventual marriage and she was securing the love and loyalty of her sons who were her future (see also Wolf's 1972 work on the "uterine family").

When the children reached the age of marriage, it was usually the mother who was most active in the negotiations, at least until it was time to negotiate the balance between bride price and dowry. This was so because she had a strong vested interest in the woman who was brought into the family as her daughter-in-law. If the young woman was not tractable, she might be unwilling to take on the household drudgery or to obey her mother-in-law's commands. Ultimately, if she considered her mother-in-law's demands too onerous, she might agitate for division of the household, thereby depriving the parents of their son's labor and, perhaps, even loyalty.

Yet, despite the potential threat a daughter-in-law represented to the unity of the family, she did relieve the older woman of many of the household burdens, and, not infrequently, was a source of companionship. Moreover, her presence in the household had both actual and symbolic value to the older woman. Socialized and habituated from birth to accept her inferiority and subordination to males, a woman not infrequently reveled in the opportunity to exert control over the life of her daughter-in-law. Further, after a lifetime of observing the "three obediences"--to parents, husband, and sons--a woman, when she had a daughter-in-law, assumed a dominant position in the superordinate-subordinate structure that ordered all relations within the family.

It is not difficult, then, to see the implications of the above discussion for the position of women in China. Despite the fact that their work was necessary for the maintenance of the family unit, their labor was taken for granted, as natural to their female existence. Moreover, their status was based not on their hard work and contribution to the family enterprise, but in terms of their reproductive capacities. Women were brought into the family for the purpose of bearing and rearing a new generation and whatever their other achievements might have been, their position in the family was dependent on their fulfilling this expectation. In short, women had no real control over their lives; they were marked by social and economic secondariness.

Development and Women in Hsin Hsing

Hsin Hsing is a nucleated village located beside the road that runs between the market towns of Lu-kang and Ch'i-hu, approximately 125 miles southwest of Taiwan's major city, Taipei. Its people are Hokkien (Minnan) speakers--as are most in the area--whose ancestors emigrated from the Ch'uan-chou and Chang-chou areas of Fukien several hundred years ago. In 1958 the registered population of the village was 609 people in 99 households (hu) or economic families (chia). Approximately four-fifths (82.8 percent) of this population was between the ages of one to forty-four years and slightly less than one-half (48.7 percent) of the villagers were male (see Table 1).

The majority of the population (55.0 percent) were members of conjugal families. Only 10 percent were members of joint families and 35 percent were members of stem families. Among families, the majority were of the conjugal type. That is, 66 percent of the families were conjugal, 5 percent were joint, and the remaining 29 percent were stem. Regardless of family type, however, almost all village families in the 1950s were agriculturalists, deriving most of their livelihood from two crops of rice, from marketable vegetables grown in the third crop, and, in some cases, from farm labor.⁵

Land tenancy was widespread among villagers before implementation of the Land Reform Program of 1949-1953, but decreased significantly thereafter. Prior to the land reform, 58 percent of the land was cultivated by tenant farmers. In contrast, by 1957 only 27 percent of the land was farmed by tenants. Despite this change in the tenancy/ownership ratio, most families cultivated farms far too small to support all family members, a consequence of a growing population on a relatively stable land base.⁶

Villagers, however, had few alternatives besides farming because the township in which Hsin Hsing is located had almost no local industries and few job opportunities. Thus, they farmed "...with the help of simple equipment and the labour of their families,...[producing] mainly for their own consumption and for the fulfillment of obligations to the holders of political and economic power" (Shanin, 1971:240). All family members were expected to work and the work in which they engaged was based on sex role differentiation.

Men most often worked in the fields, taking care of the heavier tasks such as plowing, harrowing, transplanting, and harvesting, tasks women were considered incapable of doing. In addition, some hired out as farm laborers during the agricultural busy seasons, peddled vegetables during the slack season, or migrated seasonally to cities to work as laborers. Women, in contrast, managed the house and children, raised and cared for poultry (men assumed responsibility for more valuable livestock such as pigs and oxen), dried and preserved crops, helped with lighter agricultural tasks such as weeding fields or drying rice, and, in their "spare time," wove fiber hats at home to supplement the family income. (Only a handful worked outside the home for cash, specifically a few unmarried girls who worked in a sugar factory in the mountains.)

Children, too, were expected to work. But, in general, girls had many more responsibilities than their brothers. The villagers believed that if a girl was given too much freedom at home she would "...be unhappy when she later married and finds she has a strict mother-in-law....[S]he must learn how to work so her parents-in-law won't get angry with her. It is also easier to marry her out if she learns to work well, since a boy's family wants a good worker" (Gallin, 1966:201; see also Wolf, 1972).

Accordingly, girls from an early age on were expected to help with the myriad tasks their mothers performed. The activities of their brothers, in contrast, were less restricted and most did not take on substantial responsibilities until they were 16 years of age when, in theory, they were considered adults. Both girls and boys, however, were required to attend school--six years of primary education was "compulsory"--and almost all (86.3 percent) did; most villagers recognized the importance of education, and, in fact, would have been pleased with the familial ideology stressed in the school had they been aware of it. Nevertheless, parents harbored some ambivalence about both the value and cost of education for girls. As a result, only 80 percent of the girls attended school in contrast to 95 percent of the boys.

