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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the challenges facing the modern Chinese family in Taiwan. An understanding of how culture and family life interact in other cultures may be useful in helping to understand such interactions in one's own society. Confucianism and family stability have been two enduring features of the protracted civilizations of China. In recent years, Taiwan has been influenced by dramatic cultural, economic, social, and political changes, all of which have threatened the traditional Chinese family configurations and relational patterns. Industrialization, urbanization, and Westernization have led to numerous changes in the fabric of Chinese family life in Taiwan. The role of women, education, divorce, recreation, religion, childrearing, pollution, aging, military service, filial piety, consumerism, and family interaction are discussed and analyzed. A bibliography of 64 references is included. (Author/DB)

THE CHINESE FAMILY IN TRANSITION:

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION AND SOCIETY IN MODERN TAIWAN

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ABSTRACT

THE CHINESE FAMILY IN TRANSITION

This paper investigates the challenges that are facing the modern Chinese family in Taiwan.

Confucianism and family stability have been two enduring features of the protracted civilizations of China. In recent years Taiwan has been influenced by dramatic cultural, economic, social, and political changes, all of which have threatened the traditional Chinese family configurations and relational pattern.

Industrialization, urbanization and Westernization have led to numerous changes in the fabric of Chinese family life in Taiwan. The role of women, education, divorce, recreation, religion, childrearing, pollution, aging, military service, filial-piety, consumerism and family interaction are discussed and analyzed in this essay.

An understanding of how culture and family life interact in other cultures may be useful in helping us understand such interactions in our own society. This is the underlying theme of the essay.

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Foreword

The purpose of this article is to enhance understanding and communication between two diverse cultures and societies, Taiwan and the United States. This goal is realized through an essay on the Chinese family as it exists in modern Taiwan and those forces and influences that are forcing it to be redefined.

No effort has been made to compare the Chinese family in Taiwan during this period of transition with family life in other cultures. All civilizations, as they have evolved from agriculturally based to industrially dominated economies, have had to deal with traumatic challenges to traditional family values, structure, and purpose. I hope that this essay, will give the reader a better understanding of the influences confronting the Chinese family in Taiwan and how family life is adjusting to these external challenges.

Taiwan is undergoing rapid and dramatic change. Whether the traditional values that have made Cathay the most enduring of civilizations can withstand this onslaught is the underlying issue addressed in this essay.

Two alternatives remain available to modern Taiwan society: accommodation or displacement. By the term "accommodation" I am suggesting that traditional Chinese life can form a healthy meld with the forces of change. "Displacement" would suggest that Chinese values and culture must give way to modernization.

The plasticity and harmony of the Chinese civilization suggests to me that a synthesis of traditional values and modern Western industrialization is possible. The new configuration may present a model for the Occident which is struggling with the burdens of industrial and material success.

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The Chinese Family in Transition

ISLAND TAIWAN

This island in the stream
of history's wavering flow

A bamboo in the vortex
of a mighty typhoon's blow

Ilha Formosa resilient
holds that which endures today

Vestiges of Old China
and all that has been swept away.

Shih, Tao-gua

Taiwan* is an island. Its historical, social, economic, and political evolution cannot be separated from this basic fact and these phenomena must be viewed in the context of an island state. Limited land space, rugged and majestic mountains, excellent seaports, and dense yet isolated populations are the dominant features of Taiwan. The size of Taiwan would compare roughly with the state of West Virginia. Its shape is similar to a huge tobacco leaf with a range of mountains, not dissimilar to the Appalachians, running down the spine. Numerous rivers run from the mountainous center to the seacoast.

**The terms Taiwan, Formosa, Island China and Republic of China (ROC) are used interchangeably throughout this essay.*

Taiwan is located on the Tropic of Cancer, hence its climate is quite mild. The northern part of the region — the area in which Taipei is located — is a good deal cooler than the southern area where the second largest city, Kaohsiung, is found. In the winter months when Taipei might be in the low 50 degrees, Kaohsiung can be in the mid-70's. The summer months are hot and humid with the temperature reaching the 90's on a regular basis. Humidity is rather high in both winter and summer, yet a cool breeze is a common feature of the island, which is located in the same ocean stream that bathes the nation of Japan (700 miles north of Taiwan).

Located between Japan and the Philippines and some 250 miles off the coast of Hong Kong and Shanghai, Taiwan plays an important part in the economic and military strategies of Asia.

Numerous peoples have been lured to Taiwan and these groups have played a distinct part in its cultural and historical development. Malaysian aborigines, Chinese, Spanish, Dutch, Japanese, and Americans have all either dominated or influenced the island. Historically the island must be considered part of the civilization of China. This is not said in a political framework; rather the overwhelming number of peoples, their language, cuisine, institutions, ethnological posture, and generally their sympathies tie them closely with the mainstream of Chinese civilization and culture.

The peoples of Taiwan today, most of whom were born after 1945 and hence have few direct ties with Mainland China, represent the melting-pot syndrome that we in the U.S. have attempted to develop. Taiwan's population is over 20 million, of which about 16 percent, or some three million, are "Mainlanders." This term is not used now as much as it was in the past. It refers to those Chinese who came to Taiwan after 1945 when the island was returned to China from Japan (which had occupied Taiwan for 50 years). The largest group are the "Taiwanese" who migrated to Taiwan from Fukien Province on the Mainland in the 17th to 19th centuries. Another group often counted as Fukien Taiwanese are the Hakka, who came from Kwangtung Province at about the same time but who speak a distinct dialect. The last group is the native people of Taiwan, the aborigines. Their origins are clouded in some obscurity, but it is suggested that they are not of Mainland Chinese ancestry but rather were seafaring people from the Philippines and/or the Malaysian Peninsula. Eight tribes of aborigines live in Taiwan. Like the American Indian, these people, over hundreds of years have had their lands taken from them, have been molested by the Europeans and Orientals who have visited Taiwan, and today are poor and politically powerless. Their cultural artifacts

show a proud, artistic, and industrious people who were excellent fighters and fiercely independent. Isolation of these people in the mountains and on off-shore islets has diluted their culture and relegated them to positions low on the social, political, and economic scale.

Their lives today, though improving, cannot be compared in material, health, or formal terms with the Chinese peoples of the island.

When the Portuguese first came to Taiwan in 1590, Linschotten (a Dutch navigator on a Portuguese ship) was so taken with the loveliness of the island, its lush beauty, flowers, butterflies, beaches, and all sorts of exotic flora and fauna, that he called it "Formosa" or "Beautiful Island." This name describes well the land we now call Taiwan.

The Chinese Family in Transition
Indicators of Change

"First of all, the family, rather than the individual, the state, or the church, has formed the most significant unit in Chinese society. Each individual's family was his chief source of economic sustenance, education, social contact, and recreation."

John K. Fairbanks
EAST ASIA: TRADITION
AND TRANSFORMATION; (1973)

Family as Metaphor

It is my impression that by observing family life in a culture, particularly the way that a family reacts to changing environments, we can better understand other dimensions of the society under study. What I am suggesting is that family life, particularly during periods of change, may be seen as a metaphor for the society in which changes are occurring. Families that are highly structured, lack flexibility, and are authoritarian in nature may suggest that the society, or the nation, also has as its essence these characteristics. Families that are lazy, without direction, lacking future-orientedness, and living for instant pleasure and gratification may tell us that the society in which these families are found also has this same schema of qualities. A family that does not revere its older members and haphazardly cares for its children

may tell us that the society in which this family is found also is uncaring about the elderly, unconcerned about the behavior of the children, and cavalier about its natural environment. A society, therefore, can be seen mirrored in family configurations, interaction between generations and genders, and the quality of life the older generation is willing to extend to the young.

As I suggested, the family can be seen as a metaphor, as an indicator of the vividity of a society. Indifference, anti-intellectualism, rigid and authoritarian interpersonal and intergenerational behaviors, poor use of time and resources — all of these, if found to be endemic in a culture's families, perhaps suggest that the society is not vital and that it is declining. If families do not emphasize and respect their past heritage and show its relationship to the future, it is perhaps true that the nation in which the family is located has lost its idealism and moved into the area of those societies that are plagued with compulsive materialism and economic shortsightedness.

During my years of visiting Asia, and more specifically the period of time in which I lived as a permanent resident in Taiwan, I became what sociologists might call a 'participant-observer.' This term can be defined to mean an individual who is entitled to participate in most of the activities of a society in which he is visiting or in which he lives and yet, because he still retains a certain degree of alien status, is unable to involve himself fully in every aspect of that society. This individual, especially if he is from academic life and is visiting for scholarship or teaching, normally becomes an observer of that society. I believe that most of the indigenous citizenry of any nation are so involved in living their lives on a day-to-day basis that they frequently fail to be cognizant of the activities, the changes, and the problems that surround them. However, a 'participant-observer' visiting a far nation, if he takes the time to notice, is acutely aware of the strengths and weaknesses of that nation.

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To understand the Chinese family is to understand Confucianism. Confucius, as he is known in the West, was born in 551 B.C. During this time China was going through a period of political, social, and cultural instability, with various regions attempting to

dominate the Chinese polity. The environment in which Confucius grew up molded his mentality and brought to him the vision that only collective harmony could engender order, comfort, material well-being, and stability for the people. Social harmony within the framework of Chinese society became Confucius' mission and has achieved for him the status of the greatest philosopher in Asian history and perhaps the single most important influence in the history of humankind.

Though Confucius himself never wrote books or articles on his philosophy, his students and their students kept alive his teachings; and today, through these second-, third-, and fourth-hand accounts, we have a good understanding of the value system that was established by the sage. Confucian philosophy is not based on religion. Rather, it is based on relationships that, if properly pursued, will lead to harmonious social institutions and collegial behavior on the part of all constituencies within a given civilization.

