1989

Daughter of the landlord : life history of a Chinese immigrant

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San Jose State University, 1989

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DAUGHTER OF THE LANDLORD:
LIFE HISTORY OF A CHINESE IMMIGRANT

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Social Sciences
San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

By

Joan M. Beck Coulson

August, 1989

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ABSTRACT

DAUGHTER OF THE LANDLORD: LIFE HISTORY OF A CHINESE IMMIGRANT

by Joan M. Beck Coulson

This thesis addresses the topic of the Chinese Communist Revolution of 1949, using the disciplines of anthropology and history. To understand what life was like during this period, the life of a woman has been studied using the method of oral history. Additionally her life has been put in context with the political events of the day, through the use of literary research.

Research on this subject reveals that during this time there was much upheaval in society during the equalizing process which the Communist government implemented. Many basic traditions were erased, and new philosophies of life were implemented. Every aspect of society and culture was effected: education, business, political and family life. Families were disrupted and many lives destroyed. This thesis looks at how the subject dealt with these changes, how the political events changed her life, and how her attitudes to life changed.

DEDICATION

To the students of Tiananmen Square who died in the pro-democracy demonstrations of May and June, 1989.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Alan Leventhal for his inspiration.

To Professor James M. Freeman for his guidance, and sharing with me his vision of humanity.

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And, to Ming Chang for sharing her life with me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. Introduction	i
Purpose of the Study	
Research Questions	
Relationship of History and Anthropology	
Justification for Oral History	
Library Research and visit to China	
Relationship of Narrative to Observer	
Collecting Data	
Importance of Study	
Assumptions	
Pinyin System of Romanization	
II. Historical Background	12
III. The Family	26
(of Ming Chang)	
IV The Early Happy Years	41
(to the age of 15)	
V. Homeless	51
(The Communist Revolution 1949)	
VI. The Years of Disillusionment	65
VII. The Cultural Revolution - 1966	89
VIII. The End is in Sight	104
(1973 onwards)	
IX. Analysis and Conclusion	111
X. References	119

CHAPTER I

Introduction

In conformity with trends in contemporary anthropology (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Freeman, 1979 and Rabinrow, 1977), I use the first person in the introduction, methods and analysis sections in this thesis, where appropriate.

Purpose of the Study

This study evolved from my interest in anthropology and history. I chose for my thesis research a period in Chinese history. Of particular interest to me was the time just before and after the Revolution of 1949, when classical Chinese society was remodeled under Communism. My anthropological background led me to believe that these events could be understood more clearly through the eyes of a person who lived in China during this period. Consequently, the goal of this research was to learn the effects of the Revolution upon an individual living through this traumatic time in history, a time when attempts were made to change the traditions and cultural values of the people.

Research Questions

In order to reach this goal, I have used the method of oral history as a vehicle for my study. This has been coupled with library research (chapter II) to place the life in its historical context. For my subject I chose the life of a woman who was born in 1934 to one of the leading

families in China. She lived through the Japanese occupation (1936-1945), the Communist Revolution of 1949 and the subsequent Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976.

In "The Personal Document in Anthropological Science," Clyde Kluckholm points out, "life events have meaning only in their context. This context is, in part, created by the contemporary situation of the subject and by the sequence of experience which are peculiar to him as an individual" (1945, p. 112). Therefore it has been necessary to place the life of Ming Chang among the political events of the day.

My questions are:

- 1) How did these political events change the structure of her life?
- 2) How did the experiences change her attitudes to life?
- 3) How did she deal with the culture changes in society?

In Untouchable: An Indian Life History, James Freeman states, "A detailed life history like Muli's provides a way to reach behind the surface answers outsiders often receive, grasping from the insider's perspective what he really values and how he interprets his experiences" (1979, p. 12).

Similarly, many of the answers to my research questions will be found in the transcript of the

reminiscences of Ming Chang. A pseudonym has been used in accordance with usual anthropological practices.

Relationship of History and Anthropology

This study could not have been done without the combination of the disciplines of history and anthropology. A number of contemporary anthropologists have successfully combined these two disciplines; including Eric R. Wolf's Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century (1969) and Renato Rosaldo's Ilongot Headhunting 1883-1974: A Study in Society and History (1980). In the analysis, I will compare Ming Chang's experiences with the historical documentation of the Communist Revolution. The information will show how these events changed the structure of her life, and how her attitudes to life were changed.

Justification for Oral History

In his book, The Voice of the Past, Oral History, Paul Thompson says that "Through history ordinary people seek to understand the upheavals and changes which they experience in their own lives: wars, social transformation . . . it can give back to the people who made and experienced history, through their own words, a central place" (1988, p. 2).

In the ancient past all history was oral history. All learning and understanding of clan history, medicine, crafts and traditions was passed down orally from

generation to generation. We still can see examples of this in present-day African and North American Indian societies. Myths and folk law were the methods used to pass on knowledge and history of the society.

In Britain and America sociologists and anthropologists/ethnologists found that long term social change could be recorded by persuading older informants to write autobiographies. In the 1920s and 1930s, American urban sociology produced Clifford Shaw's The Jack-Roller: A Delinquent Boy's Own Story (1930) on city life. While in Europe, W.I. Thomas and F. Znaniecki produced a massive account of immigrant life in The Polish Peasant in Europe and America (1918-20). Anthropologists, working among North American Indians, took up the life history method and made significant achievements in understanding the life and beliefs of the American Indian. Examples of their work are Paul Radin's Crashing Thunder (1926), which looked inside the American-Indian culture from their own lips, and Ruth Landes' Ojibwa Women (1938), an early collection of women's life stories. Life histories have continued to be important in contemporary anthropological work (Langness & Frank, 1981).

In China, Ida Pruitt wrote about the life styles of the elite in Old Madam Yin (1979) describing life in Beijing during the 1926-1936 period, and in Second

Daughter, (1984) Katherine Wei, with the aid of Terry Quinn, tells of her life from 1930-49 in China, when her father was the Dean at Yenching University. Revolutionary memories have been collected since the 1950s, very soon after the Communist victory. William Hinton wrote a brilliant book, Fanshen: a Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese village (1967) and later he followed up with Shenfan: the Continuing Revolution in a Chinese village (1983). These accounts proved that, through the method of oral history, one could obtain an inside view of people's culture from their own words. Also these stories show how historic events affect individual people.

Library Research and Visit to China

To become more familiar with the history of China, particularly during these turbulent years, I started library research. I also made a visit to China in 1987. While there, I visited the village where Ming was born, and her family homes in Shanghai, Beijing and Suzhou. The month I spent in China, and my continuing library research on the historical background, has helped greatly in my comprehension of both the era and the country where these events took place. The background work was necessary to understand the events which were happening as Ming grew up.

Relationship of Narrator to Observer

Ming is a graceful, petite Chinese lady. She is refined, quiet and unassuming in manner, rather nondescript in appearance, wearing simple shirts and blouses with little jewelry. The impression she gives to colleagues and newcomers is that she is "very quiet." This quietness is deceptive, though. She is very observant, possessing deep intelligence and a wry sense of humor.

Ming and I had met occasionally through work contacts over the past few years. One day, out of curiosity, I asked her where she came from: Taiwan or Hong Kong. I discovered that neither of my expected choices was correct. In the next ten minutes she gave me a synopsis of the her life history, including the seventeen years during which she attempted to leave mainland China. I was enthralled and knew at that moment that I had found the subject of my thesis. Over the following year, we would occasionally chat about some aspect of her past life and I made mental notes not to forget this or that incident. Ming was the "story teller" and I was the listener and interpreter of her statements. Always I wanted to know more and more about the events in China. I am very grateful for her trust in allowing me to share her life history. Ming is a very private person and speaks very little about her years in China to most people.

In the past, investigators have been warned to keep a certain level of detachment in the process of collecting data, but more recent studies have indicated the importance of establishing a rapport between investigator and subject. James Clifford in his book, The Predicament of Culture (1988) talks of the discursive processes of ethnography, in the form of a "dialogue between two individuals" (p. 43), and uses as example Tuhami: Portrait of a Moroccan (1980) by Vincent Crapanzano. Clifford feels "that a close involvement is needed to see the events first hand from the eyes of the participant, and a shared vision of reality is obtained where the interlocutors actively negotiate in a process of dialogue" (p. 44). L.L. Langness and Gelya Frank also admire the efforts of Crapanzano. They also mention work by Ettore Biocca, Yanoama: The Narrative of a White Girl Kidnapped by Amazonian Indians (1971). They point out that "Biocca's work with Helena Valero emphasizes the importance of recording the direct testimony of those rare individuals who are able to provide us with a vivid picture of life in realms otherwise closed to us as outsiders" (1981, p. 5). Ming and I have certain basic attributes in common, being female, self-supporting, with two children, and immigrants to a new land. I believe the dialogue between us will enable the readers to understand the difficulties of living in China during the

revolutionary years when attempts were made to change the culture and society.