In short, during the 1950s, the allocation of social roles coincided with traditional norms. Men and women both labored in an attempt to maintain the family's solvency. The general rule for women, however, was "up earlier and to bed later." Further, although boys and girls both were expected to contribute labor to the family enterprise, girls were expected to contribute more than boys.

This situation began to change in the late 1950s and early 1960s as the growing intensity of population pressure on the land created problems of underemployment and farms too small to support family members. Given the dearth of employment opportunities in the local area, increasing numbers of village males began to migrate to the larger cities of the province to seek jobs and supplemental income.⁷

During the earliest part of the move outward, migrants tended to be older, married men (see Gallin and Gallin, 1974). By the late 1950s and 1960s, however, they more often were young, single males. Some of the married men who migrated early eventually brought their wives and children to the city. Others, however, continued to maintain their families in the village while they worked in the city. As a result, in 1965 the resident population of the village was different in some--but not all--ways from that of 1958.⁸

The size of the village population had remained fairly constant over the seven years, that is, 509 people were estimated to live there in 1958, while 506 people lived (and 612 people were registered) there in 1965. In addition, approximately four-fifths (79.6 percent) of the resident population was between the ages of one to forty-five years. The percentage of population between the ages of 16 to 44 years of age, however, had decreased during the seven years between 1958 and 1965 (see Table 1). Further, the percentage of males in the village had dropped to 44.9 percent and, more striking, only thirty-four percent of the 16 to 44 year old cohort was male.

The migration of males to the city, then, left a cohort of women who were required to assume responsibility for the family farm, in addition to all their other traditional responsibilities. What this means is that married women became farm managers. They hired people to plow, transplant

seedlings, weed, and if the men were unable to leave their work in the city, to harvest the crops.⁹ In addition, they paid wages and arranged for the payment of taxes and exchange of rice for fertilizer. Moreover, they spent a good deal of time in the fields supervising laborers or checking the flow of irrigation water. In other words, women moved from an auxiliary to a main force within agriculture, participating in the public sector formerly dominated by the men of their families.

The entry of women into the public sector, however, was not accompanied by changes in the structure of status and authority within the family. There are two plausible explanations for this lack of change. First, a woman's managerial labors were considered her contribution to the family enterprise, her family duty (see also Scott and Tilly, 1975). But because the livelihood of the family depended more on her husband's wages than on the minimal profits reaped from the land, her work was considered less significant and, therefore, not valued as highly.¹⁰ Second, the "feminization" of agriculture meant a new sexual division of labor. But because of the traditional view of the economic secondariness of women's work, women's new role inherited this same evaluation and, therefore, was not accorded esteem. Work as a farm manager, then, was a source of neither power nor prestige for a woman.

It was not only married women, however, who took on new roles in response to the withdrawal of men from the rural labor force. Their daughters' lives were affected as well. Because their mothers were preoccupied with the farm, daughters were required to assume more responsibility and more tasks at ages much younger than they normally would; sometimes they were kept so busy they could not attend school regularly. In addition, because of most families' poor economic condition, daughters began to be sent to the cities to earn supplemental income in the many factories that burgeoned there in the early 1960s.

In part, parents were willing to send their daughters to work outside because factories did attempt to serve in loco parentis, providing dormitories in which young girls were protected from sexual exploitation.¹¹ In part, however, parents also were willing to send their daughters to work outside because their remittances often were a major contribution to the family treasury. Nevertheless, even though the work of unmarried females not infrequently helped guarantee the family's economic survival, they too continued to be defined by traditional norms and values.

The traditional definition of the status of unmarried women continued for two reasons. First, daughters were fulfilling traditional expectations by working, that is, their work contributed to the maintenance of the family unit. Accordingly, control over their wages and decisions affecting their lives continued to be held by the parents. Second, the value of their contributions to the family's economy was not considered balanced by the costs incurred in raising and marrying them out. Accordingly, in their parents' eyes they represented a drain on the family's "fortunes" that might better be invested in sons.

In sum, women assumed new roles in the 1960s, but assumption of these roles was not accompanied by new definitions of their place in the social structure. The question is then: What was the experience of women during the 1970s when the villagers' economic system was transformed? It is to this question that I now turn.

In the 1950s, the bus ride from Lu-kang to Hsin Hsing was made on a dirt road flanked by clusters of village houses, farmland, and one "factory" that produced bricks. In 1979, the ride was made on a cement road flanked by clusters of village houses, farmland, and over 30 factories. These factories were labor-intensive, relied on a cheap labor force, and ranged from large establishments that manufactured textiles and furniture, to medium-sized enterprises that built bamboo and wood products, to small satellite factories (or family workshops) that performed piece work for larger firms. In addition to those situated along the road, the area was dotted with other factories that also produced articles for local and foreign consumption. Further, the neighboring township housed a government-sponsored industrial park that was located six miles from Hsin Hsing and was the site of the largest export shoe manufacturing concern in Taiwan.