Confucianism has been endorsed by most of the great leaders of China and other Oriental civilizations. It emphasizes the duty of government officials, from the emperor or president to the municipal clerk and town magistrate, to serve with dispassionate and objective loyalty. A second important reason that the Confucian ideal has been sustained for 2500 years is that it is a philosophy of life extremely compatible with agrarian, cultural, and economic systems. A concept of Confucianism predisposed the Chinese peasantry to accept a philosophy that encouraged the limited resources of China, particularly during periods of despair, to be shared among the members of a group — usually the extended-family.

Confucian theory also holds that fluidity in leadership is essential if a government hopes to progress to new ideas, new blood, and a disassociation from nepotism. From the Tang Dynasty to the present, examinations were and are used to award to individuals positions of importance throughout all government agencies. Until the early 1900's, these open, fair, and highly competitive examinations were based on the Confucian classics. In Taiwan in recent years, the examination system, that all upwardly bound members of Chinese society must participate in, is based on material similar to the SAT, GRE, and civil service examinations currently employed in the United States. Thus

the Chinese people of the past and the Chinese people today, whether they live in Taiwan, on the Chinese mainland, in Hong Kong, or in the Chinese communities of Singapore, Maylasia, or Thailand, are still enmeshed in this noble Confucian tradition. Confucian endurability is based principally on its practical and flexible teaching which has been seen as relevant to all dynastic areas of China. As Olga Lang has suggested, "one can see that this realism was the source of the great strength of Confucianism and helped the doctrine to survive for over two thousand years" (1946).

One great difficulty that we in the West face is in understanding China and the Confucian notion of the individual. Individualism in the context of Chinese history and culture is an aberration. Rather, the Chinese notion of the ideal man is one whose social behavior is that of a relational being, socially interconnected with immediate, middle, and distant relationships. Again, we return to the Confucian tradition in understanding this vision of man subsuming his identity to the group at the expense of individualistic recognition. Systems of behavior, in order for them to exist and endure, are closely related to survival. The Chinese have found through trial and error that the relational being, not the individual person, affects in a more positive way the social welfare of the group. As a consequence, those persons in Chinese society who are genetically predisposed toward highly individualistic behavior modalities are seen as deviants in their social behavior. Parents quickly use the full influence of the family to modify the behavior of youngsters (usually after they enter the elementary school system at age six) to bring about an understanding of the need to conform to group, institution, community, and societal standards.

The Confucian tradition consisted of five relationships that were of paramount importance. These five, which are still seen in modern Taiwan and Singapore, were as follows: the relationships between (1) the national leader and his subjects; (2) father and son; (3) elder brother and younger brother; (4) husband and wife; (5) friend and friend. My own personal experience, as a visiting professor of history in Asia for the last sixteen years, tells me that a sixth relationship also exists and that is between teacher and student. John Fairbanks, the distinguished Harvard professor and sinologist, has stated, "As with the order of nature itself, these relationships, even those between friends, were constructed in hierarchical patterns." The parties to these

relationships understood the correctness of certain behaviors and the inappropriateness of others. And when the involved parties accepted their responsibility, entitlements were available from which all could benefit.

Harmony would hence be realized through unwritten contractual agreements between the five relationships already mentioned. If a husband cared well for his wife, his wife would be dutiful to him. Implied in this relational matrix is the proposition that should there be abuse by one party the relationship could be dissolved. This appears to have insured that abuse of the dominant party towards the inferior party was not socially acceptable, particularly because of the group and peer pressures that would be placed on the abusive individual.

The most obvious example of this was the view held in China (but not held by Western civilization) that violation of the contract between the emperor and his subjects justified violent overthrow of the regime. One should note in this regard that the philosophers of Europe adopted the Hobbesian vision of the king and his subordinates, which justified violations of proper protocol by the king on the grounds that God had given a mandate which could not be denied to the king to rule as he felt. Hence unacceptable behavior by the European monarch must be interpreted as correct behavior in that he was ruling through the will of God.

As is made clear, relationships dominated the life cycle of the Chinese. At any given time in a woman's or man's life a complexity of synergistic interactions was taking place. A man could be a father, a citizen, a husband, a friend, a younger brother, an older brother, a son, and a community leader at the same time The stereoptic baggage that the average person carried through life, in the relational obligation, would to us in the West seem unmanageable. Contradictions of loyalty and commitment would appear to be built into the constellation. However, growing up in an environment where survival and prosperity depended on fulfillment of the relational imperative created in the individual the ability to discern how to act in all situations and under which conditions one relationship would eclipse another.

The Confucian view, adopted 2000 years ago and to this day the foundation of social relationships among the Chinese people on Taiwan, can be summarized in this way: (1) Social order exists when all members of society honor the requirements of

their role; (2) Proper behavior is p ssible and is defined through relationality; (3) Relationships are structured in accordance with nature, e.g., a formal hierarchal order exists.

Chinese civilization has placed great emphasis on the family system as the basis for economic, cultural, and social well-being, as a method of caring for the elderly after their ability to be productive has ended, and for educating the younger members of the group not only in ways that would enhance their productivity, but also to the values found in being a civilized, cultured, productive, and harmonious person.

Dramatic changes are now challenging the Confucian ideal of the traditional family in Chinese communities throughout the world. The remainder of this essay will address those challenges that are confronting family life in Taiwan. This study will not be comparative in nature; that is, Taiwan society will not be compared to Western societies or to Chinese life on the Asian mainland. For the last fifteen years I have been a regular visitor to Asia and particularly to the island of Taiwan. During this relatively brief period I have observed dramatic changes in the political system, in economic development, in the growth of urbanization, in educational life, in the drive towards intense competitiveness and consumerism, and in Chinese family life. Many of the changes appear to be positive.

Under the leadership of the late Chiang, Ching-Kuo the beginning of democratization was seen. Under the present government, headed by Dr. Lee Tung-hue, this process of democratization, political parties, and a greater emphasis on marketplace economics continues to be nurtured. At the same time that these positive political and economic advantages are being fostered in Formosa, a concomitant breakdown in the traditional Chinese family organization appears to be occurring.

Western societies in the United States, England, Germany, France and the Low Countries experienced these same phenomena during the last century and into the beginning of the 20th century. The main difference is that the transformation in the fabric of Western civilization, from rural to industrial, from monarchical to democratic, from single party to multiparty, was the length of time in which these changes occurred. Urbanization as we know it in the United States took 50 years to develop; urbanization as it is emerging in Taiwan has taken less than 20 years. In order for

Taiwan to remain a viable economic entity with a political system supported by a powerful economic machine, it has been necessary for the island to move in a very short period of time from the traditional and venerable China, so beautifully described by Pearl S. Buck in her trilogy *House of Earth*, to a highly industrialized, technological, industrial, service-oriented, and consumption based society.

It has been observed by historians and sociologists that family evolution tends to lag, changing more slowly than the political and economic structures. Taiwan family life fully corroborates this view; nevertheless, the Chinese family in Taiwan has changed dramatically, particularly over the last two decades. As a generalization these changes have been brought about for two reasons. First is a result of a new social and economic environment and the political influence of the West. It has been through the modern school system in Taiwan as well as mass communication, particularly television contacts with the West and the ongoing flow of Americans and Europeans living and working in Taiwan, that Westernization has come to be an important part of life on the island. Today, in modern Taiwan all school children who are fortunate enough to continue beyond the twelfth year are in fact subject to ideas, literature, teaching methodologies, and examples that are essentially Western. Most university professors in Taiwan have taken part of their graduate education in the United States and over 90 percent of the foreign degrees earned by Taiwan scholars, specifically those completing a terminal degree, are from an American university .

A second major reason that the Chinese family has changed is economical. Traditionally men and women were employed in jobs directly or tangentially related to agriculture. Industrialization in Taiwan, a paucity of available land, and the opportunities presented by urban life have worked together to influence the Chinese family and to place it in an environmental setting alien to the agrarian life that dominated Chinese civilization for five millennia.

Mencius, the great philosopher of the Confucian school and the scholar first responsible for standardizing the Confucian text, made this statement: "The root of the

empire is the state, the root of the state is the family, the root of the family is the individual." What Mencius was suggesting is that if the individual grew up in a nurturing family environment and if he was taught to respect authority within his family, he would also respect it outside the family and therefore be a cooperative member of his civilization. The family, as historians, sociologists, anthropologists, economists, psychologists and social workers tell us, is the primary social unit of any social organization.

Family life was always paramount in China. It was cultivated more in Chinese civilization than in any other country in the world and achieved greater importance to maintain social order and coordination; the West has relied on external agencies, particularly the institution of religion, and more recently various government-sponsored entities. The Chinese found that these positive attributes could best be inculcated through the family. Filial piety therefore became the metaphor for religion and community organization in China. Because of the advent of Westernization, industrialization, urbanization, democratization, and consumerism, the Chinese family is now confronted with an onslaught of nontraditional and intrusive factors that are forcing it to redefine itself and to compromise many of the ingredients that contributed to its enduring and benevolent quality.

The term family as used in this essay is based on the current Chinese concept of the family and is in accordance with the notion that existed in Imperial times and today. It is an economic definition and can be referred to as a unit consisting of members related to each other by blood, marriage, or adoption and having a common budget and common property. This definition comes from the distinguished orientalist Olga Lang in her book *The Chinese Family and Society* (1946). Not only does this definition fulfill the academic needs of interpreting the Chinese family, it also is consistent with the definition implied in the great literature that deals with China, be it the poems and short stories of the Tang, the novels of the 15th century, or the 18th century Dream of the Red Chamber, the greatest Chinese novel ever written; the trilogy by Pearl Buck,

titled *The House of Earth*, which has as its first chapter the delightful novella, *The Good Earth*; or the recently published novel by the Hong Kong journalist Robert S. Elegant titled *Dynasty*. By using this definition of family, we can include not only those people living under the same roof but also those people who are temporarily absent. The relatives outside of this definition of family belong to one's kin group or one's clan group.