Collecting Data

Although Ming had initially agreed to work with me on her life history, when the time came for us to start the project, she seemed reluctant, explaining that she did not feel she was an interesting person. I suggested to Ming that she could talk about her relatives and friends first and she agreed to go ahead. As Ming expressed concerns that reliving some of the unpleasant periods of her life may affect her ability to sleep we decided to collect the data during our lunch times in a nearby park. Initially we talked about her grandparents, then her escapes to Hong Kong. She was less interested in her years before the age of fifteen and I had to make definite inquiries about this time period. She was reluctant to talk about her marriage or the Cultural Revolution. She would say things such as, "I married and twenty years later I left China." Finally as she became more comfortable with our dialogue she was able to talk about this time. Suddenly one day she said, "Tomorrow I will tell you about it," and the next day she went cohesively into the most dramatic period of her life. The main interviews were conducted bi-weekly through the months of July and August 1988, with each interview lasting approximately an hour and a half. The taped material was

transcribed verbatim with minor organizational modification for the purpose of continuity. Although Ming insisted I should put the story into "my words," I chose not to do so because I would not have been able to reproduce the flavor of her experiences; consequently the narrative retains Ming's wording.

Importance of the Study

Clifford Geertz ponders the future of ethnology or cultural anthropology in the final pages of his book, Works and Lives (1988). He says that much of the work has already been done on people from faraway places and wonders whether, with the dissolution of colonialism, we will not need people going "back and forth between the Euro-American centers of world power and various exotic elsewheres to mediate between the prejudices of one and the parochialism of the other." He wonders what will be the next necessary step now that "the proconsuls are gone and the sociomechanics implausible" (1988 pp. 146-147).

Perhaps the next work will be for the investigators to research among the many immigrants who have recently come to the West. The article "The New Faces of America's People" (Insight Jan. 16, 1989) points that by the year 2030 Americans of European ancestry will no longer be in the majority. Since 1980 there has been an influx of

570,000 immigrants each year. From 1985, only 11 percent of the new immigrants were of European background, 40 percent were from Latin America and 46 percent were from Asia (pp. 8-9). The United States has many ethnic peoples from Cuba, Mexico, Asia, and other lands. Contemporary anthropology can perhaps help local communities and industries adjust to the cultural backgrounds of the immigrants and bring about an understanding between the newcomers and the existing population. America is fast becoming a multicultural country, and efforts will be needed to turn this into an integrated society.

Assumptions

As Ming's experiences during the revolutionary times are not unique, how she dealt with changes will be helpful to others surviving a political and cultural upheaval.

Gail Sheehy says in her book, Spirit of Survival:

more and more, the strategems used by ordinary people to survive such a period of personal upheaval resemble the techniques resorted to by the classic survivor. The classic survivor is forced to endure a prolonged state of pain, privation, uncertainty, or fear. Time loses all its comforting boundaries and there is no concrete reason to hope for deliverance, yet the person endures. (1987 p. ix)

Pinyin System of Romanization

The use of the modern Chinese Pinyin system of Romanization has been used for most Chinese names. For example the spelling of Mao Zedong for Mao Tse-tung,

Beijing for Peking, Tianjin for Tientsin, Guomindang for Kuomintang. One notable exception is Chiang Kaishek (Pinyin system is Jiang Jieshi). Most letters are pronounced as written except Q = CH, C = TS and X = HS.

CHAPTER II

Historical Background

Geographic Features

The People's Republic of China is a country of Central and East Asia, second largest in land area (the Soviet Union being the largest), covering 3,700,000 square miles, and divided into 29 provinces and regions. It has the largest population in the world, according to the census of July 1982 (Chen, 1985, p. 1), with over one billion people (about 22.6% of the world's total).

Civilization and Culture

"China is the oldest continuing civilization surviving in the world today" (Cotterell & Morgan, 1975, p. 9). It is an agrarian state, which means it is the oldest political state in human history and has proceeded out of its own prehistoric roots. Civilization started in the Bronze age, 5,000 B.C., when the society evolved from a tribal to a peasant state. Ideographic, or logographic script was invented at that time and is still in use in China today. In ideographic script, each character represents an object or idea, rather than sounds, so meaning is accessible to speakers of different dialects. The Mandarin spoken dialect is very different from the Cantonese, Shanghai and other dialects, but the script is the same.

The unique culture of the Chinese has evolved because of their relative isolation from the rest of the world. The jungle, ocean, Himalayan mountains, and the Pamirs deserts have kept them apart from other people. Most of the people of China belong to the ethnic group call Han, named after the people of the high culture Han dynasty, which existed from 202 BC to 220 AD. The remaining six percent of the population are minorities with different languages and religious beliefs.

Ethics and Philosophy

Since the first millennium B.C. there has been the philosophy of Yin and Yang, which depends upon a balance of two natural forces. Yin represents the negative, female, weak, and dark aspects, while Yang represents the positive, male, and light aspects. It is felt that these two forces should not be in conflict, but should be balanced. These old ideas and beliefs have had a tremendous influence on Chinese politics, sciences, arts and have influenced the women's secondary role in this society.

The two main currents in later Chinese thought and philosophy are Taoism and Confucianism. Buddhism spread from India in the first century A.D. and Christianity came in the eighteenth century. Tao, or the Way, taught that people should live in harmony with nature and each other.

Confucius (born 551 B.C.) introduced a philosophy which was an extension of these beliefs. He was regarded as a great philosopher, advocating respect for ancestors, parents and the feelings of others. His texts were included in basic education and the subject matter of civil service examinations, assuring the Confucian influence in all social norms and morals (McNeill, 1970, p. 3). His desires for harmony meant that monarchs had to receive loyalty and respect from their subjects, rule with benevolence and sincerity while avoiding force.

Family and Marriage

In the past, marriage was by far the "most important contractual relationship in Chinese society" (Freedman, 1979, p. 262). Hierarchy was emphasized and resulted in "the relatively low position of the husband-wife relationship" (Mackerras, 1976, p. 146) which, in turn, led to the arranged marriage system. Olga Lang says, "High respect for family and paternal authority became another specific feature of Chinese civilization" (1946, p. 9). The family unit consisted of members related to each other by blood, marriage, or adoption and having a common budget and common property. A daughter would become integrated into the husband's family, so she had no future value to the family. Added to this was the fact that only sons could carry on the necessary filial duties

and ancestor worship. The chief Chinese virtue was filial piety; it was the social, the political, and the religious duty of every individual to respect their elders and superiors. "The father was the prototype of all political authority, and disobedience to him would threaten the foundations of the state" (Creel, 1954, p. 303).

One aspect of the low status of women was the custom of footbinding (the four smaller toes were bound under each foot, forcing the women's weight onto the heel). This practice started in the late Tang Period (618-900 A.D.) and lasted until the new Republic period (1911). The second ruler in the Tang Dynasty, Li Yu, is reported to have compelled his fair Yaoniang to bind her feet so as to dance on the image of a large lotus flower. The custom spread to all levels of society, and the most important criteria for a marriage was the size of the bride's feet rather than beauty of her face or person. The procedure made the girl less useful and more dependent on male members of her family.

History from 1911 Onwards

The time period from the beginning of the new Republic in 1911 until the present time is of importance to this thesis. It is necessary to clarify what was happening in China while Ming Chang was growing up in the late 30s and early 40s, when the whole structure of her

society was changing. The new ideas brought back to China from the students who had studied abroad in Europe, America and Japan, and the influences from the Western traders and missionaries led to the movement for change (Fairbank, Reischauer & Craig, 1973, p. 764-766). Dr. Sun Yatsen became the leading force behind the movement, and the new Republic of China was formed in 1911 (Cotterell et al., 1975, p. 266). Dr. Sun had attended schools in Hawaii and Hong Kong. His early education being Western, he was influenced by the Western sociology, politics and religion.