These factories, however, generated only a portion of the job opportunities available in the area. Still others were provided by the service and retail sales shops and the building construction outfits that had burgeoned in the area. In Hsin Hsing alone, seven small satellite factories offered employment to the members of the owners' families as well as to unrelated villagers. In addition, three villagers operated artisan workshops themselves or with the help of family members, and 26 villagers operated retail and service shops, small businesses, and itinerant marketing enterprises.¹²

Given this rural industrialization, it was not surprising to find that the system of farming in the area had changed. In the 1950s, most farming was done by hand labor, that is, by large numbers of men using simple tools. In 1979, the need for either a physically strong or a large labor force had been obviated by the modernization of agriculture. The introduction of herbicides made it unnecessary for large numbers of people to spend arduous and time-consuming labor weeding the rice paddies. Similarly, the development of tube wells operated by diesel engines or electric motors did away with much of the heavy physical labor, as well as the time constraints, involved in irrigating the fields. In point of fact, only a few tasks involved in the cultivation of rice were done by family members manually and these few were among the least strenuous in the process--broadcasting seeds, pulling seedlings in preparation for transplanting, spreading fertilizers and herbicides, and irrigating.

All other tasks were performed by hired laborers, usually using machines. Power tillers, operated by their owners, had almost completely replaced the plow and water buffalo. Transplanting machines, manned by

their owners or hired specialists, had superseded family hand labor. And harvesting machines, handled by their owners and their assistants or by hired labor teams, had supplanted traditional exchange labor groupings.

A comparison of the structure of the village population in 1979 with those of 1958 and 1965 suggests the way in which the villagers had responded to these economic changes. The data showed that although 606 people were registered in the village in 1979, only 383 actually lived there (see Table 1). Further, the character of the population resident in the village had changed. The percentage of children 15 years of age or younger had decreased, suggesting that villagers had modified their reproductive behavior (see also Davis, 1963). Further, the percentage of males in the village had increased to 50.9 percent of the population. More striking, however, was: (1) that the proportion of villagers between the ages of 16 to 44 had remained fairly constant; and (2) that males comprised fifty-one percent of this cohort, a percentage approximately one and one-half times greater than that found for males in this cohort in 1965.

This difference, in part, was an indication of the decreasing migration of men and the increasing migration of unmarried females to urban areas. But, the difference also was an indication of the increased stream of movement into the village by earlier out-migrants. Between 1945 and 1969, 45 of the several hundred persons who had migrated had returned permanently to the village. (Included among these 45 were many who went to the city as seasonal workers and several others who simply did not like life in the city and so returned to the village.) In contrast, between 1970 and 1979, thirty-eight migrants--almost as many in one decade as in the previous two and one-half decades--returned permanently to the village. In part, the return migration of these people reflected a response to the availability of land as a resource to help support family members during the resettlement period. But in part, the remigration of these people also reflected a response to the intense competition and high costs in the city and, as might be expected, the obverse in the home area.¹³

Further comparison of the data suggests another way in which the villagers responded to economic development in the rural area. The distribution of villagers by family type had changed considerably between 1958 and 1979; there were one-half fewer conjugal families and almost three times as many joint families in the village in 1979 as there were in 1958 (conjugal: 33 and 66, respectively; and joint: 13 and 5, respectively). Obviously, economic development had not been inimical to complex family organization in Hsin Hsing.

There are two plausible explanations for this finding. First, the number of joint families had increased because villagers believed that this type family was an excellent mechanism for socioeconomic success in a changing world. Economic diversification and extensive relationships with people outside the area still were considered requisites for achieving wealth and social status. Thus, a family that consisted of many potential workers, as well as other members who could perform tasks

necessary for the functioning of the family (for example, management of the household, supervision of children, or care of the land), had a better chance of diversifying economically than did a family of small size. Moreover, a family that consisted of several daughters-in-law had more opportunities to establish and cultivate instrumental networks than did a family of small size. In short, the large joint family was seen as an avenue by which prosperity could be secured.

Second, joint families managed to maintain themselves as single units in Hsin Hsing by consciously modifying the structural arrangements of the family. Traditionally, income earned by family members became part of a joint treasury and was used to support the individual members of the larger unit. Cohen (1976) and Yang (1945) have pointed out, however, that opportunities did exist for individuals within the large family to accumulate private money for use by their own conjugal rights. Sons might do some "trading" and retain any profits if they borrowed money on their own credit and took all responsibility for whatever risks were involved (Yang, 1945:79). Wives could retain the money they brought to their homes as brides--that is, sai-khia (Hokkien) or szu-fang-ch'ien (Mandarin)--and any funds they were able to earn during times over which family control did not extend, for example, the periods before breakfast or after supper when there was no family work (Cohen, 1976:181; Yang, 1945:79). Ideally all earnings became part of a common coffer, but in practice private money or sai-khia could be accumulated by individual members (male or female) of the family. Nevertheless, traditionally the practice had been discouraged "by the family at large" because it threatened its unity (Yang, *ibid.*).