Three main types of Chinese families have existed throughout history and still exist in Taiwan to this day. The first we will call the nuclear-family. Families of this type normally include father, mother, and unmarried children, usually below the age of 21. The second type we will call the stem-family. This family consists of parents, their unmarried children, and one married son with wife and children. The last type we will call the extended-family. Other names for this type of family configuration are the grand-family, the traditional-family, or the joint-family. These terms will be used interchangeably. The extended-family consists of parents, their unmarried children, their married sons and sons' wives and children, and sometimes a fourth or fifth generation, including grandparents, great-grandparents, grandchildren, or great grand-children.

Historically in China the extended-family was the choice, and today in the rural countryside of Taiwan in the rural countryside these families are frequently seen in their red brick, multi-roomed, U-shaped homes which include a large central courtyard and have the traditional Fukien tile roof. This type of extended-family plays a very minor part in modern Taiwan life and will not be dealt with in depth in this paper on the Chinese family in transition.

Rapid economic development in recent years is causing new patterns and new configurations in Chinese family life. Women more than men have been influenced by the rapid change occurring on the island of Formosa. Historically women were granted status by their father and his position in society and by the status which was given to them upon their marriage.

Fluidity within the social classes in Chinese society did not exist until recent times, that is, until the opportunities became available for both women and men to benefit from the public education system. An individual's place in society, particularly that

of a woman, was essentially fixed based on the family to which he or she was born. With the advent of open and competitive education for both sexes in Taiwan, women now have the opportunity to move from one class to another, irrespective of their ancestral roots, to enter the work force, and to be part of the professional world. As women have moved up in society and have been granted access to what has traditionally been considered the man's world, difficulties in the field of family life, childrearing, marital stability, and divorce have also developed. Statistics which suggest that numerous economic opportunities have come to women also show that difficulties and dysfunctionalities in traditional family values have increased at an approximately equal pace. Chinese society historically was authoritarian; that is, the father's influence in the traditional family was supreme. This was based primarily on his economic status, his ability to be the key wage earner, his entitlements to property, and a variety of laws and precedents that favored him as the authoritative member of the family.

The old extended-family, as has been defined, is no longer common in Taiwan, although my conversations with Chinese people indicate that living together with their parents and their children's children would be their favorite choice. In modern Taiwan more than 50 percent of the households are nuclear-families. Of these, approximately 25 percent are two-generation families.

Young people express several reasons for preferring the nuclear-family over the stem-family or the extended-family. First, young people wish to avoid the conflicts that normally arise in larger families, particularly the stressful relationship between a mother and daughter-in-law. Second, young people believe that marriage is more satisfying when given the privacy of a single family dwelling. Third, the architectural nature of urban life in Taiwan — basically high rise condominiums, co-ops, and apartments — precludes multi-generational living. Housing costs in Taiwan, particularly in the major cities of Taipei, Taichung, and Kaohsiung, are among the most expensive in the world. As a consequence, young couples can only afford small units consisting of a bedroom, one bath, kitchen, and small living room. This architectural design eliminates the possibility of the extended-family and makes it difficult to have more than two children even if the housing unit is expanded by one extra bedroom. A

fourth reason why the nuclear-family is preferred to the extended-family is that young people have a different vision of Western ideas. Traditional China saw itself as the center of all civilization. Young Chinese are quick to admit that many notions from the West, be they in medicine, politics, entertainment, economic management, are in fact superior to what was enjoyed and revered by their parents and grandparents. A fifth reason that the nuclear-family has become a dominant mode of life in Chinese society in Taiwan is a result of the desire by the older generation to enjoy the fruits of their labor rather than to turn over their wealth, their property, and their prestige to their children.

The extended-family was based on the notion that at a certain time the oldest man in the family (who was its patriarch) would retire and, though he would be revered and treated with great respect, his first son would make all the decisions required to run the farm or the business. Older people today fear that their children will not be prudent in the use of family money and real estate and frequently inform their children that they would rather maintain a separate residence. Their fear is that the temptations of modern economic life may cause in young people a frivolous pattern of behavior and that the senior members of the family will be financially destitute at a time when they are most in need of funds for living.*

One cohesive agent in the traditional Chinese family was the observance of ancestor worship. This institution, which can trace its genesis to ancient China, has been seen by sociologists as a force that not only included the whole population but was used for strengthening the authoritarian nature of the family. Changes in this important aspect of Chinese family life in Taiwan characterize and symbolize the transitional nature of Chinese society.

**These reasons given as to why the nuclear-family has declined are the result of extended and extensive interviews that I did during my 1990 visit to Taiwan. Specifically, I surveyed college students in Taipei city, Taipei suburbs, Taichung, and Tunghai. The question that was asked that led to the five rationales for the preference of the nuclea-family was, "Do you hope to live in an extended-family or a nuclear-family setting?" "Why?"*

Ancestor worship implies that the ancestor is not entirely departed and that a portion of his spirit continues to interact with the family. Rites performed therefore have two functions: to pay respect to the dead for their contribution to the family and to keep the family requesting benefits from the dead. Supernatural powers are thought to be possessed by dead ancestors so worship is necessary to assure family harmony and success. Having many sons assured that ancestors would be properly worshiped. Traditional Confucian teachings also saw ancestor worship as a means for control within the family, since it gave elders an additional device for maintaining harmony and order in the family unit.

In modern Taiwan ancestor worship still exists, but due to many features of contemporary life it plays a diminishing role in family activities. In the traditional grand family, those individuals of greatest importance were placed in rooms and apartments near the central hall where the ancestor shrine was located. This was the place of honor and to be housed here was an honor. The large complex family compound could accommodate all male members of the extended-family as well as their wives, children, and concubines. Important pronouncements and judgments were always given in the main hall in the shadow of the family shrine.

In recent years modern city housing has not been designed to serve the needs of ancestor worship. The two- and three-bedroom apartments in the cities of Taiwan are quite the same as might be found in America and Europe. No extra room is included for the shrine and its numerous symbols, tokens, and candles. The high price of even small apartments has led to foregoing of the rite of ancestor worship in many Chinese families, and the end of ancestor worship may be in sight. Its demise could lead to family fragmentation, disobedient youth, and a general breakdown of traditional Chinese values. The nuclear-family, urban living, and new architectural designs in housing have all reduced the functions of ancestor worship as a device for social control, harmonious living, and containment of youthful energy and rebelliousness.

Perhaps of all of the changes discussed in this paper, the abandonment of the tradition of ancestor worship best symbolizes the dramatic transitional phase that is confronting the Chinese people of Taiwan. As Mencius reminds us: "There are three things which are unfilial and to have no posterity is the greatest of them." (Li Chi—*Book of Ritual*)

In traditional China, marriage was viewed as a union of two economic units for the purposes of having children, enhancing the well-being of both families, and as a vehicle for serving ancestors through ancestral reverence. The marriage ceremony in dynastic China included in its ceremony an ancestral worship component. Marriage, therefore, was not only the union of a man and a wife, but a synthesizing of two families which almost always were of the same social and economic plane. Marriage was seen as such an important step in the life cycle of the Chinese that parents took on the responsibility of selecting the partner for their sons and daughters. Parents held the view that romantic and physical inclinations on the part of their children could lead to disastrous consequences for the entire family. Therefore, the parents, frequently through an external and highly paid broker, would select the bride or groom for their child. The issue of marriage was so important that it involved the whole household and could not be left purely in the hands of youth who, because of an infatuation, might make an incorrect decision.

Taiwan in recent years has moved towards a Western model of marriage. Though 80 percent of the young people interviewed in a 1990 survey indicated that they would not marry a person disapproved by their parents, the majority did suggest that seeking parental guidance in marriage was not something that they anticipated doing. Statistics concerning student attitudes towards marriage found that 92 percent favored love as a basis for marriage. Romantic love as seen in Western civilization is a relatively new phenomenon in China. Arranged marriages were predominant throughout Chinese history until World War II, when change seems to have occurred.

A number of factors contributed to a change in marriage attitudes from the rationales previously stated to the notion of love and romance. The most important appears to be the Western influence on Chinese civilization through literature, movies, television, and the influx of numerous Western people into the Asian society. Marriage today is also occurring much later in the life cycle of Chinese men and women in Taiwan than it did 50 years ago. The average college educated woman now is married at 27. The average college-educated man postpones his marriage until he is 31. The

reason expressed by women is that they wish to have the opportunity to experience employment and travel opportunities prior to marriage. Men cite the need for economic independence and the obligatory two-year military service as their logic in delaying marriage until their early thirties. Rural farm people still marry earlier than urban people and they continue to live in modified extended-family patterns to a far greater degree than do urban residents. In traditional times, the new wife would move into the compound housing unit of her husband and would become in fact a servant of the husband's mother, carrying out the most mundane of chores because of her lowly status. Only after younger brothers brought their brides into the house would the status of the older brother's wife be raised.

Recent studies indicate that as industrialization and urbanization continue to dominate the landscape of Taiwan, traditional marital values are adjusting to the new modernized lifestyle. In dynastic China up until the second World War, legal rights of Chinese women were severely restricted. A wife had the obligation to her husband and her husband's family to bear sons, to care for her husband's parents, and to carry out those responsibilities that her husband or his parents demanded of her. Should she find her life unbearable she had little or no recourse. To leave her husband and return to her own family legally required her to abandon her children and all of her possessions and to live out her life in the most monastic of existences. An excellent study of a woman who lived with an insufferable husband and in an unbearable household in dynastic China can be found in the book, *The Death of Woman Wong*, by the distinguished Yale University professor Jonathan Spence. Today in modern Taiwan a wife does have legal rights and can initiate divorce on a variety of grounds, most of which are related to physical abuse and cruelty.