The new Republic was not peaceful. There was much disunity, drug use, corrupt Warlords, and demands from the Japanese and other overseas governments for trade concessions. Dr. Sun administered the south of China, while Yuan Shihkai, a powerful pro-Japanese warlord, controlled north China with the Northern Army (Hu, 1987, p. 17). When Yuan died, the country became divided for the next ten years, with the warlords ruling in the North and Dr. Sun in the south. Ming Chang's father grew up planning his future in the administration of the new Republic led by Dr. Sun. Chiang Kaishek emerged in 1917 as military advisor to Dr. Sun, and in 1919 the Nationalist Party was formed after the May 4th Movement. (On May 4, 1919, students demonstrated in Beijing against

the concessions which were being awarded to Japan at the Peace Conference in Versailles.) Later, in 1921, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) came into being and held its First Congress in Shanghai. Mao Zedong, one of the leaders of the May 4th movement, was also one of the leaders in this first Communist congress. At that time the Guomindang government of Dr. Sun welcomed members, whether they were Communists or Nationalists, and there was even a Nationalist-Communist alliance in 1923 (Barnett, 1968, p. 7).

When Dr. Sun died, a struggle took place between the right and left factions, with Chiang Kaishek as leader of the right wing and Mao Zedong as one of the leaders of the left. Chiang, as the son of a well-to-do land owner, was concerned with developing a strong National State. He was not interested in transforming the society in the same way that Mao was. This basic difference between Mao and Chiang began to emerge at this time. The Alliance split in 1927, and the Communists established a separate peasant state in Hunan (Cotterell et al., 1975, p. 271). Conflicts continued between the Guomindang government and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and instead of combining forces to expell the Japanese threat, the Guomindang continued to try to extinguish the CCP. By 1929, Chiang and Mao came into open conflict when

Guomindang troupes attacked rebellious workers in Shanghai.

In October of 1934, the Communists retreated from the Guomindang army and set up new bases in the northwest of China. About 86,000 men and women started a long 6,000-mile walk, now known as the Long March, with about 4,000 arriving in Shaanxi a year later. At that time, the CCP was led by Soviet advisers (Otto Braun in particular), but by January of the next year Mao had come to the fore and took the leadership of the party. During the Long March Mao's attitude toward the emancipation of women became apparent. They were accorded equal rights; there was even a regiment comprising 2,000 women. Later he was to coin the expression "Women hold up half the sky" (Salisbury, 1985 p. 265).

During the quiet years when they were establishing their new society in Northern China, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) gained the confidence of the people and recruits to their army and cause. The army of the CCP, the People's Liberation Army (PLA), treated the population very well. They were given three commands with regard to dealing with the peasants: "Do not take even a needle or a thread. Consider the people as your family. All that you have borrowed you must return" (Cotterell et al., 1975, p. 278). Land redistribution was started and the Communists tried to bring about an equitable reform for

all Chinese. Emphasis was given to the education of women, pointing out the injustices of the old system and encouraging their mobilization to the cause of Communism (Jancar, 1978, p. 177).

The Japanese invaded Northern China at the Marco Polo Bridge on July 7, 1937. This started the eight-year war with Japan. This is the period when Ming Chang's family escaped from their home near the sea at Golden Mountain, [Ming's translation] and moved to Shanghai.

The Japanese invasion was not an entire success, and Edwin Hoyt comments in his new book, The Rise of the Chinese Republic:

and now they held the whole of the Chinese coastline, from Manchukuo to the Pearl River in the south. They were capable of driving a column of troops anywhere within 500 miles of the coast. But those penetrations were really meaningless in terms of military victory. Wherever the Japanese went, the people moved out and the local militia and warlord forces scattered; and when the Japanese retreated back to the coast, the people returned and the local forces took command again. So the Japanese controlled China, but they had not won their war. Instead they were being sapped month after month by the high cost of occupying part of that vast country. (1989, p. 177)

Many schools and colleges were closed, and libraries were burned. Some books were saved when people took the books from schools and moved into free China. While the Communists fought the Japanese in the northern villages, there were efforts to get Mao and Chiang together to fight

against the Japanese, particularly when Beijing and Shanghai fell. However, these efforts were unsuccessful and fighting continued, often Mao and Chiang against one another, but sometimes against the Japanese. Chiang's passive resistance to the Japanese caused his troops to lose their combat effectiveness (Hu, 1987, p. 19). Eventually Chiang retreated to Chongquin (Chungking) and remained inactive from 1939-44, leaving the Communists to keep up their guerilla warfare against the Japanese (Fairbank, 1986, p. 205).

After the end of hostilities between Japan and the rest of the world in 1946, Chiang's Guomindang took the Southeast of China and the Chinese Communist Party took the Northwest. During this time there were many student protests in Shanghai against the injustices in society (Wei, 1984, p. 6) under the Chiang regime, but to no avail. Chiang seemed more obsessed with destroying the Communists than attending to the ills of his society. Chiang started the civil war in June 1948 (Hu, 1987, p. 19), but his forces were low in morale, while Mao's troops had been hardened by the life in the Northwest and were inspired by an ideal of liberation from imperialism and feudalism. By the beginning of October 1949, Chiang had given up and retired to Formosa (now Taiwan).

The Communist Revolution of 1949

The CCP made sweeping reforms. They took control of the economy by taking over the banking system (Fairbank, 1986, p. 279). They instituted hygienic methods in the cities; they repaired public works and controlled disease. Drug abusers, peddlers, prostitutes, beggars and petty criminals were sent to retraining programs. The army was self-disciplined, polite and helpful, in great contrast to the treatment the people had experienced under the Japanese, and even Nationalist, troops. The new administration was faced with an enormous task: to improve the health, education and prosperity of an exceedingly large nation of over 800,000 people, 80 percent of whom were illiterate. Additionally out of a population of four hundred million, only 185,000 (1/10th of one percent) had had a college education before 1949. Education was based on the Soviet model with emphasis on scientific and practical subjects, de-emphasizing liberal arts programs.

Land reform was implemented, the aims of which were to redistribute the land from the very rich to the poor. This is when Ming's family lost their farm land income and became poor. The following extract from Hoyt's book gives an idea of the atmosphere at that time: "Special people's tribunals were established, and these had enormous power.

They could declare a person a 'class enemy,' and once that was done there was no appeal from the sentence they imposed, even if it was death" (1989, p. 248). The cadres (community leaders) would take peasants through landlords' houses, showing them the rich silks and porcelains the landlord used. By the time the trial was held, public indignation against the rich person was at a peak. Sometimes the landlord was simply humiliated and the lands and goods taken. Sometimes he was shot. This was major social change, with the destruction of the old rural gentry class and scholar-officials. The large 100-room house of Ming's grandfather was made into the headquarters for the local government.

The government tried to improve the position of women. They encouraged women to speak out against the inequities of the past at community meetings, and efforts were made to get them to work in the neighborhood committees. The All-China Women's Federation was formed and in 1950, the new marriage law was passed. Among the changes were the abolition of arbitrary and compulsory forms of marriage; parents were not to interfere in their children's marriage. Women were entitled to equal pay. Husband and wife were to have equal rights of possessions of the marriage and free choice of occupation and social activities. Requirements for a marriage were simple:

registration with the local government and no elaborate ceremonies. This reduced the dependence of the young couples upon their respective parents.

The aims of the Communists were the equitable redistribution of wealth and equality in society, but harsh measures were often taken to implement these goals. Through the next few years Mao Zedong led campaigns against different groups, which caused fear of reprisal among the population. The first target, in 1952, was the bourgeoisie with the three evils of corruption, waste, and bureaucracy. Then came the campaigns against the five evils of bribery, tax evasion, theft of state property, cheating on government contracts and stealing of economic information. Cadres infiltrated the workmen in factories and business firms, denouncing the employers, starting rumors, and persuading workers to rise up against their employers. Accusations were made and repeated endlessly until the accused were forced to confess and then punished. In big cities, such as Shanghai, hundreds of people committed suicide under harassment. In 1957, Mao began the campaign against the triple evils of subjectivism, sectarianism, and bureaucratism which led to repulse the rightists' wild attacks. This is when Ming's younger sister was sent off the country as a "rightist."

The period which caused the most stress to Ming's life and health was the Cultural Revolution of 1966. Mao used the young people of China to help him fight the new policies of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, because he felt they were allowing a re-emergence of old class systems. In 1965, he wrote an article called "Bombard the Headquarters," which called for the young to help him. "Revolutionary fervour spread from the universities and colleges into schools" (Cotterell et al., 1975, p. 279) and 13,000,000 came to Beijing to attend big rallies through August and November 1966. These young people, called the Red Guards, went out in the town to do away with old ideas, culture, custom and habits. Mao wanted the young people to route out the revisionists and purify the revolution. Between January 1967 and mid-1968, the Red Guards had seized power and taken over and controlled the country. They worked in committees of three, one member from the PLA, one from the cadres (local community) and one from the Red Guard. Half a million people were involved in this upheaval, and "729,000 people were 'framed and persecuted', of whom 34,900 were 'persecuted to death'" (Rodzinski, 1988, p. 127).