In Hsin Hsing, however, not only was the practice encouraged in the late 1970s, it might be said to have been institutionalized. A joint treasury, controlled by the father (chia-chang), was maintained and used to cover the cost of gifts and medical and household expenses (for example, food, utilities, and taxes), to provide capital to begin businesses, and to pay all educational expenses (be they for grammar school, high school, college, or apprenticeship training). But, the contributions of family members to this treasury were neither equal nor total. Only the chia-chang continued to deposit all of his earnings, if any, into the common coffer. Married sons deposited only a portion of their wages or business profits into the family treasury and daughters-in-law contributed none of their earnings to the joint coffer. What this means is that sons were permitted to keep some, and their wives all, of their earnings as savings for future ventures and/or investments and as funds for the clothing and recreation of their own conjugal units.

Moreover, daughters-in-law were encouraged to engage in remunerative activities during the time traditionally reserved for activities on behalf of the larger family. (Indeed, village families reported that they wanted their sons to marry women who had work experience so that they were equipped to re-enter the labor market after marriage.) This was so because parents realized that such activity furthered the achievement of the ultimate objective of the family, the postponement of its premature division. Permitting a woman to earn money in order to provide for the

personal needs of her family mitigated potential conflicts over perceived economic inequities, traditionally a cause of early family division. Further, permitting a woman to earn money in order to provide venture capital and savings for her individual family strengthened its self-sufficiency and prepared it to assume economic independence. In short, a phenomenon (i.e., sai-khia) formerly viewed as a potential threat to family unity, in 1979 was used as a mechanism to foster its unity and continuity. (See Gallin and Gallin, in press, for a more detailed discussion.)

That this modification in the arrangements of the joint family was common in Hsin Hsing can be seen from the fact that almost three-quarters (70 percent) of the women who were under forty years of age and members of joint families engaged in remunerative activities (see Table 2). These women were able to work because their mothers-in-law assumed some of their role responsibilities, for example, supervised their children or worked the family land. By contrast, women without available mothers-in-law were far less likely to engage in remunerative activities. Only one-third (33.3 percent) of the women who were under forty years of age and members of conjugal families worked for salaries or wages.

It is obvious, then, that the existence of a supportive family structure in which mothers-in-law take over some of the younger women's domestic tasks has a direct impact on the work access of women. Accordingly, the modified joint family had become a strategy adopted by some villagers to attain the ultimate goal of the family, the development of the economic potential and security of each conjugal unit within it. The attainment of this goal, however, was, in no small part, at the expense of the daughters-in-law (and to a lesser extent the older women) who: (1) assumed double work loads; and (2) achieved security only in the social mobility of the family.

Village families, however, employed a variety of strategies during the 1970s to promote their well-being. Wives of those men who no longer considered farming as either their primary or secondary activity (16.4 percent) increasingly took to the fields, replacing their husbands as the primary agriculturalist in the family; land usually was not allowed to lie fallow because it was a source of food, i.e., rice, and additional taxes were imposed on fields left uncultivated. Further, to the extent that working was compatible with their child-care responsibilities, married women increasingly entered the wage-labor market to earn supplemental funds for the family.¹⁴

The movement of women into the public sector in the 1970s can be seen from the fact that only one-third (32.9 percent) of the married women in the village identified their primary activity as housekeeping, their traditional task (see Table 3). The remainder, with the exception of two older, retired women, identified their primary activity in terms other than traditional ones. Approximately two-fifths of the married women (39.9 percent) identified their primary activity as work for remuneration (i.e., wage laborers and entrepreneurs), and one-quarter (25.9 percent)

identified their primary activity as non-remunerated work in the public sector (i.e., farmers and assistants in a family business). While it might be argued that farming and helping with a family business fall within the traditional definition of the female role, nonetheless, it is a fact that such activities were traditionally considered secondary to women's primary responsibility for the management and maintenance of the household.

Given the fact, then, that married women in the 1970s assumed new roles, one might ask: Was this change accompanied by changes in the structure of their relations with men? The answer is no. Male authority was evident in all walks of life in the village. For example, while men had considerable leisure in the evening, women carried on time-consuming household activities. In addition, men were served their meals first and women ate whatever was left over. Further, men continued to be the primary representative of the family at public events such as village meetings or public religious rituals. Women might have done most of the work for and participation in such rituals, but it was only the men who planned and performed the ritual in the role of shamans or priests.

It was not only in situations internal to the village, however, that male authority was evident. It was evident in situations external to the village as well. Earlier it was seen that five married women were engaged in entrepreneurial activities. Three of these women operated satellite factories in which the products of larger firms were assembled; a fourth operated a large piggery; and the fifth operated the village barber shop. All of these enterprises were located in the village. Yet, with the exception of the barber shop, their operation required that the women go outside the local area to negotiate the terms of their responsibilities and the sale of their products. The women, however, did not do this; their husbands did.