The relationship that exists in modern Taiwan between the husband and the wife is closely related to their educational level and their occupation. Recent studies indicate that husbands and wives who have college educations share decision making and also share the responsibilities associated with the nuclear-family in which both partners are employed. Lower class marriages, particularly those found in rural areas, tend to be task- and not process-oriented. The husband has a set of obligations which he must fulfill; the wife has her collection of responsibilities. The sharing of decisions seldom

occurs because when there is a decision to be made it is deferred to the husband's parents. This more traditional model is prevalent in both rural farm and rural non-farm regions of Taiwan.

Studies recently conducted in Taiwan indicate that two types of power exist within the nuclear-family: public power and private power. Public power may be defined as those decisions that are applicable to the external image of the family, such as job selection. Internal power refers to those decisions that are linked closely to the day-to-day effective running and management of the family. Budget control and decisions about schooling fall into this category. In the middle class of Taiwan the male in the family is usually identified with public power, while the female is more closely linked to private power. In recent years the general trend has been towards a more egalitarian home life in which the wife and husband share in decisions in all areas of their common marital experience.

Ironically, as the democratic family model has become more prevalent and as the nuclear-family has become the preferred modality for living arrangements, there has been a concomitant increase in the divorce rate in Taiwan. Divorce was until recently almost unknown in Asia. Many have tried to explain the absence of divorce in the Chinese experience. Perhaps the two most widely accepted rationales are: (1) Women would endure unbearable situations to avoid losing their children, the status that their marriage gave them, and the anticipated security so needed in their old age; and (2) Men who were unable to find happiness with a wife could have a second wife, a concubine, or a mistress. This arrangement, it is suggested, prompted many men who may have been married to an incompatible spouse the opportunity to avoid divorce through external relationships and liaisons.

Modernization in Taiwan has also led to a sense of liberation on the part of Chinese women. They may now legally divorce their husbands, and husbands may not find it as socially or economically expedient to have a second wife or a concubine. Though the divorce rate in Taiwan (about 5 percent) is far lower than that which we have in the United States (50 percent), it is growing significantly.

Divorce appears to be closely related to a variety of factors, such as the types of employment that men and women have, their educational level, and the location where

they live. A 1985 study by the distinguished sociologist Hsieh Kao-Chiao indicates that women employed in the field of sales have a significantly higher divorce rate than females employed in other fields. Women employed in urban areas were more likely to experience divorce than those who were employed in rural areas, and women who had a significantly different educational level from their husbands were more likely to get divorced than if there were a similarity in the level of education. Religious difference between the husband and wife does not seem to be a factor related to the divorce rate in Taiwan.

Divorce for Chinese women is more of a problem than for Western women, in that there are many fewer Chinese women who are divorcees and as a consequence their ability to receive support from each other is minimized. Also, in the United States a majority of divorced women remarry within three years and up to 70 percent of all divorced women in the United States remarry within five years. Taiwan does not have a particularly large pool of divorced or widowed men. As a consequence, a divorced woman with one or two children will have a difficult time finding a suitable husband. Chinese men remain conservative in their willingness to accept as a wife a woman who has been divorced, and even more cautious when the woman brings children into the marriage. Ironically, as divorce increases in Taiwan, the pool of divorcees, both men and women, will expand to such a degree that the dilemma of not finding available a suitable partner, will decrease. Attitudes toward divorce will also change as more people realize that with industrialization, urbanization, and modernization divorce is a logical and historically inevitable consequence.

In traditional China, a man was allowed to have more than one wife if his first wife did not bear him sons. Large families were more important than monogamous relationships. Therefore, as a survival tactic, the Chinese not only desired large families but also sanctioned polygamistic relationships. Though polygamy is no longer common in Taiwan, I can say with certainty that numerous Chinese men do have a second wife and that their status in the community, be it academic, military, political, or governmental, is not diminished.

Industrialization and urbanization historically have had a direct influence on family size. Today the average urban family of Taipei believes strongly that two children is the ideal but that one child is almost as good. A second rather important change that has occurred within the last two decades is the reevaluation of the notion that sons are more desirable than daughters. In recent years there is a sense on the part of most Chinese in Taiwan that a daughter is just as good as a son.

In interviews that I held with Chinese scholars in October of 1990, I was informed that a new trend is emerging. The desire for a daughter is now frequently more pronounced than the desire for a son. Whether this view is held by Taiwan society at large or is purely a phenomenon of educated, urban persons is hard to discern. The logic in wanting a daughter is that — the fast pace of life in rapidly developing Taiwan so consumes the time, the energy, and the economics of a son that he is unwilling and unable to perform his traditional duties of caring for his aged parents. Daughters, however, have not moved as quickly into the economic fast lane and are seen by Chinese parents as more caring and more diligent in their filial obligations. As a consequence, Chinese parents who do not feel secure with their very limited retirement benefits, health policies, and the social welfare agencies in Taiwan see the daughter as being more purposeful in her efforts of caring for those aged members of the family. This notion complements the living patterns that have emerged with the relatively recent establishment of the nuclear-family in Taiwan. During the thousands of years of Chinese history the extended-family was the mode for social and economic welfare. Urbanization, industrialization, and the high price of housing units now prevents this; therefore, the daughter appears more willing to devote a portion of her day to the care of the parents, while the son, in order to be successful in modern Taiwan society, cannot accept the burdens of caring for his parents.

A distinguished sociologist in Taiwan has written extensively about women and the profound changes accorded them as Formosa moves from traditional to contemporary times. Dr. Shieh Kao-Chiao, professor of sociology at National Cheng Chi University in Taipei, has spent a good deal of his research effort on the topic of women and

attitudinal and social changes that have taken place in Taiwan. It is impossible, of course, to discuss in any detail the comprehensive and important findings of Professor Shieh. Some of his major themes are highlighted in the following paragraphs. I must add that Dr. Shieh spent many hours with me discussing his research and sharing with me insights he has on Taiwan family life and the changes it is undergoing. My time in Taiwan, 1990, was made more meaningful by the help afforded me by Professor Shieh.

O the past decade the status of women in Taiwan has changed dramatically. During the Chang Dynasty as well as the period of Japanese occupation of Taiwan, a Chinese woman was little more than a servant in the home of her husband and in-laws. With the demise of the extended-family, the significant reduction in stem-families, and the wide acceptance of the nuclear- or modified nuclear-family, the place of the woman has been elevated. Economic changes, legal rights, employment opportunities, and ideas from Western and Japanese society have all come together to enhance the status of women in modern Taiwan. Status change has brought great difficulties to women, which will be discussed briefly in this section of my essay. Educational opportunity, which until quite recently was severely restricted to females, has now been completely opened so that boys and girls may attend school at the same rate. In 1990 the percentage of boys and girls attending elementary school was 99 percent. The gender ratio was essentially the same for junior high school and high school, though the percentage of overall attendees decreased. The ratio of men and women attending universities now is approximately the same, though within specific academic disciplines there are significant differences. Men still tend to dominate the medical profession, engineering, and those sciences related to mathematics, physics, chemistry, and biology. Women make up a disproportionate number of the studentry in teachers colleges, especially those institutions training elementary school teachers. Also, a greater number of women are found in the humanities and foreign languages. Nursing remains essentially a field reserved for female students.

The Ministry of Education in Taipei in its 1990 educational statistical report indicates that though more men receive an advanced college or university education, the proportion of women in university life as well as in the other levels of education

has increased faster than the proportion of men. This would suggest a general opening for women of the traditional conduit for success and honor in Chinese society—higher education. Historically, formal education existed for filling jobs in government, the academy, or business. Women were confined to activities in the domestic setting. These chores would have been learned from their mothers and their grandmothers. In modern Taiwan, women have broken free of these traditional constraints to educational opportunity. They no longer depend solely on their in-laws for their place in society. Like men they now can achieve through advanced education, technological training, and commercial status. As a result of this, statistics show that more women are entering the labor force than ever before. Until the 1960's virtually all women who were employed did so in connection with a family business or enterprise. Currently over 80 percent of all Chinese women living in Taiwan who are within five years of having graduated from their terminal educational level found employment external to the family business or enterprise. Part of this is the result of the tremendous decrease in family farm activity which historically was the main avocation for Chinese women.

Problems that are engendered by the increase of economic and educational opportunities for women have also grown significantly. Working women with children must place their children in suitable day-care environments. Many choose the private day-care centers that are becoming increasingly popular, particularly in the urban areas of Taiwan. However, even the most energetic and successful mother can be overwhelmed by the responsibilities of full-time employment in addition to caring for younger children. Chinese fathers, who are trying to be successful at a relatively young age, do not take on the same domestic responsibility as their wives. Chinese women, therefore, tend to have the double burden of caring for children and fulfilling their obligation of employment. The use of day-care centers is, at best, a compromise solution and most Chinese women with whom I spoke expressed to me their wish to spend more time with their little ones.

Marital satisfaction is also influenced by higher education and employment opportunities for women. In general, husbands and wives who both work and who do not have children indicate a high level of marital happiness. Husbands and wives who both work and do have children, particularly during the first seven years of childrearing, express levels of dissatisfaction with their marriage. Husbands and wives who

both work and are financially able to hire in-house domestics to care for the children, and couples in which one party, usually the wife, stays at home are more satisfied with their marital status even during the first seven years of childrearing than are those couples who must both work.

The divorce rate in Taiwan has increased significantly during that same period of time that employment and educational opportunities for women have also increased. This further suggests a close relationship between women who are employed outside of the family and divorce. Notice, however, that women who worked prior to having children and women who worked after their children were grown, e.g., had entered college, had found suitable employment, or had gotten married, expressed a higher level of satisfaction with their choice of marriage. In summary, we can suggest that the social, economic, and educational opportunities afforded women by the developing industrial, political, and social dimensions of Taiwan society have not in all cases led to family stability, marital contentment, and positive childrearing.