Gradually from 1973 onwards the atmosphere became more relaxed, particularly after Mao died in 1976, and Ming was able to leave China. It will be shown in the

thesis how Ming survived these many upheavals and changes to her life and to the structure of her family. In 1978 she immigrated to the United States, learned a new career, started a new life, and brought her two daughters and sister here.

CHAPTER III

The Family

The Chinese form their identity on their family background, consequently, one cannot begin to understand a the life of a Chinese person without knowing something about her family and ancestors. In this chapter Ming talks about her maternal and paternal grandparents and her husband's grandparents.

Two female members of Ming's maternal family (great-grandmother and grandmother) stand out for their independence and fight against restrictive traditions. Ming's maternal great-grandfather, who was Governor of Shaanxi Province, chose not to have his daughter's feet bound in the customary manner of those days; in addition he sent her to Japan for ten years to be educated. This was an unusual action in the days when women were traditionally restricted to the four walls of their house. However, this was not a traditional family. Ming's great-grandmother left her husband, because of his philandering ways, and moved to Suchou where she supported herself as an artist.

Ming's paternal grandparents initially started out with a small farm, but when debts from opium drug addiction became prevalent among the Chinese in the 1880-1890s, many neighbors offered their land for sale to Ming's grandfather to support their habit. By the time

Ming's grandfather to support their habit. By the time Ming's father grew up, the farm had increased to 30,000 acres. The family had a good reputation in the area; they were educated and well respected. Ming's father was sent to a French college and had a position with Chiang Kaishek's government. He missed a chance to become Ambassador to France because filial duties required him to care for his ill father.

Ming's husband's grandparents were quite poor but her husband's father worked hard and won a scholarship to study in America. He returned to become a manager on the railroads and became very successful.

Tell me about your mother's family.

My mother's grandfather was a high government official in the Qing Dynasty, this is much higher than the other side of the family. My great-grandfather was a Governor of Shaanxi Province. Of course he was rich and he had a very beautiful wife. She had tiny, bound feet, and she was a very famous artist. But during that time a lot of men go out fooling around with the girls, especially the men who have a high position in the Government. The King, for example, had three hundred wives! So great-grandfather got a lot of beautiful girls sent to him; he was very handsome man and my

great-grandmother was so jealous. Of course during that time no one got a divorce or separation, but great-grandmother separate with him! (chuckle)

Did he bring the girls to the house?

No, he did not bring the girls to the house, but went out to see them, but my great-grandmother could not stand it and so she left him. When my great-grandmother moved out, great-grandfather brought the women into his house, actually not only one but a lot of girls. After one year, the one he liked the best climbed a ladder to pick a rose and fell down to the ground and died. My great-grandmother heard about this news and she was so happy and that the girl was gone, but he got another one and so great-grandmother never moved back. She lived alone for the rest of her life, and made a living as an artist from her drawings. It was a very unusual thing to happen in those days.

They had two children, a boy and a girl and because they only have these two kids, they are very spoiled. The son is my great uncle and after he graduated from a famous university in Beijing he was sent to Illinois University to study chemistry. He left a girlfriend in China, but this girl married a rich man so he was very sad when he heard this news, while in the United States, and he tried to get rich. When his father sent him money and he put on

the stock market and then during the 1920s the stocks crashed and he lost all his money. After he graduated and got home he became very crazy and he changed. I don't know whether it was because of this environment in the United States or he got so much pressure, or he was so depressed. Anyway when he got home, he didn't know who were his parents! They picked him up at the dock he didn't have any expression on his face, he changed. After that he didn't do anything for twenty years!

The girl is my grandmother; she was born in 1896. My grandmother was the only one in town without bound feet! This was because my great-grandfather could not stand to see his daughter suffer with bound feet, and also he wanted her to be educated. She was sent to Japan to a famous high school and college when she was ten years old. Her teacher took care of her and she was well educated. She returned after college at the age of sixteen years and found she was the only girl in the town without bound feet! When she got home, she was happy, just like a boy jumping around. She has big feet! She was the only girl in the town who was happy. They lived near Suzhou. It was a nice place they produced a lot of crops, ducks and rice.

But who would marry a girl with big feet? My grandfather! He had returned from abroad and didn't want

to have a wife with bound feet, and so when he met my grandmother and he was happy and they married. My grandfather was from a poor family and he struggled by himself, and during that time the government had education funds to send good students to foreign countries and so he got a scholarship to go to the University of Wisconsin, majoring in civil engineering. Also he got a degree in astronomy, so he was well educated when he got home. He got a job in the government taking care of Environment Planning and did pretty well.

But as he was still interested in astronomy, and he had some inventions in this area. One day he went to a conference in Nanjing, and met a man who was also an astronomer. They talked about their families and how my grandfather had a beautiful daughter and the new friend had a son. (The son is just one year younger than my father.) So they talked and they decided to arrange a marriage. My uncle's son was in France during that time, he was majoring in architecture, and they said that when he came back they would arrange a marriage, but finally my uncle said, "I have a younger brother still not married yet" and so he decided to match my mother with my father, who was his younger brother. His son is tall and handsome; my father is nice looking but tiny. My mother had this other boyfriend, he was from not such a good

family, he was the son of a neighbor in Shanghai. Because of the Japanese invasion, everybody came to Shanghai. This family lived in Suzhou, and we lived in Golden Mountain, but everyone moved to Shanghai. After a long time struggle my grandmother arranged this marriage--the wedding was so big. My mother's wedding picture is so big. A lot of people and all the relatives were invited. My grandmother spent all her cash and a 3-carat diamond ring!

My mother didn't want to go through with the marriage, but finally my grandmother pretended she was ill with tuberculosis by getting some blood from a pig and dropping it on the ground and saying, "I'm sick." It did help, because finally my mother did marry my father.

Did you use religion in the marriage ceremony?

We used a Buddhist service for funerals, but we don't go to pray to Buddha all the time and we don't have a Buddha at home; just for funeral service. We usually have the wedding ceremony in a big room in a hotel. The party is different than western parties. There is no dancing or singing, but they hire the Opera Show to entertain the guests, and after that the family members get together and meet each other. Somebody will stand there and introduce you. If the bride is a lower generation they say, "This is your great-grandmother," "This is your

great-grandfather" and then they kneel down. If same generation they just bow to each other. My mother wore the western white dress and my father was in a tux. Other people wore whatever they wanted. My mother chose to wear a western wedding. Chinese always change clothes after the wedding ceremony. The bride comes out when the guests start to eat and toasts the guests. They put on original Chinese dress then. There is a banquet. Children are introduced and kneel to older relatives. Older relatives give a red paper bag with money in it to the children. The older gives to youngest. If the bride is an aunt, she gives to youngest. The wedding couple are given wedding presents. Older parents give to the bride.

Who pays for the wedding?

The bride's side pays for the bride's guests and bridegroom pays for the bridegroom's guests. The bride's side have to buy all the furniture and blankets and decorations, but the bridegroom's side pays for the bed and the house. In Chinese marriage they buy everything, everything is bought for them.

Tell me about your paternal family

In the old days, people have to pass the government examination to get a high position in the government. So my grandfather got a position, but not a very high position. The money he made is from the people selling

their land and these people were abused by the drugs and they had to sell their property.

So he had a government job and some land to start with, or did he have a farm?

His parents and his grandparents had the farm already--but not too much [or large]. He was the one who bought most lands, around the years 1880-1890s.

Is that was when there was lots of drugs in China?

Oh! yes, it was the rich farmers who had plenty of land and money and who became involved with the drug habits and had to sell their land, not the small farmer who never got to that stage.

So this made him a wealthier man because he had this farm land? Where was this and how many acres did he have?

Golden Mountain is where our home town is, near to Shanghai, and we were one of the two important families in the community. We had 30,000 acres and there were mountains and there were lakes, and lots of houses. The family is famous in the high.... what do you call it? (in society?) in society as well as intelligence and knowledge because we had a library and a lot of books.

This is the big house that had over 100 rooms?

Yes, my grandfather and his three sons and their families all lived in it. The house was so big you could

get lost in it! Later after the revolution the house was used by the communist authorities as offices for the County Government.

Did the grandfather have more than one wife?

No, but after my grandmother died, he married another woman. She was a daughter of a servant, and very young.

Did he have more children?

No. You know, in the old days people were very scared about tuberculosis, just like people scared of cancer now and he got this disease and finally the poor girl from the poor family, she got it too and so she didn't live too long. My grandfather died when he was seventy-nine but he stayed in bed for a couple of years before then.