There are several explanations that could be given for this phenomenon, and two were offered by the women's husbands. First, women lack the knowledge and skills required to negotiate "good terms with experienced businessmen." This explanation might be correct. Yet, the fact that the women were able to hire and supervise staffs of workers does suggest that they were not totally lacking in negotiatory skills. Further, anyone familiar with female shopkeepers in China can attest to their well-honed bargaining skills. Second, women have no independent means of transportation to travel to the sites where they must deal with other businesspeople, that is, they "do not know how to operate a motorcycle." This explanation was being offered by a husband when his wife drove up on one of the five motorcycles owned by the family; he amended his statement by explaining that his wife had just learned how to drive the vehicle.

Third, interaction with businessmen outside the local area enhances the danger of promiscuity among women, particularly in a society in which business negotiations not infrequently are transacted in wine houses. This explanation was not offered by the husbands of the entrepreneurs. Yet, it is reasonable that husbands might be mistrustful of situations

that exposed their wives to such interaction with unrelated males. As a result, the husbands might well have assumed responsibility for maintaining contacts and dealing with the businessmen with whom their wives had to interact.

In sum, the assumption of new roles by married women during the 1970s was not accompanied by appreciable changes in their status relative to men's. In large part, women continued to function under traditional norms of subordination, secondariness, and dependence, despite the fact that the success of their families depended upon their efforts and skills. Their burdens were heavy; they played a dual role and worked harder than men.

It was not only married women, however, who took on new roles in response to economic developments in the area, as well as elsewhere in the province. Their daughters also increasingly entered the wage-labor market. Four-fifths (80.6 percent) of the unmarried females in the village worked for salaries or wages in 1979 (see Table 4). Approximately half of these women worked in the local area (51.6 percent) and half worked in the cities (48.4 percent), principally in Taipei. (No doubt, more would have worked outside had job opportunities not been available in the local area.) Only a handful, three (9.7 percent), were still in school.¹⁵

The brothers of these women worked as well. But an inspection of the data shows that the work activities of unmarried males were different from those of unmarried females. Although a majority (58.1 percent) of the girls worked in factories, only about one-tenth (12.9 percent) of the boys worked at such jobs (see Table 4). In point of fact, almost half (45.1 percent) of the single males either were skilled entrepreneurs or worked at jobs that required skill or knowledge. Moreover, a greater proportion of the unmarried men (22.6 percent) were in school or in training as apprentices than were the unmarried women (9.7 percent). What this means is that sons were given a different amount and kind of education than daughters. More specifically, parents invested in their sons' futures by subsidizing their higher education or training as skilled laborers. Their daughters, in contrast, were sent to work at unskilled, low-paying jobs in which their chances for advancement were negligible.

This disparity was mirrored in the disposition of the earnings of unmarried daughters and sons. The wages of unmarried females were given to their parents--with the exception of a small amount that was retained as pocket money--either to supplement the family budget or to be invested in money-lending clubs until cash was needed to purchase their dowries and start their sai-khia. In contrast, although unmarried sons also were expected to give a portion of their earnings to their parents (albeit a smaller portion), few did. Moreover, few unmarried sons saved a portion of the money they retained, as was expected, for use at the time of their marriage. (One village mother complained to us--not to her son--that "he treats his wages as if they were his sai-khia.")

The reasons for these differences are not difficult to unravel. Boys remained in the family, and, therefore, an investment in their training was an investment in the family's future. Girls, in contrast, married out and, therefore, an investment in their training had little future value. Further, by ending their training early and sending daughters to work, parents garnered money that either: (1) could be used to support sons in training; or (2) could be used to purchase more substantial dowries for their daughters, thereby allowing the parents to negotiate marriage arrangements and establish linkages with families of greater substance and influence. In this sense, then, the earnings of daughters released money from the family treasury--money that might otherwise have been spent on them--for investment in the family's sons and future.

The seeming nonchalance with which most parents accepted the desultoriness of their sons in depositing portions of their earnings into the family coffer also was a reflection of the permanent nature of boys. Sons perpetuated the line of descent and, ideally, provided support for parents in old age. Sons, however, armed with skills and knowledge (in many cases acquired at their sisters' expense), no longer were completely dependent on their patrimony; they were able to sell their labor power and, if they wanted, provide for a life independent of the larger family unit. Accordingly, they rarely were censured when they failed to meet expectations about their contributions to the family treasury. Their good-will and loyalties had to be maintained.

Daughters, in contrast, were remarkably compliant in giving parents that portion of their wages that was expected. This was so because, for most, work did not lead to autonomous decision-making or independence; lacking skills and knowledge, daughters had few alternatives other than marriage and family. Their jobs, however, offered little opportunity for meeting young men and they continued to rely on the help of parents and kin to find husbands. Further, the extent to which the families of their future husbands provided social mobility was, in part, a function of the size of their dowry. Daughters, therefore, turned over their wages to their parents; they had few other options. Their hard work had not won them equality of opportunity.