In order for Taiwan to remain competitive, all members of society must be educated to their fullest potential and be allowed to enter the free marketplace. Changes in traditional Chinese values concerning a woman's relationships with her parents, her husband, and his parents have brought stress to the Chinese family in this period of transition.

With the disappearance of the extended-family in Taiwan, a new process of socialization of children has become necessary. In the traditional grand-family, aunts and uncles, grandparents, and cousins all work as one unit in caring for all of the children in the family compound. Smaller family size and the nuclear-family have replaced the extended-family configuration as the primary agency for the child's welfare and upbringing. Women now have the opportunity to reenter the workforce after having children. The most common method for child care in Taiwan is for a member of the family, often the grandparents, to temporarily raise the children. However, the concept of the day- care center and the nursery school are rapidly being accepted in Formosa.

What the effect will be of day care on child rearing can only be speculated about. The most immediate effect is the diminished position of the grandparents, who historically accepted and relished this responsibility. When asked why numerous Chinese nuclear families chose day care over allowing grandparents to raise the children in the absence of working parents, young Chinese women and men gave these explanations: (1) The grandparents lived too distant from the family for it to be convenient for them to raise the children; (2) There was a philosophical gap in regard to childrearing between the mother and the grandmother; (3) Grandparents were not reliable in caring for the socialization needs of young children who must survive in a modern urban industrialized society; (4) The economics of day care presented no burden; therefore, it was unnecessary to rely on family members to assist with child rearing; (5) Day care professionals were better equipped to handle all childrearing contingencies (learning, health problems, or behavior disorders) than are grandparents. These notions suggest an erosion of the role of the older person in the family constellation.

A dilemma that is facing Taiwan as it moves from an agricultural society to a technologically oriented environment is the issue of caring for the aged. Modernization as we have been using the term throughout this study suggests the emergence of a new family configuration — the nuclear-family. Young people are leaving rural areas and giving up the farming and fishing occupations of their parents to become part of the rapidly expanding urban experience that currently dominates the statistical trend. Chinese culture has always placed great importance on caring for the old people in society, for it was believed that aged people had valuable knowledge related to the agricultural environment. The mechanism for this social obligation was traditionally the joint family. With the absence of a new generation to take over the family farm or the family fishing vessels, the older rural generations who are in their 50's, 60's, and 70's are now left without a support system to see them through their golden years. I am told by Chinese scholars and friends that being old in China was a wonderful

experience. Your children and your children's children cared for your every need. Nursing homes, old persons homes, or government sponsored charity wards were unnecessary for the man or woman who had children and grandchildren.

Times are changing and this wonderful value which was such an important part of Chinese civilization is now being eroded by the move toward modern life. Children do not have enough time to care for their aging parents and also succeed in the highly competitive, industrialized, technologically oriented, capitalistic economy of Taiwan. The government has not clarified its position on the issue of the aged. It is a relatively new phenomenon that the younger generation will not care materially and emotionally for the older generation, and governme ıt policy has not kept pace with this changing atmosphere. In Singapore, tax incentives are made available to young married couples who provide in their housing unit for parents or in-laws. This system is being investigated in Taiwan but has not yet been implemented. An absence of government money available for social security and a diminished concern on the part of young people for the welfare of the aged is bringing major trauma to the Chinese family in Taiwan.

One way that this predicament is being addressed is for the older generation to retain its wealth and spend it on its own needs without sharing it with the younger members of the family. Taiwan is the second richest society in Asia, surpassed only by Japan. Older people frequently have great wealth which they have acquired through hard work, conservative spending, selling of land, and good investments.

Though the older generation may be able to care for many of its material needs, chronic illness and loneliness are two dimensions of aging which cannot be addressed purely by material well-being. The expectations of the older generation today are similar to those of their parents. They expect to be treated in the same way that they treated their parents and as they observed their parents treating their grandparents. This ideal is seldom realized in Taiwan today because the expectations of the younger generations, particularly people under 40, have been forced to change. They define their family in the context of the nuclear relationship, while the older generation continues to define the family in terms of the extended- or grand-family concept. Hence, the younger generation sees a close linkage between involvement in the

hyperactive economy in Taiwan as most important, while the older generation believes that greater attention should be spent on traditional behaviors, particularly those related to the classical Chinese value of assuring happiness and prosperity in old age. Time will of course solve this dichotomy of values, but for the next twenty to thirty years there will be a conflict between the agenda of the younger generation and the expectation of the aged persons.

Chinese society has always placed great importance on age. It is believed that an old person has wisdom surpassing that of a young person. The notion comes in large part from the fact that in agricultural life experience is the best teacher; an old person has had more years of experience and therefore is wiser in the ways of farming, harvesting, and fishing. Modern Taiwan faces a serious problem towards adjusting its social life to accommodate the aged. Today in modern Taiwan the most assured way to be successful is to be highly competitive in the education system. By earning an advanced degree, particularly in a mathematically or scientifically oriented discipline, chances of a young person's economic or social success are greatly enhanced. Unlike agricultural life, technological society is changing rapidly. Experience in one specific field and expertise in one area of employment can be a hindrance to success if obsolescence comes to that field of work. Young people, therefore, who have most recently emerged from the educational setting are frequently the most suited to enter into positions of influence and responsibility. Older people whose training was in areas that have become obsolete no longer retain the cherished position that they once had. Though reverential treatment is still afforded the aged in Chinese society on Taiwan, it is out of respect and not out of a need for the transfer of information; old people have, in recent decades, lost their coveted place in Asian society. Youthful energy and a formalized understanding of the latest techniques in computer science, in medicine, in engineering, in farming, or in sales have replaced the age of experience.

A modern society, like that which exists on Taiwan, requires a highly educated and skilled labor force. Historically, education for a majority of the Chinese populace was

handled informally at the family level. A father would teach his son how to farm, how to harvest, how to fish, how to handle money, how to be a merchant, or how to be a soldier. In modern society he must turn over the responsibility of education to an external agency, normally the government. The demands of a society like that of Taiwan, Japan, or Singapore leads to the development of a broad educational system which trains increasing numbers of younger and older students in non-family settings. Taiwan more than any other Asian society has used the education model as a vehicle for economic, political, and social development. School involvement at all levels has greatly increased. Today in Taiwan, approximately 99 percent of all young people are attending school grades 1 through 6. The number decreases at the junior high level but only slightly. Senior high school requires admission through a highly competitive examination system and as a consequence the number of young people attending the academic senior high school is only about 45 percent of those who finished the 6th grade. Other tertiary educational experiences, however, are available in commercial, technical, vocational, military, and maritime high schools. The thirst for learning appears to be unquenchable in Taiwan society as well as within the Chinese communities throughout the world.

These changes in schooling in Taiwan have had far-reaching implications in the lives of young people. Young boys and girls spend increasingly large amounts of time in public and private schools throughout modern Formosa. While they are in school they are away from their parents. As a consequence much of the strong bonding that existed in dynastic China and during the early Republic years is lost. Children no longer have the strong identity with their parents and their parents' vocation that they previously had. Also their time as students, which is approximately 250 days a year and about 9 hours a day, decreases their availability to work on behalf of the family economic unit and at the same time increases the age at which they commence regular employment. Persons who have spent many years in the relative comfort of the academic setting can seldom adjust to the hard work involved in fishing in the harsh environment of the open sea, farming, lumbering or mining. Upon finishing school, be it at the mandatory 9th grade, or the selective high school level or the prestigious college and university system, a young person is well prepared to enter the job market

that represents modern Taiwan but is ill suited to emulate the employment role of his mother or father. This dramatic change in Chinese society on Taiwan is creating a chasm between the older generation, which continues to hold to traditional values, and the younger generation, which sees its destiny closely linked to the industrial and technological sectors of industry in Taiwan.

These changes have brought increased separation between the generations and, as the amount of independence by young people increases, the difficulties associated with bitter generational relations has also increased. In short, the opportunity to receive the education and to move up the social and economic ladder to meritorious academic achievement has, as a by-product, created dysfunctional relationships between the generations. Ironically those young men and women who are the highest achievers in academic life in Taiwan and who in all probability are the future leaders in all fields are the ones who are distancing themselves most dramatically from the older generations. Achievement oriented young men and women would have been key factors in the success of the extended-family and would have accepted leadership roles in the traditional agricultural based society of Old China.

Education as used in this paper is seen as a factor that contributes marginally to the Chinese family in this significant transformational stage of its evolution. An important article that addresses the topic of change and education in Taiwan was written by Chiu, Hei-yuan, and was published in the book, *Taiwan: A Newly Industrialized State*, edited by Michael H. H. Hsiao, who is with the department of sociology at National Taiwan University and also is a research fellow at Academia Sinica. It is professor Chiu's belief that educational development and industrial development are not necessarily synonymous; that is, that there is not a specific one-to-one relationship between Taiwan's significant growth in industrialization, in technology, and in marketplace economics and the existing educational system in Taiwan. Professor Chiu points to the statistics that show the rate of economic growth in Taiwan outpacing significantly the government's commitment to the expenditure of tax monies to the national education system. Professor Chiu believes that this dichotomy reflects the real world situation

whereby education is lagging behind the industrial complex and the economic infrastructures that make up Taiwan's significant developmental success.

Taiwan also tends to foster through its education system traditional conservative values. Studies done of attitudes of young people suggest that the longer they stay in education the greater their political acceptance of the governing regime and the more complete their compliance with national policies in economic, diplomatic, and social issues. Sheldon Appleton and Richard Wilson, writing in the 1960's and 1970's, also concluded that a direct relationship existed between support for existing government policies and educational achievement. High school students are much more supportive of the national government position on most issues than are people who have graduated from primary or junior high schools. College graduates express the highest level of government support of all groups in Taiwan. Unlike Japan, Korea, Singapore, the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, and even Hong Kong, all of which have as their greatest proponents of radical change their educated elite, Taiwan finds its most educated group generally in support of established governmental policies. The modern Chinese family in Taiwan is influenced less by the educational system than it is by the dramatic industrial, urban, and political changes that have occurred over the last two decades.