My father is the youngest and his biggest brother was twenty years older than him. He was an astronomer, researching for the stars; and a famous one and he was very nice guy, very honest and always studying, this kind of type.

The second son is more business minded and he is the one always concentrate on making money. He made a lot of money. He had his own fabric factory and a bank, but he left his wife with six kids and marry another girl. We used to have a security guy, and he fell in love with the security guy's daughter. Since he lived together with her

he never came back to his wife. He never lived in the family house with that girl because the family rule is very strict, unless the grandfather approved no one can bring anyone into the house. The family is famous and very, very clean, [respectable] the grandfather was an important man in the community and he did not allow him to bring a second wife into the house.

What was your father's work or position?

My grandfather put him in the college. The college was run by the French and my father learned French in college. After that he worked in Chiang Kaishek's government in the Foreign Department, Nationalist Government. Probably started in 1932, in Nanjing, because this was the Federal Capital, Chiang's capital. Then he had a chance to go to France to be the Foreign Ambassador but he could not go because his father was sick in bed during that time. All the Chinese people have to be very faithful to their parents (not faithful, nice, to their parents) and so he didn't leave his father and so he missed the chance. But he didn't work in the Foreign Department there very long because the Japanese invaded. I think this was in 1936 when I was two years old.

Tell me about your husband's family

My husband's father was from a very poor family. I think because his grandfather was taking drugs or

gambling. He was poor, but went to Shanghai, just with a little suitcase and that's it . . . and did very well. He started very poor but worked very hard so finally the government sent him to Illinois University. He got one degree there and another one from Japan. Got back to China and worked on the railroads and made a lot of money from people wanting to get their supplies through quickly in 1920s. He made a lot of money!! There were a lot of different troops fighting with each other then (before Chiang and Mao's time) and they needed to send their arms across the country. All these different groups gave him gifts and besides this he was taking care of the railroad which was in a very rich area of Shanghai, Hangzhou and Nanjing. He sent his son (my husband) to England and the two daughters went to the United States to study.

But the eldest daughter, they loved her best because she was very pretty. She worked in United Nations for a while and then an American guy tried to have her friendship and they went out together for ten years. Their parents wouldn't agree to their marriage and so they just hang around without marriage. After ten years of friendship their parents thought they had better agree to their getting married and they had a big wedding. But after the marriage, things didn't work out. I don't know what happened, perhaps he found another girl, but my

husband's sister committed suicide. It was big news in all the newspapers in California because they lived in Berkeley. So when the second sister wanted to marry another American guy, their parents disagreed again because they didn't know each other very long. But this couple just run away together and it worked out pretty good. They married and have twin daughters and a son and live in Chico. They live happily there now.

From the time Ming started to talk about her life, it became apparent that her ancestors were very important to her realization of her own self. In fact, she didn't think that the things which she herself had experienced or achieved were very important or interesting. In contrast she held the academic achievements of the members of her family important, and this is evidenced by the fact that she remembers every university her relatives attended and their area of study. In the past, many of her family were scholar-officials who were a part of the permanent bureaucracy of the country. These scholar-officials, although elite, were still commoners (Wortzel, 1988, p. 9). They drew their strength from the indispensable social function which they performed for the country (Balazs, 1964, p. 16). The wealth and position of the family could be charted by the schooling of the children.

For example, it obviously took more money to send children to school in Europe or America, than to Japan (Pruitt, 1979, p. 3). Paul Thompson says in his book, The Voice of the Past that "Family history especially can give an individual a strong sense of a much longer personal lifespan, which will even survive their own death" (1988, p. 2). For the Chinese, this continuity is particularly important.

The Confucian principles extended to family life and led to a paternalistic system in the home. The female was subject initially to the will of her father, secondly to her husband and finally to her son. The four standards of behavior she should try to achieve were obedience, timidity, reticence and adaptability.

Apparently Ming's great-grandmother did not achieve these standards because she did an "unheard-of thing" by leaving her unfaithful Governor husband. She showed great courage and determination by leaving him and making her own living in town as an artist. This seems a very surprising action but, as Lloyd Eastman says in his book Family, Fields and Ancestors, there was a movement amongst the intellectuals for the education and emancipation of women:

Upper-class women were doubtless the principal beneficiaries of the improved access to education, and in the late eighteenth and early

nineteenth centuries, some women became noted as poets, calligraphers, and painters. Women such as these, it is claimed, associated easily even with scholars, and at least a few men . . . came to sense the idiocy of the old saw that "only the untalented woman is virtuous." These men, as a consequence, criticized the patriarchal ideology that emphasized female inferiority, urging that women be given greater educational opportunities and that the oppressive codes of women chastity be abandoned. (1988, p. 20)

Ming's great-grandmother was probably a part of this advanced environment living in the sophisticated society of Suzhou. It seems natural that Ming was told stories of the past by her grandmother, and that this great-grandmother was a strong role model, not only for Ming, but for other women in her family. Ming was particularly proud of the bravery of this ancestor.

Marriage in China was regarded as a family matter, with similarity in social and economic status between the families being a usual requirement. Parents arranged marriages with family interest in view. Personal affection of bride and groom for each other was considered not only unnecessary but harmful, and young people often did not meet each other until after their marriage (Lang, 1946, p. 32). Jacques Gernet comments that "the richer and more influential a family, the more it endeavored to add to its power and the number of its members by birth, advantageous matrimonial alliances, and the extension of its area of patronage" (1962, pp. 147-148). The marriage

of Ming's mother was an example of this type of arrangement. Despite the fact that her mother (Ming's grandmother) had been educated in Japan and had broken out of the mold, she still put the interests of the family first and pressured her daughter to marry the man chosen for her, and not the man she loved. This is evidence of the determination of the family to continue their social and economic status through the use of marriage.

CHAPTER IV

The Early Happy Years

Ming was born in 1934 and lived in a traditional elite family until she was fifteen years old. The invasion by the Japanese was the first disruption to Ming's life. The family left the big family home and escaped to Shanghai. Through the next few years (1936-49) battles were fought around their home at different times between the Japanese and Chinese and Japanese and Allies.

What were your first memories?

My first memories are of collecting eggs on the farm in Golden Mountain when I was about a year and a half old. There was a small door and you can lift it up and take the eggs. Another thing I like, eating sugar cane--they peeled it for me. It was a nice place. We lived in Suzhou the year after I was born. I was such a picky eater. When I didn't want kitchen food, my maternal grandmother would get a ricksaw and tell the boy to drive around the town until I saw something I liked. I was spoilt and my grandmother often used to talk about those days.

What happened to the family, farm and big house when the Japanese came?

We escaped from Golden Mountain because it was near the ocean where the Japanese came over by the ships. The

whole family took the small boat and moved to Shanghai. We had moved from Nanjing to Golden Mountain; and then one night the Japanese came over and then the whole family escaped to Shanghai. It was safer being in the city than at the farm.

Why do you think the Japanese invaded China?

Japanese principally invaded China because they needed the food and supplies. Japanese seem to be quite poor and ate only a dish a rice and a pickle each day. Their quality of life seemed to be poor and they did not make good quality products. Toys dolls, for example, were stuffed with paper, you would see this if you opened them. The Japanese were mainly very cruel in the countryside because this was where the food was. They would rape women and steal the food and then kill and burn down the villages. They had three three aims: "Kill, Steal and Burn."

We were bombed twice in Shanghai by the Americans; once when the Japanese were in the city and again when the Communists invaded the city!

What did you live on in Shanghai?

We had clerks in the big house and they collected the rents from the farmers, and so for eight years we lived OK and didn't have too much trouble. We left Golden Mountain when I was two. My grandfather bought a house in Shanghai

so all of us moved into this house and after a few years my father bought a house.

Is this the house I visited in Shanghai?

Yes.

What was the house like when you lived there?

Well, it was painted outside, not like now. (chuckle)
[I had brought Ming back a photograph of the house taken during my visit in 1987] The house had six bedrooms, a living room, dining room and kitchen. We had Western furniture in our house, sofa and two chairs and coffee table in the living room. The painting and decorations were Chinese though. We had a very nice antique copper drum, which had been used in the wars. My father had put glass and silk embroidery on the top. In our living room there was a big painting of my grandfather which used to scare me. I used to be too scared to go into the living room on my own.

How many servants did you have?

We usually had three maids; one to do the cooking, one to clean the house and one to look after the children.

What did the Japanese do when they invaded?

The Japanese Government tried to hire Chinese people to work for them to control China against the Chinese people, and so my father didn't want to, and since the family was rich so he didn't have to go out to work. So he

stayed at home for eight years. He used to teach us (my brother and sisters) about Confucian principles and Chinese brush writing. He could be very strict and cross if we didn't study well and spanked us.