Summary and Conclusions

The subject of this paper has been the impact of economic development on women's work and status. Anthropological and sociological data collected over a 20-year period showed how peasant women who primarily performed domestic roles based on traditional norms were transformed into "workers" who played a significant role in the agricultural and industrial sectors of the economy. It was seen that the 1950s villagers were tied to the land and the allocation of roles reflected a dichotomy of public and private domains; men worked outside the house, primarily on the farm, and women presided over the household. By contrast, in the late 1970s, a plethora of jobs were available off the land and the assumption of roles was more fluid. Men were joined by women in the public sector, but the corollary was not true. Men did not move into the domestic sector.¹⁶

The data showed that the entry of women into both the agricultural and non-agricultural labor force reflected a response to both demand and supply factors (see Tiano, 1981). During the late 1950s and 1960s women were drawn into the agricultural labor force when men--plagued by problems of underemployment, farms too small to support family members, and a dearth of local off-farm job opportunities--migrated to cities to service their growing populations. During the 1970s women were drawn into the industrial labor force when the rural supply of workers was insufficient to meet the needs of the labor-intensive industries that burgeoned in the area.

Familial considerations, in contrast, acted as supply side factors that propelled women into the agricultural and industrial labor forces. Unmarried daughters were sent to work to supplement the family income and to subsidize the training of their brothers who were the family's future. Married women were moved from an auxiliary to a main force in agriculture to manage farms that, although not the mainstay of the family's livelihood, provided food for consumption. Married women, in addition, were pressed into remunerative activities to earn money either to guarantee the family's economic survival or to advance its fortunes.

The data also showed that the legal and social changes that accompanied economic development did not appreciably enhance women's autonomy and authority. Laws were enacted to alter traditional patterns of inheritance and provide women institutionalized access to the property of their family. Nevertheless, customary law continued a de facto practice and women did not claim their inheritance. They accepted their dowry--to which they made a substantial contribution--as their patrimony and continued to lack control over the means of production. In addition, although married women "owned" their sai-khia--husbands have no rights to their wives' private money--married women used their money to help support or to provide venture capital and savings for their individual (conjugal) families, not to promote their own economic independence. Similarly, although women could sell their labor power they were fated to low-paying, dead-end jobs because they lacked non-material resources such as knowledge and skills. In point of fact, the women of Hsin Hsing continued to be dependent on the family and their welfare and social standing were bound up with its success.

Further, although a number of women joined the families of their husbands by "free-choice" rather than being brought there by traditionally arranged marriages, once women became members of their husbands' families, their goals were defined for, not by, them. They were expected to conform to traditional familial norms--to bear and rear children and contribute their labor to the family enterprise. Despite the fact that their work was necessary for the maintenance of the family unit--and was used as part of the variety of strategies adopted by families to promote their well-being--women's labor was taken for granted, as natural to their female existence. In short, the women of Hsin Hsing continued to be members of households, not individuals.

Was the lack of change in the position of these women in the social structure a reflection of the persistence of traditional culture? There is no question that women in Hsin Hsing continued to be viewed--and to view themselves--as an input of labor to the household economy and a means through which the family line was perpetuated. Continuities from the traditional past, then, would seem to be a plausible explanation for their subordinate position relative to men.

If, however, the norms and values of tradition continue to define the status of women in a developing society such as Taiwan the question becomes: Why do cultural traditions persist? I would argue that they persist because traditional ideology is congruent with the political economy of Taiwan (see also Gates, 1979). Let me explain. Taiwan's economy is dependent on foreign capital and trade; the government must maintain a favorable investment climate--that is, political stability and low wage rates--to ensure that capital is not driven to seek a cheap labor force elsewhere. In addition, Taiwan's economy is inextricably linked to the capitalist economy and, therefore, extremely vulnerable to international market fluctuations. Accordingly, the government must maintain an elastic labor force responsive to the demands of cyclical economic processes.

Women meet all the criteria defining the requisite labor force.¹⁷ First, they are a submissive and docile labor force, willing to accept low wages and unlikely to agitate for increases in these wages. Second, they are a minimally trained labor force, willing to accept the lackluster and poorly paid jobs available in labor-intensive industries. Third, they are a transient labor force, willing to accept low wages and unlikely to remain long enough to demand higher wages and job benefits. Fourth, they are a tractable labor force, willing to be drawn into or expelled from the labor market according to the exigent needs of the capitalist economy.

Women manifest these traits because their lives continue to be governed by the precepts of the family. Socialized in norms of hard work, responsibility, compliance, and subordination to the interests of the patriline, women accept the fact that they are expected to sell their labor power to repay the costs of rearing and marrying them and of reproducing the family group. Held responsible for the maintenance and servicing of the household, women accept the fact that they are expected to carry the double burden of domestic responsibilities and public labor. Provided with only a modicum of education and training, women accept the fact that they are expected to seek security and upward mobility through marriage and the advancement of the group's economy. Patriarchal ideology, in sum, effectively maintains and reinforces values and behaviors necessary for contemporary capitalism.