The most significant transitional attitudes that separate the educated class from the non-educated class are related to the view of family size, the best age for marriage, the number of children wanted, the desire to live in a nuclear- versus an extended-family, the importance of birth control, parents' expectations of living with sons, and the concept of interacting with other family members. More educated persons believe that they can govern in large part their destiny. Less educated and more traditionally bound persons accept a higher degree of fatalism in their external and personal worlds. Much of this is related to the occupational opportunities that younger, more educated women and men have had in recent years.

Farm life carries with it built-in features that are normally beyond man's control. Weather, plant viruses, insect devastation, chemical changes in soil and water composition, all plague individuals who have agricultural life as their base of economic existence. Fatalism, therefore, is characteristic of Chinese farmers, their families, and their culture.

Education has not influenced certain deeply held convictions of Chinese: (1) Younger people in Taiwan today still believe, strongly, in supporting their parents financially in old age. This view is held across educational class and occupational lines; (2) Older parents believe that irrespective of their son's station in life he should care for them in their old age and that generally they should be offered a place in his household to spend their last years.

There exists in all educational systems a dichotomy. On the one hand, it is felt that education must produce innovative, unorthodox, and rebellious thinking; without these characteristics creativity cannot exist and without creativity changes in life that enhance the vigor of a culture will not be brought forth. On the other hand, an educational system is a process for socializing young members of the community into the mores and values which they are expected to practice and to which they are expected to conform. Hence an educational system which is sponsored by the government and controlled by an agency of the existing power structure exists for the most conservative of reasons — to perpetuate the values and myths which the existing regime wishes to see maintained. Each nation must decide whether an innovative and necessarily rebellious studentry or a conservative and thus complacent studentry is more important. Most nations are able to identify a point along the liberal-conservative continuum where they hope to focus their educational energies. Taiwan, like Japan, Singapore, and Korea, has opted to use education as a force for stability and not for radical change. Leading educators tell me that the conservative model of education that exists in Taiwan is a result of four traditions: (1) the Confucian ethic; (2) the rigorous examination system which must be passed in order for young people to move up through the education schema; (3) the nature of the Chinese language, which requires an inordinate amount of time to learn and does not lend itself to creativity; and (4) the Sinocentric nature of the Chinese people and their strongly held belief that Chinese culture and Chinese values are superior to those of other civilizations.

In conclusion, the Chinese family in this transitional period has been influenced marginally by the educational system that currently exists on the island. The educational model tends to evolve behind industrial growth, urbanization, Westernization, and technological development. Yet it does maintain a sense of continuum with

the China of the past, and therefore it is seen by all groups in Chinese society on Taiwan as a force for the continuation and perpetuation of essential elements of Chinese civilization. Of all governmental agencies, the public education system that now exists in Taiwan is considered the least influenced by money and favoritism and the most evenhanded, fair, and equitable agency of all economic social and political classes of people.

The young people growing up in Taiwan today are significantly different in their notion of material values than were their parents and grandparents. As a result of Western influences, industrial development, and urban living, free market economics have become a greater influence in Taiwan than in any other Chinese society, with the possible exception of Hong Kong. Personal consumer habits have been influenced significantly by national economic trends. In 1990 Taiwan had approximately 90 billion dollars on reserve and the average income in Taiwan is now $9,000 per year. This suggests not only a high per capita income but also a dynamic market place and consumer-oriented economy. While the older generation is renowned for thrift and eagerness to save, younger generations (men and women under age 40) have become aggressive consumers, particularly over the last five years.

The Chinese of Taiwan traditionally saved up to 35 percent of their income. This large amount is most notable when compared to savings patterns of people in other industrial modern societies. The Japanese save approximately 20 percent of their income, while Americans save approximately 7 percent. One will remember in Pearl Buck's book, *The Good Earth*, the importance that Chinese families placed on savings and hoarding. The uncertainties of agricultural life, particularly the vicissitudes of weather, warfare, and starvation, have historically foisted in the Chinese a compulsive pattern for saving a relatively large portion of their earnings.

Today, after decades of conservative spending patterns, Taiwan residents are choosing to use their money for the purchase of brand-name clothing, quality watches, jewelry, Western shoes, imported liquors, cosmetics, automobiles, condominiums,

and expensive overseas vacations. This transitional dimension in Chinese life, from a conservative income-saving culture to a consumer-oriented society, is having a dramatic impact on the value system of both younger and older Chinese people in Taiwan. The hallowed traditions that are common to all agricultural societies placed high value on material savings. Taiwan is emulating Western culture in its consumer patterns.

In order for a society to be dynamic and competitive in the world economy it is necessary for individuals in the polity to consume high levels of items produced locally and abroad. The main difficulty with consumerism is the value gap that develops between parents, grandparents, and children as to how monies are spent. Young people in Taiwan over the last decade are particularly interested in rock music, fast foods, video games, coffee and tea houses, Western clothing, and Japanese motorcycles and automobiles. As family wealth increases, parents appear more willing to support their children's consumption tendencies.

In this same regard the desire for material items on the part of the young has led to a new dimension in Chinese society on Taiwan. Young Chinese students are now accepting employment during their free time. In the past it was unheard of for a boy or girl in junior high or high school to supplement his allowance with part-time employment.

The burgeoning fast food industry as well as numerous other service oriented opportunities create in the younger generation an interest in entering the job market as part-time employees. Though this frequently has a deleterious effect on grades and study habits, youngsters believe that greater happiness can be found if they have extra income for the purchase of consumer goods and enjoyment of leisure time. On walking through the downtown streets of Taipei city, Taichung, and Tainan one notices immediately the large number of students working at McDonalds, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Ponderosa, and various other Western-style service and eating establishments.*

**The advent of McDonald's, et al, in Taiwan and the introduction of Western junk foods on a large scale is an excellent symbol of the Westernization and urbanization of the island. Fast food restaurants can only survive in urban areas. Before Hardee's, Pizza Hut, Wendy's, McDonald's and others locate a multi-million-dollar operation overseas, extensive market-potential, location-preference, and traffic-flow studies are done. Taiwan has been one of the most successful Western junk food markets in the world, breaking numerous records in consumption and profits.*

Many of these students attend high school and college programs in the evening from 6 to 10 pm. Their daytime hours therefore can be used to earn extra money. Students who go to school during the traditional daytime hours from 8 am to 4 pm may elect to work during the late afternoon and evening hours in part-time jobs. Statistics from the Ministry of Education in Taipei are not available to show the relationship between academic achievement and part-time employment. The highly competitive nature of the academic high school suggests that boys and girls who are working part-time probably have grades inferior to those youngsters who can spend their after school hours in study, in tutorial schools, or in intensive cram sessions.

The consumption-oriented nature of the cities of Taiwan contrast dramatically to what one finds in the beautiful countryside where consumerism has not yet become a dominant feature. Consumerism is a symbol of the change that is taking place as a result of industrialization, democratization, Westernization, and urbanization. How a consumer-oriented society like the new Taiwan can exist in juxtaposition to the old China that still prevails in the minds of older generations and in rural communities is hard to discern. For today's youth the opportunity to live in a consumer-oriented society is new and exciting and has redefined, perhaps permanently, Chinese history and culture. For the older generations youthful consumer patterns are too hedonistic and present a threat and challenge to the traditional values that have allowed Chinese civilization to retain its place of enduring glory for some 3000 years.

Since the mid-1970's when I first began doing field-based research in Formosa, I have noticed a change that to many observers, both native and foreign, seems to have gone undetected: The Chinese people on Taiwan have dramatically shifted their dietary patterns.

Food and its proper preparations have always been an important part of Chinese culture. Years of experimentations with ingredients, spices, and cooking techniques give modern Taiwan the most outstanding collections of basic and exotic Chinese cuisine on earth. Hong Kong, though it has dishes that may be more esoteric than that found in Taiwan, does not have the fine selections and also the reasonable prices that can be offered in Formosa.

It is suggested that every year the people of Taiwan spend enough money eating in restaurants to pay for the building of a full, four-lane highway from one end of the island to the other, a distance of some 250 miles. The traditional Chinese greeting is not "How are you?", rather "Have you eaten yet?" If the answer is yes, that means the person is well and happy.

The preparation of food, particularly for the evening meal, was in traditional China an arduous task. Time devoted to this task would consume much of the day, and women would have this duty as their main vocation. Good food and pleasant meals were symbols of a healthy family, good inter-generational relationships, and prosperity.

Rapidly changing lifestyle and Westernized attitudes, particularly in larger cities, is having a noticeable impact on the dietary and dining patterns of the people of Taiwan, particularly those under 35.

Centuries of practice have created cuisine that brings beauty, health and flavor to the Chinese table. The use of super-heated oil assures that all items are germ-free when served, and the consumption of large amounts of tea, which can only be prepared by boiling water, guarantees a beverage free of pollutants.

An industrialized society, where husbands and wives both work long hours, leads to major changes in traditions that had their provenance in agricultural life. Fast foods of the Western variety, prepackaged meats, fish, vegetables, fruits and caffeine-laden soft drinks, are replacing many traditional Chinese foods. Younger people today are as likely to have a "Big Mac" as to order a traditional noodle or rice dish. I asked my women students (1988) how many had been trained by their mothers or grandmothers in Chinese cooking. Of seventy asked, only ten indicated that they could prepare traditional Chinese meals. Women graduating from college no longer know the fundamentals of food preparation and Chinese cooking. The traditional Chinese dinner that includes all members of the grand-family is a rare occurrence in most households in Taiwan.