What age did you go to school?

I went to school for a few months when I was four years old, but I contracted tuberculosis and had to stay home in bed for two years. I was kept in a separate room upstairs away from the rest of the family. After I got well, I was very strong because I had been given good food while I was ill. My father like to get up early and take me for long walks in the fresh air up to the dairy near us. I suppose the walks were to help me keep well.

Tell me about your brother and sisters.

My next sister is two years younger than me, and my next sister is five years younger; my brother is nine years younger than me. My youngest sister is always worrying about something, she is nervous--she is closer to my mother than I am. I was always very independent. My brother is nice, I am fond of him. We all were sent to a Mission school which had two principals; a Chinese one and a Western one. Boys and girls were mixed together in elementary school, but separate in high school. We were taught classical Chinese subject as well as English. All the children who attended were from the families of the

elite or high shots, like the mayor. For example, the wives of Chiang Kaishek and Sun Yatsen both went there.

Did any of your relatives become Christians?

My grandmother converted to Christianity and my father also. Later my mother converted when she came to America, but I still haven't figured it out yet.

What was your favorite thing to do as a child?

I loved to read. I loved books and spent all my pocket money on books. By the time I was fifteen years old I had over 500 books, but I lost them all. After the revolution my mother sent them with other belongings and furniture to Suzhou, where she sent me to school for six months. When she decided to bring me back, she told my Aunt that she could keep the books to live on. (She had no income; her husband had been put in jail by the Communists because he had worked as the head of the Police Department during the Japanese occupation.) I was so angry at the time about it, but I suppose my Aunt needed the money; she had six children. She made a lending library out of my books and she and my cousins were able to live on the income.

What happened to your other relatives?

During Japanese time the elder uncle didn't work either--only the second one, he had two families with

thirteen kids; the second wife had seven kids so he had to work and make money.

Is he still alive?

No he died, my father died, all of them died.

My (paternal) grandfather was already sick and stayed in bed for several years in Shanghai before he died in 1942 and my mother's father had a stroke and couldn't work anymore and so they moved from Suzhou to Shanghai. In a couple of years he died of a stroke and left my (maternal) grandmother and her family.

My grandmother (who had been educated in Japan) got a position as a Principal of a Girls College in Nanjing. This was during the Japanese occupation. My father was angry and every time she brought something home and he just threw it out. This was not a Japanese school but because the Japanese had invaded and occupied the area they controlled schools and government and my father thought she shouldn't go to school and be the Principal. If grandmother didn't have this position she could not survive because there is nothing to eat, she didn't do anything bad, just a school, probably they taught the Japanese language. My father's mother died early when he was young. I never saw her.

We had quite a good life in Shanghai before 1949 and my mother had a very good friend there whose husband ran

the ferry service, and her son was my first boyfriend, but those are other stories.

Ming's first memories are of a happy life on the farm. This period in the country was the first stage of her life in the warmth and safety of her family, with a doting grandmother. The memories are of a much loved first-born child. Lloyd Eastman says that in traditional Chinese society the first born, even if a girl, is treated with much pleasure. He goes on to say that "If the girl were the mother's first-born, her arrival might be greeted with some satisfaction because her birth proved the mother's fecundity and offered hope for the birth of a son in the future" (1988, p. 21).

The society in which Ming grew up had basic patterns of behavior, values, beliefs and expectations that were built in and accepted by the group; this society provided her with security and trust. Erik Erikson asserts that early trust is crucial to the sense of autonomy that one experiences within his culture. He says furthermore, "This forms the basis in the child for a sense of identity which will later combine a sense of being 'all right' of being oneself, and of becoming what other people trust one will be" (1963, p. 249).

The Chinese family unit consisted of members related to each other by blood, marriage, or adoption and having a common budget and common property (Lang, 1946, p. 13). Traditionally it was the parents' duty to arrange marriage for their children. Marriage was an act performed by families, not individuals. According to the law, marriage was a legal contract concluded by the leads of the bride's and groom's families. After the marriage the groom remained in his family home, but the bride was uprooted from her home and set down in an unfamiliar house. This did not happen, though, in the early years of the marriage of Ming's mother.

Ming spent the first two and a half years of her life living in her maternal grandmother's house. This is contrary to the usual pattern and Ming explained that the grandmother loved her first-born daughter (Ming's mother) so much that she couldn't bear to let her live with the son-in-law's family. This is evidence of the power and influence of this woman. She was able to keep her daughter with her and go against all the traditional ways. Ming's close relationship with her maternal grandmother continued throughout Ming's life, and she would often make the comment that her grandmother was the only one who really cared for her. Thus, in addition to her first role model

of the great-grandmother, we have a second role model in the grandmother.

After the Japanese invasion, Ming moved with her parents into a traditional Chinese family house with the grandfather and other brothers and their families. So Ming's first few years were in an elite Chinese family. She and her brother and sisters were given a good education and tutored in Confucian principles. The behavior patterns for Chinese are rigid in comparison with American standards. Jacques Gernet elaborates on the Chinese system:

As well as being the foundation of morals, these ideal family relationships were also the basis for social relationships. They expressed to perfection the only type of relationship to be found in all forms of social contact: that of inferior to superior, of recipient to benefactor. (1962, p. 145)

When Ming was four years old, she contracted tuberculosis and spent the next two years in bed upstairs, on her own, away from the family. One must wonder how this would affect a little girl. Perhaps this is when she formed her love of books. When Ming was telling me about her books, she recessed deeply into her memories to recall the pain and anguish she had felt at the injustice of losing the books. Even as she was reliving this moment she burst out laughing at the memory of her youthful anguish. What did it really matter anyway, and after all had not her

Aunt needed the money? We were silent for a while. I understood her teen-age grief, but also, as an adult, could appreciate her mother's problems and the reason why she had given away the books.

CHAPTER V

Homeless

The Communist Revolution of 1949 (ages 15-19 years)

The first effect of the Communist Revolution was the fighting between the soldiers of the Nationalist government of Chiang Kaishek and the soldiers of the Communist army. Ming's family became involved when they sheltered a neighbor who ran the Shanghai ferry service.

When the Communists took over in 1949, the farm land of the family was confiscated by the new government. Ming's parents had no money to support the family, so they sold their home in Shanghai and moved from place to place looking for a means of survival. After a couple of years Ming's mother found work in Hong Kong and remained there, sending money back to support the children in China. The father was unable to support the family and the unit was broken.

* * *

My mother's friend was from a rich family. Her husband was the owner of the ferry service in Shanghai. He graduated from Illinois or Wisconsin University and went back to China and started the ferry business. During the Nationalist/Communist war, Chiang's troops tried to withdraw because they lost the battle. They tried to escape across the Huang pu River but all the sailors and

captains ran away--nobody wanted to ferry the soldiers across the river, because there were still gun fights. My mother insisted that this family move to our house. My mother just emptied the bottom part of the house--living and dining room and father's study--and let them live there with two servants, five children, two parents and a driver and maid. After they lived in our house for a couple of days, they felt embarrassed to live and eat there, so they said they better they moved back to their own house, which was very close to ours on same street, but mother wouldn't let them go.

Chiang's people went to our neighbor's house and used guns to search all over the carpet and everywhere to find this guy. Search, search for my mother friend's husband because he is the owner and they want him to drive the boat. He would have been killed! Of course they shoot in the house. The family were very lucky that had they hid another couple of days with us and so they appreciated her help and later on they kept my sister for a year.

The Communist Party was like a gang group when the revolution started. Revolutionary groups always do things secretly--that is normal. Revolutions always started with secret groups who try to take over the government, and so the government tried to catch those people. It took them

more than ten years to take over, it started before the Japanese invasion.

What did your family think about it?

Worried about it, but didn't discuss very much before kids. Don't like kids to understand.

The Communist troops were up in the east and north part of China and the old government, Guomintang troops chase them to the west corner. Their life was very tough, short of food and short of clothes, short of everything. The Japanese started to attack China and then the Communists take this chance to force the Guomintang (Chiang Kaishek) to fight Japanese and they tried to sneak in so their success is because the Japanese came to China. So the Guomintang government had a hard time to face two enemies. A lot of countryside and many provinces had been destroyed by Japanese troops and there were beggars on the streets. People were getting poorer and poorer. Then the Communists tried to get all the poor people together. They said they will help them, get them food or something. Because a lot of people were homeless, too many homeless. Communists still not as strong as Guomintang and so they have to act secretly.