The position of women within the social structure, then, is not simply a legacy of traditional culture. It derives from a system of "patriarchal capitalism" in which women's subordination is reproduced to maintain and justify the employment practices that underpin the political economy. To ensure sustained production at low cost during periods of economic growth and political stability during periods of economic recession, government--

through the educational system and the mass media--encourages an ideological environment that relegates women to menial labor and household tasks. The marriage of patriarchal ideology and contemporary capitalism allows the family, the nation, and the international market economy to take advantage of women's unpaid-domestic and underpaid-public labor. Development in Taiwan, then, has neither altered cultural definitions of male and female roles nor transformed the structure of status and authority within the family.

NOTES

1. The research on which this paper is based spans a 20-year period of work with Hokkien Chinese whose home village is located on the west-central coastal plain of Taiwan. The first field research, in 1957-1958, involved a 17-month residence in a rural agricultural village, Hsin Hsing, and focused on changing patterns of peasant life within the larger settings of regional and national development. This work was followed by two separate studies, in 1965-1966 and 1969-1970, of out-migrants from the area in which the social and economic correlates of migration within the city and country-side were examined. The most recent research, carried out during two months in 1977 and six months in 1979, involved a return to the village area and focused on socio-economic change within the context of global development. During these field investigations, data were collected via anthropological and sociological techniques, for example, participant observation, in-depth interviews, surveys, census, and collection of official statistics contained in family, land, school, and economic records. These data provide extensive ethnographic and archival documentation of the area over time, offering a dischronic view of the way in which these people have responded to economic development and how their lives have been affected by these changes.

The research was carried out in collaboration with Bernard Gallin, Ph.D., whose insights have contributed immeasurably to my intellectual growth. We acknowledge with thanks the organizations that provided financial assistance over the years and made our several field trips to Taiwan possible. Specifically, funding was provided by a Foreign Area Training Fellowship, a Fulbright-Hays Research Grant, the Asian Studies Center at Michigan State University, the Mid-Western Universities Consortium for International Activities, the Social Sciences Research Council, and the Pacific Cultural Foundation.

2. Throughout this paper the terms domestic sector and public sector are used to distinguish between the private context of household service and the public context of income-generating work. As will be seen below, however, the separation between the sectors never was as rigid as the terms imply.
3. Ho's data are not disaggregated by location, but our observations suggest that throughout the 1960s industry and commerce mainly penetrated towns and rural areas within commuting distance to cities, not the more distant countryside such as the Hsin Hsing area.
4. Promulgation of laws both in Taiwan and the People's Republic of China, however, have attempted to alter this traditional pattern of inheritance and to provide women institutionalized access to the property of their family of origin.

5. The two exceptions were the sons of a formerly large, landlord family. One of these men was a physician who had received his medical training in Japan during the 1940s. The other, his brother, operated a business that he had established after his land was expropriated during the Land Reform of 1949-1953.
6. In 1957, 45 percent of the village families cultivated below 0.5 hectares of land and 84 percent cultivated below 1.0 hectares. Put another way, on the average 0.12 chia of land was cultivated per person in the village.
7. The influx of Chinese from the mainland to Taiwan after the Communists assumed power in 1949 created many service jobs that rural villagers filled. Hsin Hsing migrants, men with little capital, low educational levels, and few skills, were a part of this cohort.
8. Official township records were the source of the population figures for 1958, while survey interviews provided the data for 1965 and 1979. Not until the second field trip were complete data collected for both resident and registered populations and thus official figures must be used for this earlier period. Nevertheless, those data available for 1958-1959 indicate that approximately 100 male villagers were working outside the village during that period. It is assumed, therefore, that the official figures do not distort reality enough to make the comparison unwarranted.
9. Women were hired primarily to weed fields, although male labor teams hired to perform heavier tasks sometimes included one or two women. A majority of such labor teams were from outside the local area.
10. Women's new agricultural role also was not recognized officially. Their occupation continued to be listed as "housewife" in the official records of the township and their husbands, who worked in the city, were designated as "farmer."
11. Such a system served the factory owners' interests as well; housing workers in dormitories helped control and limit the mobility of the employers' labor force.
12. For a detailed discussion of socioeconomic changes in the village area between 1958 and 1979, see Gallin and Gallin, 1982.
13. It is difficult to document the reasons for these centripetal and centrifugal forces, but they undoubtedly are linked to international and national developments. The oil crisis of 1974 and the world recession and inflation of 1974-1975, together with the resultant changes in the world market, momentarily slowed the pace of industrialization in the cities of Taiwan (Taiwan Statistical Data Book, 1979: 78). This forced some factories to shut down and others to cut back production, at least temporarily. At that time, the rapidly increasing costs of materials, land, and particularly urban labor, together

with a greatly improving province-wide highway and truck transport system, spurred and made it desirable and profitable for businessmen to seek out and take advantage of less costly rural land on which to locate factories and a cheaper labor force to staff them. Concomitantly, the implementation of the government's "Accelerated Rural Development Program" created a climate in which farmers believed they could derive benefits--increased income--from cultivating their land. Further, the promotion of rural industrialization encouraged the increasing establishment of factories in rural areas. In short, off-farm job opportunities were created during a period when agriculture was made a more profitable activity.