Taipei, the largest and wealthiest city in Taiwan, has complete sections devoted to Western foods. Most hotels have a Western restaurant; and children, when given a choice, will frequently request that they be taken to an American junk-food restaurant.

The introductions of Western foods and eating patterns is not, of itself, bad. It does show the intrusive nature of Western ideas and tastes. Taiwan was until recently a bastion of traditional Confucian values and Chinese traditions in art, life-style, education and cuisine. The change in culinary preferences suggest that other deeply held values are also being challenged.

One negative result of the influx of Western foods into the dietary patterns of Chinese young people is obesity. Educators and physicians tell me that, until recently, children of Taiwan had no problems related to being overweight. (Approximately 30 percent of American school children are overweight). Chinese food, with its absence of dairy products, soft drinks, candies, copious amounts of meat and its natural high fiber, fish, rice, and vegetables cooked in hot oils or boiled is naturally healthy food. Western items such as hamburgers, pizza, ice cream, cake, ad infinitum, are now included in the daily diet of many middle- and upper-class children. These foods are having a deleterious impact on health and physical fitness.

Fat school-age children, a novel item on the traditional Chinese scene, are becoming commonplace. More threatening to the people of Taiwan is the change in the socialization and bonding processes that in the past accompanied traditional family dining.

Taiwan's rapid development as an industrial giant has had a deleterious effect on the ecology of the island. Clean air, fresh, sweet, bubbling streams and unlittered beaches are almost impossible to find in modern Formosa. A decision was reached by the authorities of Taiwan in the early 1960's that economic development had to proceed rapidly and that environmental concerns would be cared for only after the island was economically sophisticated. The cities of Taiwan today are crowded with cars, buses, trucks, and taxicabs. To be successful in Taiwan, families must live in or near city areas and as a consequence the ecology in which most individuals interact is urban and frequently polluted. This dramatic and unmeasurable change is a consequence of the transformation of Taiwan from an agricultural province, which it remained until the early 1960's, to a major center of industry, commerce, transportation, and finance. The

Chinese family in Taiwan has also had to redefine its relationship to the environment. Prior to the industrial age, children could roam the countryside, wade through rice paddies, ride on the backs of buffalo, and swim in the waters, the streams, the lakes, and the sea that are found throughout and around the island. This outlet for stress and anxiety, two characteristics that are found in more industrial societies, is no longer available to children of upwardly bound families. Parents whose lives were regulated by the seasons, who could be sure that the water they were drinking and the food that they were eating were healthful, now must be concerned because of the industrial pollutants that may invade their water supplies and their foods. Taiwan is making efforts through a variety of governmental agencies to deter the onslaught on the landscape, the pollution of the air, and the contamination of water supplies. However, industrial development to be successful must also continue to grow. A laissez-faire attitude towards ecological issues appears to be the position of the national government, which sees the defense of Taiwan, the material quality of life of the people of the island, and the relationship with other nations intimately tied to continued economic and industrial development.

Most people living in Taiwan believe that the environment has become too heavily polluted. They believe that if the environment continues to deteriorate their lives will be directly and adversely affected. When a survey was done of the people of Taipei by the *United Daily News*, a Chinese newspaper, on April 19, 1990, 94 percent of the respondents from the city of Taipei considered pollution to be a major problem. In Kaohsiung, the second largest city in Taiwan, 65 percent of the respondents considered environmental protection more important than continued economic growth. Kaohsiung is one of the most populated and polluted sections of southern Taiwan. When people throughout the island of Formosa were asked to choose between economic development and environmental cleanliness, 55 percent favored a clean environment, while only 21 percent considered economic development to be more important. Ninety percent of all respondents to the *United Daily News* survey believe that the national government has an obligation to intervene to help purify the environment. A majority of these people also expressed dissatisfaction with the government's performance in the area of ecology, conservation, and pollution control. The areas in which the

greatest concerns were expressed were (1) air pollution, (2) garbage, (3) contaminated water, (4) advertising, and (5) noise. These figures would indicate that a significant majority of the people of Taiwan feel strongly about the need for Taiwan to reconsider its priorities and to place a clean environment ahead of continued hyperactive economic growth and development.

* * * * * *

Chinese society is built on the notion that there should be a reciprocity of relationships. The Chinese word for this notion is *guan-chi* 關係 . The best definition for *guan-chi* is reciprocity in human interactions. In traditional China, a man's ability to be successful in business, in the purchasing of land, and in numerous other economic endeavors was related to the circle of acquaintances with whom he interacted. Personal advantage would be gained when one had close relatives in high places. A man's upward mobility in China was, and to a degree still is, closely akin to his contacts throughout society. Hence if the individual has been able to make numerous contacts through his education, through his family activities, through membership in clubs, sporting associations, travel groups, or by way of marriage, he feels his potential is enhanced. In 1987 I surveyed 100 undergraduate students attending universities in Taiwan. A majority felt that success in life was closely related to academic achievement and hard work. This same group however, admitted that *guan-chi*, or being connected through a system of reciprocity, led to a lifetime of success and happiness. I have attempted to look at the notion of *guan-chi* or reciprocity in a mathematical model.

It is obvious that a person's closest relatives — his parents, his brothers, his sisters — are the individuals from whom he receives his greatest support throughout life. If we could diagram the concept of *guan-chi* we would see a small circle in which the individual would appear. Extending from this small circle would be a progression of concentric circles. The first and innermost group of circles would represent close family members and children; beyond that would be close friends, classmates,

business associates. At the farthest circle would be those individuals with whom only a small amount of relational time was spent, such as taxi drivers, waiters at restaurants, those who would take care of your home, repair your automobile, ad infinitum. Taking this mathematical approach and attributing to each of these concentric circles a numerical power which when added together equals 100 percent, shows diagrammatically the intensity of the relationship and the potential for *guan-chi* that existed. An example might be the relationship of brothers. In Chinese society while the father is alive this sibling relationship is very powerful. We might be able to attribute the number 20 to this relationship. The relationship between a father and son could be possibly a 30; the relationship between a man and his closest classmate might be given a 15. The total number in all a man's relationships would equal 100 percent. Hence each relationship that an individual has is ascribed a numerical weight, based on the importance of the relationship to the individual's economic, social, cultural, and political influence in the society. In traditional China, there was a clear-cut understanding of the relational setting for all people with whom a man would interact. It was fixed and would be copied from his father's interactions and passed on to his son. Modern Taiwan is the product of thousands of years of Chinese civilization modified only slightly by the Japanese occupational and socialization period from 1895 to 1945. This contemporary society presents a complex socio-diagrammatic collection of relationships, in that the average Chinese living in Taiwan is constantly interacting with not only those people who made possible the traditional core of his relationships but also a wide range of individuals who in traditional Chinese life would not be known. As a consequence the notion of relational behavior has had to be modified so as to conform to the reality of Taiwan's new economic and social order.

The dilemma that exists is that younger Chinese people are attempting on the one hand to show propriety towards all of those who make up the concentric circles of the sociogram of which I have spoken. However, this increase in the number of people with whom a Chinese now has a relationship, be it his brother-in-law or his investment agent, has increased dramatically. It now becomes virtually impossible for the modern Chinese in Taiwan to exchange *guan-chi* with all of those with whom he must deal. Hence the relationship that exists between the Chinese in modern Taiwan and those

people with whom he interacts may become dysfunctional in that the relationship has built into it an insurmountable conflict, basically the ideals of *guan-chi* and the pragmatic realities of dealing with hundreds of people on an average day. I have often felt that the reason Chinese seem to be so unconcerned about environmental issues, social welfare of the poor, and concerns for public agendas is that they are so consumed with the Confucian notion of caring for and nurturing those in the concentric circles closest to them that they simply do not have the energy or inclination to extend their efforts beyond this reference group.

Western people often are more generous with strangers than they are with family members. The Chinese exhibit the opposite extreme. Westernized manners of living, particularly the nuclear-family, will challenge the traditional Chinese approach to relationships. The end of the extended-family may also mean an eclipsing of the traditional concept of reciprocity within the context of *guan-chi*.

A major dilemma that faces women and men on Taiwan is related to the compulsory military service that men must accept normally after finishing their formal education. The average male college graduate is approximately 24 years old. This is two years older than the average American male college graduate and is related to the fact that youngsters start elementary school a year and a half to two years later than their American counterparts. While college graduates and high school graduates are fulfilling their military obligation of twenty months in the national armed forces of Taiwan they are literally out of circulation. During this same period of time women of the same age group are involved with the social, cultural, and economic life of the cities and suburbs of Taiwan. Men are unable to remain in contact with classmates, with family relatives, and others who could help them in establishing their careers. Women of the same age group are able to prosper economically and socially. During this time of life most enduring male-female relationships begin. So many of the young men are unable to remain part of the social scene that the young women, who are eager to establish long term relationships that will lead to marriage, frequently gravitate

towards involvement with men older than themselves. Chinese men in their 30's are financially better off than young boys who have recently finished college and are in their obligatory military service period. It is very common for Chinese women in their mid 20's to fall in love with and marry Chinese men in their 30's or even 40's. The economic security and the social status that the man slightly older in age can offer them and the fact that men of their own age (20-25) are frequently in the military and therefore have had their careers and their social development retarded by two years of military service, makes the selection process quite different today from that in traditional China. During the dynastic period and during that age in which agriculture was the dominant economy of the Chinese people in Taiwan, marriages were arranged by parents and brokers. Girls of 14, 15, and 16 would frequently be betrothed to men of about the same age. The primary reason for this was that the collective economic matrix of the extended-family and the need for younger women to assist with family chores allowed marriage to occur significantly younger than in Europe and the United States. This phenomenon of women in their mid 20's marrying men significantly older does pose a major social concern in that the average life expectancy of a Chinese man in Taiwan is about 70 years while the average life expectancy of the women of Taiwan is closer to 75 years. If a man is 40 when he marries and his wife is 25, this represents a 15-year spread at the time of marriage. If the wife statistically will outlive her husband by 5 to 7 years, this suggests that the period of widowhood is generally over 20 years. Unless economic, health, and social care for widowed women is made available through governmental or private providers great hardship will befall the aged mothers and grandmothers in Taiwan society.