After they took over, they built a government, drove the foreigners away and took over money and Chinese businesses. They tried to equalize everything. Beggars

disappeared, and prostitutes disappeared, and little by little rich people disappeared (chuckle), which is good, I think. You can say part of it is good but part isn't. They don't know how to manage the government and make everybody rich and make living standards go up. But they don't know how. They go through one movement after another. The country is isolated and development is stopped.

Did China get technical help from Russia?

I don't think they got any help from Russia. Russia just used China to help fight with Americans and expand Communist territories, that's all. In 1949 the Korean war started.

Did China send troops into Korea?

Yes, I think thousands died in the Korean war.

What happened when the Communists took over in 1949?

They took all the land and house in the country but they didn't take the house where we lived in Shanghai. They killed one clerk and another clerk ran away and just disappeared. This clerk became a rich man with two wives! After a couple of years, the Communist government came to us and asked where he was. Where is so and so? I think he ran away because he was scared of the Communist government. The government controlled the farmers, the poor people, and tried to make them against the rich.

They beat the rich. One clerk was beaten to death. This happened right away in 1949. They organized the local farmers to take over the land.

Did the Communist government take all of the land, or part of it?

They took all of it. All of a sudden we become poor. We had some cash and my mother had jewelry, we had one small piece of land about one acre, that's all, and one house in Shanghai.

When the Communist government took over, my father didn't know what to do. We sold the house in Shanghai and became homeless and all the furniture and everything was put in friends' houses--one here and one there and we thought we would come back one day. Actually we never did. I was sixteen years old--we just brought clothes and luggage--sold the house and went to Tianjin (a northern sea port near Beijing). When father sold the house he got six big bars of gold. After they sold the house and people left, my mother sat down and cried. She knew this is something very serious. We didn't understand we had become homeless. My mother and my brother and younger sister went to Hong Kong. So my father, one sister and I left Shanghai and went to Tianjin. But actually not a very good idea because we didn't know anyone over there and why should we go to Tianjin to do business; why not

Shanghai? We spent a lot of money travelling. Take the plane, take the train! During that time my father still bought first class tickets, still thought he was rich, he didn't realize that much. My father lived in the YMCA and my sister and I stayed in a boarding school for a year. Then my father never got any money and so the money we had got less and less. During that time in Tianjin, there were lots of beggars on the streets.

My mother, with my brother and youngest sister, were in Hong Kong and for a year they lived in my mother's ex-boyfriend's house--his wife wasn't there; she was still in Shanghai! He took care of her. You see my parents' marriage was arranged by their parents so my mother always didn't like it and as she chose to go to Hong Kong because her ex-boyfriend was there.

Was it okay for people to go to Hong Kong?

After 1949, for a couple of years, the Communist government didn't mind, they were still pretty loose on the borders and let people leave, but the British or Hong Kong Government cared because they didn't want refugees to come in.

After a year in Tianjin, my father found nothing he can do, he tried pretty hard but he didn't get anything because all the businesses had stopped. My father didn't know how to do business actually so there was nothing he

could do. So he brought us back to Shanghai and tried to put me and my sister into my mother's brother care but he didn't accept us. But my mother's sister accepted us, so we went to live with this family in Suzhou. This when my mother shipped our furniture and my books there. I think two of us went there and I stayed with my aunt and eventually went to boarding school and my sister returned to stay in my mother's friend's house. My mother had saved her friend's husband's life.

Then one day, while I was at school, my father came over and said, "I want to take you to Hong Kong" and I said, "Okay." We left Shanghai for Hong Kong in 1950. During that time the Hong Kong government don't want refugees to come in, and so we have to pay these people to smuggle us in so I had the experience of being smuggling in. It was fun but so tiring. (giggle) My father and I walked the whole day. You sit on a bike and they ride you to a place, then walk a distance and then took a boat, it was raining. We took nothing with us, just a small brief case. We stayed at a country place for a night and booked the bus; we walk in the dark, you know the country without street lights is very dark and there is water on both sides from the rice fields. Then we arrived in Hong Kong and my father gave my mother a call. My mother already

moved out from her boyfriend's place to a very nice hotel, The Four Seasons Hotel, Waterloo Road. A nice place.

Did the family go back together?

Yes, except for my next eldest sister, she always stayed in China. When I was young, I was always happy, I never worried about my parent's problems. I never understood when these things happened. It wasn't so bad, we were still happy kids, still quite happy. Get the ticket, find someone to smuggle us to Hong Kong, and he was a cute boy! When I arrived in Hong Kong, he tried to find me, wrote me a letter. My mother said, "You have just got there and have someone chasing you!" So I didn't contact him and I didn't go out with him. I liked it in Hong Kong, they did your hair so nicely. I found my friends in Hong Kong. I was very, happy at that age. Kids at sixteen don't worry, very happy.

Did you father get work?

My mother had jewelry and in a couple of years we had sold it and so what to do? They talk about what to do. My mother wanted my father to stay in Hong Kong because some people wanted to go into business with my father - say put 20,000 Hong Kong dollars in together and open a plant or something, but my father didn't want to. My father was scared and they argued and my father said it was because my mother has a boyfriend in Hong Kong, that

he didn't want to stay there. You have to understand my parents' differences. When I was little, the family was rich, but my father used the money carefully because he said our ancestors were very poor, and told the story that when people married they reversed their clothes for a wedding dress. But my mother was spoiled. My grandmother spent every penny on her because she was very beautiful. My grandmother had six children, she spoilt the first and last one: my mother and my youngest uncle. My father was spoilt but spent the money carefully; my mother spoilt but spent the money wildly. So they argued a lot, they argued all day long and my mother still had the ex-boyfriend in her mind and she didn't like my father at all. But after a couple of months the whole family moved back to Shanghai.

Why did they come back?

You know in the first couple of years the government didn't show any bad side and they tried to keep people quiet.

Did you think anything worse would happen?

They just killed those people working in the government, like Chief of Police, but didn't touch other people. We went back but my mother still left her money in safety deposit box. She didn't bring all the money back. Then we rented a house in Shanghai and I enrolled

in another school in Shanghai. I was now seventeen when we came back to Shanghai.

My father couldn't find a job. Finally my mother's friend, the guy who ran the ferry, had another factory to make telephones and he gave my father a job. My father didn't have any technology, so he was just a clerk. He didn't give us any money. My grandmother died when my father was young and, so my uncles took care of him a lot so my father didn't know how to do anything well.

We went to Hong Kong and came back Shanghai and forth three times. People don't know what to do, not just my family. Because my grandfather is big landlord--go for the big landlord. This is the Communist focus on them. Take land and make them scapegoat, that is the target of the revolution.

Did the Communists know where they were? Did they come after you?

No, they concentrated on the clerks at the house.

What was life like in Shanghai then?

Not too much problems, fairly normal. The small business without employees were OK.

My mother left Shanghai in 1952 because we cannot find any money and she goes back to Hong Kong to try to sell her jewelry. She said that she would come back in a month, but when she got there she found a job. My

grandfather's students (at the Technology School) knew my mother and they found her a job in an insurance company, and so she stayed there and sent money home. Before she left, we always had two maids to take care of us, so we kept the two maids and lived in a rented house. One maid was a nurse to look after the younger children.

My father moved out. My father's cousin is a little bit older than him and likes him a lot--she wanted to marry him before my mother so she tried to influence him to move to the house where her son is living.

After my mother went back to Hong Kong, we lived in a rented house in Shanghai with two maids. The first family of my uncle (businessman with two families) lived upstairs and the wife had six children. After a while we had to move to another smaller house because the owner wanted to sell the first house. This time we only had two bedrooms--four children and one maid slept in one room. It was a very big room and divided into two areas. Downstairs was full of stuff belonging to my elder uncle. The second uncle's son sold all his stuff and emptied the room then we moved into this area.

One of the first acts of the Communists in 1949 was the land reform act. Ming's family lost their farm lands and income and was forced to sell the home for money to

live on. This was a shattering experience for the family. As Ming said, "All of a sudden we became poor." Other families, however, like the neighbors with the ferry boat business, were able to go on living in their homes.

At fifteen years old Ming was initially unaware of the political turmoil that the Communist Revolution would have upon her and her family. Consequently she considered the early disruptions adventures: travelling to different towns and attending different schools, being smuggled into Hong Kong, and reunited with old friends. These were exciting times with battles being fought around Shanghai, and neighbors to be protected.

The revolution had a disastrous effect on Ming's father. He had been trained as a diplomat, but there was no use for his skills in the new society. He was not able to adapt to the new life, and his attempts at business in Tianjin were a failure. Ming understood why her father was not very successful. She made excuses for him, saying he did not know how to be poor, and he wasted the little money they had. She explained his inadequacies by saying he was physically small, and as the youngest son, had had all decisions (including his marriage) made for him by his elder brother.