14. The proportion of married women working in the rural area is much higher than in the city (see Diamond, 1979; and Kung, 1976), a result of an imbalance between supply and demand in the countryside. That is, the pool of available single women is small and the demand for cheap labor large. Thus, married women are recruited into the labor force.
15. Since 1969 lower middle school education has been compulsory in Taiwan. Most young people graduate at the age of 15 or 16 and the majority immediately enter the labor force (see Diamond, 1979; and Kung, 1976).
16. The only males ever reported to "keep house" were the earliest married migrants. They quickly gave up this activity, however, when they were joined by their wives or returned to the village. In the 1970s, married migrants tended to be young and to be joined by their wives in the city almost immediately after the move. Unmarried men who lived away from home most frequently lodged with kin, usually a brother and his wife, or with the "master" to whom they had been apprenticed.
17. My comments in the following discussion apply only to women who are members of the petty bourgeoisie and proletariat. (For a discussion of the role and status of women in the "new middle class"--i.e., that class made up of white-collar workers, managers, and administrators employed by the government or by private corporations--see Diamond, 1975.) According to Gates (1979:390-391), the petty bourgeoisie comprises approximately 47 percent of Taiwan's population and includes almost all agricultural owner-operators and a large group of small businesspeople and artisans. The proletariat makes up about 20 percent of the population and includes factory hands, construction workers, sales clerks, hired artisans, and landless agricultural workers.

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Table 1. Population of Hsin Hsing By Period, and Age of Residents

Age	Period					
	1958		1965		1979	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1 to 15 Years of Age	269	44.2	237	46.8	151	39.4
16 to 44 Years of Age	235	38.6	166	32.8	129	33.7
45 to 64 Years of Age	90	14.8	78	15.4	78	20.4
65 Years of Age and Older	15	2.5	25	4.9	25	6.5
TOTALS	609	100.0	506	100.0	383	100.0
SEX RATIOS	95		82		113	

Sources: 1958, Household record book (hukou), Pu Yen Township Public Office
 1965 and 1979, Field Interviews

Table 2. Work Status of Hsin Hsing Married Women By Age and Family Type, January-June, 1979

Family Type/Age	Work Status				Totals	
	Working for Remuneration		Not Working for Remuneration			
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<u>Conjugal</u>						
20 to 39	4	33.3	8	66.7	12	100.0
40 and older	10	52.6	9	47.4	19	100.0
<u>Stem</u>						
20 to 39	7	50.0	7	50.0	14	100.0
40 and older	3	16.7	15	83.3	18	100.0
<u>Joint</u>						
20 to 39	7	70.0	3	30.0	10	100.0
40 and older	2	16.7	10	83.3	12	100.0
TOTALS	33	38.8	52	61.2	85	100.0

Source: Field Interviews

Table 3. Primary and Secondary Activities of Hsin Hsing Married Women By Age, January-June, 1979

Activity	Age				Totals	
	20 to 39		40 and Older		Number	Percent
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
<u>Primary Activity</u>						
Farmer	7	19.4	11	22.4	18	21.2
Housekeeper	10	27.8	18	36.7	28	32.9
Wage Laborer	13	36.1	15	30.6	28	32.9
Entrepreneur	5	13.9	--	--	5	5.9
Helper Family Business	1	2.8	3	6.1	4	4.7
Retired	--	--	2	4.1	2	2.4
TOTALS	36	100.0	49	100.0	85	100.0
<u>Secondary Activity</u>						
Farmer	10	50.0	7	50.0	17	50.0
Housekeeper	6	30.0	6	42.9	12	35.3
Wage Laborer	2	10.0	1	7.1	3	8.8
Entrepreneur	--	--	--	--	--	--
Helper Family Business	2	10.0	--	--	2	5.9
TOTALS	20	100.0	14	100.0	34	100.0

Source: Field Interviews

Table 4. Activities of Unmarried Hsin Hsing Villagers 16 Years of Age and Older, by Sex, Location, and Type of Activity, January-June, 1979

Sex and Location	Type of Activity										Totals	
	School and Apprenticeship		Entrepreneurial (Self-Employed)		Factory Work		Clerical and Skilled Labor		Family Business with Indefinite Wages			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<u>Female</u>												
Local	1	6.2	--		10	62.5	3	18.8	2	12.5	16	51.6
Non-local	2	13.3	1	6.7	8	53.3	3	20.0	1	6.7	15	48.4
TOTALS	3	9.7	1	3.2	18	58.1	6	19.3	3	9.7	31	100.0
<u>Male</u>												
Local	4	25.0	4	25.0	1	6.2	3	18.8	4	25.0	16	51.6
Non-Local	3	20.0	4	26.7	3	20.0	3	20.0	2	13.3	15	48.4
TOTALS	7	22.6	8	25.8	4	12.9	6	19.3	6	19.3	31	100.0

Source: Field Interviews. Fourteen young men serving in the army were excluded from the analysis.

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