Transition is confronting the Chinese family in Taiwan on many fronts. One of these is the new approach that industrialization, Westernization, and urbanization are bringing to the field of leisure and recreation for the Chinese family. Little is written about leisure and the Chinese experience, probably because the notion of leisure, free time, and vacationing is relatively new to the people of Taiwan and Asia. Until the last

decade there was no word in the Chinese dictionary for leisure. The traditional Chinese view of leisure and free time has always been negative. It was felt until recently that a person who was enjoying a vacation was in fact wasting time. The Chinese notion of work differs dramatically from the American view. Chinese have never clearly separated work and leisure; rather, as part of the work experience, time would be taken for meals, for resting, to greet relatives, to perform various ceremonial obligations such as caring for ancestral graves, and participating in the numerous holidays that fill the Chinese calendar. The concept of a separate period of time devoted purely to vacationing is alien to the Chinese experience. And only now that the Chinese family in Taiwan is in a period of transition and wealth do we see the vacation in which the family departs from its residence to spend enjoyable time together at either an ocean resort, a mountain park, or a lakeside villa, becoming part of the agenda. The explanation for the recent advent of the vacation is basically economic.

Until recent times Chinese believed it was necessary to work at all free times in order to acquire the necessary wealth as assurance against periods of misfortune. The income of the average person in Taiwan in 1991 surpassed $9,000 annually. This very high income, plus the fact that Chinese families traditionally save upwards of 30 percent of their earnings, has made Taiwan one of the richest societies in the world. It is quite logical that this new wealth would encourage the nuclear-family configuration to seek ways of recreating. Farm life provided the necessity to work year round and also contained built-in recreational activities. The extended- or grand-family with three to five generations and numerous brothers, grandchildren, children, aunts, and uncles living in the same compound had a certain dimension of recreation built into its fabric. The nuclear-family of today, as seen in the burgeoning cities of Taiwan, does not have built into it the recreational features that were found in farm life and at the extended-family compound. As a consequence, the nuclear-family with its wealth, its 40- to 48-hour workweek, and its access to good transportation has chosen the Western type vacation as a method of fostering family togetherness and social interaction.

Physical activity modeled after Western athletic events are now very popular in Taiwan. Children who in bygone days would have gathered spontaneously at a riverside to go swimming or may have enjoyed roaming through the rice paddies and

Foreword

The purpose of this article is to enhance understanding and communication between two diverse cultures and societies, Taiwan and the United States. This goal is realized through an essay on the Chinese family as it exists in modern Taiwan and those forces and influences that are forcing it to be redefined.

No effort has been made to compare the Chinese family in Taiwan during this period of transition with family life in other cultures. All civilizations, as they have evolved from agriculturally based to industrially dominated economies, have had to deal with traumatic challenges to traditional family values, structure, and purpose. I hope that this essay, will give the reader a better understanding of the influences confronting the Chinese family in Taiwan and how family life is adjusting to these external challenges.

Taiwan is undergoing rapid and dramatic change. Whether the traditional values that have made Cathay the most enduring of civilizations can withstand this onslaught is the underlying issue addressed in this essay.

Two alternatives remain available to modern Taiwan society: accommodation or displacement. By the term "accommodation" I am suggesting that traditional Chinese life can form a healthy meld with the forces of change. "Displacement" would suggest that Chinese values and culture must give way to modernization.

The plasticity and harmony of the Chinese civilization suggests to me that a synthesis of traditional values and modern Western industrialization is possible. The new configuration may present a model for the Occident which is struggling with the burdens of industrial and material success.

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along the oceanside now are encouraged by their parents and by their schools to participate in individual and group sporting competitions. In doing this the children are isolated from their grandparents and parents, who have their own social outlets. The Western model of recreation, whereby a few families unrelated by blood rent a condominium, a beach house, or a mountain retreat together, has become quite popular in Taiwan. The most extreme transition from the type of leisurely and recreational activity that was found in the extended-family during the more traditional days of China is the new private club which has in recent years become very popular on the island of Taiwan. Membership in these clubs is restricted and extremely expensive. After being admitted to one of these private clubs a person has a timeshare condominium at his disposal for a predetermined number of days per year. Membership costs between $5,000 and $20,000. It is for a lifetime and it may be passed on or sold. The private club, and there are over 25 of these throughout the island, are normally located in scenic areas where other recreational facilities such as lakes, mountain trails, or beaches currently exist. What is interesting about the private club concept is that it is diametrically opposite to the traditional concept of recreation in Chinese family life. The private club is oriented to the nuclear-family or in some cases it is designed purely for a husband and wife to get away from the noise and pollution of the cities and the stressful interactions of business and family obligations. Leisure and recreation, as they are now being redefined, present to us an excellent example of the transitional nature of social life in Taiwan and of the dynamic changes that are taking place within the value system of the Chinese family on island China.

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Conclusions and Observations

> *"For the moment, maybe, the Western impact has driven Confucius from his millennial throne; yet even if he has been officially deposed, the unconquerable sage is still contriving to govern where he no longer reigns. . ."*
>
> Arnold Toynbee

The dramatic changes that have taken place in Chinese society in Taiwan over the last few decades have affected the Chinese family and its traditions. A majority of the

households in modern Taiwan are nuclear in configuration. A small portion are stem, and except in the rural areas the extended-family has been eliminated as a viable economic and social force in Formosan society. Numerous factors have caused family change. Among the most important are urbanization, Westernization, industrialization, technological developments and the need for Taiwan, for geopolitical purposes, to adjust its economic system so that it might be competitive in the world economy. Individualism, democracy, egalitarianism, and the relationship between women and men in Taiwan society have also brought about dramatic social, sociological and psychological changes in the people of the island who are seeking new patterns of family life and child rearing. To accommodate these consequential changes, parental authority, ancestor worship, arranged marriages, inferiority of girls and women, age hierarchy, and the emphasis on family life as a vehicle to have and raise children have all been demoted in their level of importance. In their place have come new configurations in relationships which have been discussed on the preceding pages. For many of the older values concerning family life that exist in Taiwan, most are being challenged by the new realities brought on by Taiwan's place in the industrial consumer-oriented world. Parents now delay having children in order that they may better integrate their lifestyles with Taiwan's economic system. A majority of all women in Taiwan have careers outside of their family; this is reflected in the huge growth of private day-care centers throughout urban and suburban sections in Taiwan, and in more recent years the demand for public kindergartens in Taiwan.

The Chinese family in modern Taiwan is no longer a self-sufficient social, cultural, and economic unit. Increased importance has in recent years been put on the family as a consuming unit. Religious life has become less important as a part of family life than in the past, and this is symbolized by the new architecture of housing units throughout Taiwan wherein there is no place for the traditional family altar. Education, which was always a family function and responsibility, now is vested in the authority of the government. Ancestor worship, which maintained a control over the younger members of the family and acculturated them into the values and mores, has decreased significantly. Younger people today in the highly competitive economic and technological marketplace are able to move quickly up the ranks of employment. Age is no

longer seen the virtue that it once was. The youth of Taiwan today, particularly those who have graduated from one of the prestigious universities on the island, are able to enter positions of authority and financial security superior to those that were available to their parents or grandparents. Women have more legal and economic rights than in the past and their level of responsibility within the family and in the external world of employment has increased. This may be one of the causative factors in the increasing divorce rate among middle-class educated women. The Western notion of romantic love has become important. Happiness is seen as the most important goal of a marriage in modern society, whereas in the past the goals of a good marriage were to have children, maintain the family name, and provide an economic and social sanctuary for the aged.

The Taiwan family today is more flexible and more Westernized than ever before in Chinese history, and a greater degree of life styles are tolerated. Recreation has had to readjust from its traditional model found in the old Chinese extended-families to a new nuclear-family modality. Private clubs for fathers, mothers, and children have become very popular and symbolize the desire on the part of the nuclear-family to have social involvement external to in-laws, parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles. A dilemma that faces the island of Formosa as it moves from an agricultural society to an industrial, consumer-oriented environment is ecology. The air and water of Taiwan have, by necessity of rapid development, become polluted. Noise pollution is rampant in the cities and stress caused by ecological shortsightedness is having a deleterious effect on the health and well-being of many urban and suburban dwellers.

Education, though it has had to accommodate new ideas and new teaching and learning strategies, has not changed as dramatically as have other external influences on the Chinese family in Taiwan. The educational system of the island attempts to balance tradition with innovation and is more of a conservative than innovative entity.

From this short essay on the Chinese family in Taiwan in this period of transition, it can be concluded that numerous changes are occurring at a rapid pace. Though we

in the West experienced these same dramatic transitions, they occurred over a relatively long period of history. The Chinese people on Taiwan are attempting to deal with the same barrage of changes in a short, compressed span of time. Whether Chinese civilization with its long history and its emphasis on Confucian conservatism and traditionalism can accommodate the numerous aforementioned challenges confronting it and whether the Chinese family will survive the onslaught of industrialization, consumerism, Westernization and other issues will be left for pundits, philosophers and theologians to discuss.

Hu Shih, one of China's great contemporary thinkers, made this observation:

> *"It would surely be a great loss to mankind at large if the acceptance of this new civilization should take the form of abrupt displacement instead of organic assimilation, thereby causing the disappearance of the old civilization. The real problem, therefore, may be restated thus: How can we best assimilate modern civilization in such a manner as to make it congenial and congruous and continuous with the civilization of our own making?"*
>
> —Hu Shih
> Development of the Logical Method
> in Ancient China (1922)

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