Ming's mother dealt with the new political situation differently. She was a strong-willed person; for example,

she saved the life of a neighbor during the war. After the revolution, she felt the family's future lay in Hong Kong rather than mainland China. She attempted on several occasions to relocate the family there, but the father was reluctant to take a chance and start a new life. When the father faded out of their lives, the mother took over the responsibility for the family, working in Hong Kong and sending money back to support the children. The whole structure of the family life was turned around; the mother emerged as breadwinner. Ming admired her mother's tenacity, but at the same time she resented some of her mother's actions and felt abandoned by her.

China was not the only country to experience the drastic changes which a revolution brings. After the Russian Revolution of 1917, when Alexandra Tolstoy (daughter of Leo Tolstoy) returned home from nursing soldiers in World War I, she found herself homeless. All her furniture was gone, and her house did not belong to her anymore; even the animals she raised did not belong to her. The government nationalized banks and chaos and disorder followed. In objection to the famine and disorder people made speeches on every corner. The biggest problem was the earning of money for food (Tolstoy, 1981, p. 75). Alexandra Tolstoy survived the next several years. She was arrested several times and

exiled to the country to work on a farm, before finally managing to leave Russia in 1929. All these events are similar to the experiences which Ming and her family would face.

The political events destroyed the structure of Ming's family. In the early period, there were exciting changes, but the results and the full effect of the revolution would be felt in the next segment of her life.

CHAPTER VI

The Years of Disillusionment

Ming's years from ages nineteen to twenty-five were ones of disillusionment. Her family was all dispersed; the father was banished to the countryside, the mother fled to Hong Kong for employment, and the four children were left in Shanghai with two maids. During these years, three people shaped Ming's life and future: a maid, her first boyfriend and her husband.

By 1953 the government had tightened up restrictions on the general public and began interfering in businesses. The children's life became intolerable because one of the maids, who had been left to look after them, became influenced by the communist doctrines. Ming, being the eldest, took the brunt of her manipulations, and the maid destroyed her relationship with her first boyfriend. Ming finished two years in art college and then took the first opportunity to marry to get away from this situation. Ming and her husband moved to Beijing soon after their marriage, and Ming made her first application to leave China. Ming paints an interesting portrait of life in the capital with stories of her neighbors and their problems with the new government; the atmosphere is a warning of what will come in the Cultural Revolution.

How was your life after your Mother left?

I was in high school then. My father was gone, and we four children lived in Shanghai with two maids looking after us.

What were the changes you observed?

You know, people from poor families are good class people in the communist society. Rich people are lower. So they gain a higher position. So the maid my mother hired to take care of us she became the boss! She became powerful in the new society. She went to meetings and she talked to people outside the house and she became very aggressive and we all had to listen to her. My mother earned the money in Hong Kong by working in an insurance company and she worked very hard to get it--it was not an easy job. It was "hard money" and she sent it back to raise us, but the maid spent money very carefully in the household and we didn't have good food. She saved most of it which then went into her pocket! My mother sent a lot of money. Most families of five usually spent 150 yuan a month, but my mother sent 300 yuan and probably the maid only spent 100 yuan. She also stole things. In the earlier time after we moved to Hong Kong, we never sold anything and so we had piles of luggage in that room and little by little she stole everything.

Was there any social life?

I remember going to movies a lot when I was in junior high but when I was in a higher grade and college I was very tight of money and I was very poor, no money at all. No money for clothes, not because my mother didn't send enough money, but because the servant was bad and fought the nurse maid. One was very bad, she was always a theft. She stole everything and broke my relationship with my boyfriend--this was the son of the ferry owner. He was very nice looking. I should have married him!

You remember my mother's friend (ferry boat) and the whole family moving into our house for a few days. They have five kids and we played together then. Their second son he is so nice looking, and slim, and tall, very, very nice looking, like a movie star. Oh! I started to be crazy about him, but I didn't say anything, nobody knew. He didn't say anything, I didn't know if he liked me or not then. After a couple of days we stayed together as friends and didn't go out, and then I went to Hong Kong and then he became my standard to find a boyfriend. After I came back from Hong Kong in 1951, he was already in college majoring in architecture.

In 1952 when my father couldn't find a job and my mother was going back to Hong Kong, he came back and asked me to go with him. This was a big thrill for me. Then we

went out--he liked me and we became very close right away. When my mother left there are two maids in the house. I was too young to understand what was happening. The bad maid always come to me and said the nurse is doing this or that--and gossips.

When my mother left, she let me control the money. This maid didn't like that so when I went to school, she took the money. I was too young to understand. She talked to my sister about me, gossiped about me. Talked to my mother's sister, gossiped about me, tried to get rid of me. Said I spent money on new clothes for a party and I didn't buy clothes for my sister, things like that. She also knew my boyfriend's mother and she went there and she says (about me), "She has so many boyfriends." I was too young I didn't know how to handle it but I could tell she has been talking about me. She went there all the time. The boy never came to my house. His family still have a big house and car, while I live in a humble house. But I am too proud and think that he doesn't want me because I am poor. Then his mother saw all the kids with no parents and thought she would have to care for them, so his mother started to turn away from me. I am poor and he is rich and because he is nice looking, he has a lot of girls chasing after him. I was young and I don't want to chase him. The maid told him there were boys around the house

so this boy listened to the maid's talk and he was upset too. He went to my house and he saw a couple of boys outside my place, so he was suspicious of me. He didn't like to have a girlfriend who had a lot of boyfriends, and so I said, "if you can't trust me go ahead." Right away I lost 30 lbs. So that's a recipe to lose weight! I became so nice and thin.

Right away to go out with other boyfriends. The maid led my sister against me and I don't have any money. I got hungry because I didn't have anything to eat and the maid always got cheap food. I walked to school and I didn't have any money. The maid saved all the money for herself. This was when I walked five miles to visit my high school friend at night. Then I went to Art College and started working in Shanghai.

How did other members of your family get on?

My father's elder brother went to Taiwan with his two children. He buried his gold under his kitchen and left Shanghai--didn't take all his gold away. He stayed in Taiwan until he was almost ninety years old. He did pretty good over there, doing astronomy research in the University. The first couple of years the life was very hard--and his son graduated from the university in France and he became an architect. They lived together and got on well. His son finally married a girl from the Yau

family. Other uncle, after the revolution, moved to Hangzhou with his second wife--didn't do anything. He had enough money, but because of big expenses with seven children, life was tight.

During this time was the uncle with factory able to go on? Did the Communists interfere in the running the businesses?

For a little while he could go on. The government told him how to run his business from 1953. In 1953, they began to interfere. They said business, will become a joint venture with the government. In all businesses, the owner or president of the business have their own office. My mother's brother was a banker, and of course the bank manager has his own room. The authorities come in and stand surrounding you and ask you questions, "Did you get a bribed?" or "Have you bribed anybody?" and "Did you escape the taxes?" Something like that, and force you to say "Yes." You have to say, "Yes." They don't let you go home and sleep. They take turns, day and night, questioning you and finally you are so tired, you say, "I did take a \$1,000 bribe" and "I didn't show \$1,000 on taxes." So you answer and have to bring a lot of money out from your pocket to pay fines. Almost the whole plant so even if you didn't do it.

Did they arrest you if you refused to say if you had been bribed?

They question you to death, a lot of people jumped out the windows in 1953.

My mother left Shanghai in 1951. Little by little, the rules got tighter and they don't allow the ballrooms to play any western music. They don't allow night clubs. No one can leave the country. This is in 1953 they started clamping down now. All the people used to have private cars but stopped: only a few very rich people can still keep cars.

Did most of the Westerners leave in 1949?

Some left, still some in 1952. All of the foreigners, American teachers, they left in 1953.

Did you have a feeling it was getting serious then?

Yes, scared. Since they captured the business men, I figured this government is really rude and then I started to be scared. I was still in school, all state schools, there were no private schools then.

What happened to the schools?

They changed all the schools and put all the students together. They combined all the private and government schools. Foreign teachers started to leave and Western education was cut out. All the books from the Communist areas in the west and north part of China were brought

down. They already had a communist educational system in place there. All the teachers changed the way they taught and started to follow the new system, but in fact, the standard is much lower than before. The language is made easier than before. Before Communism, every school has different standards like here, some have higher standards, just like here and some are harder to get in and some schools are easier. After revolution, everyone studies the same books.

Before Communists took over, did everyone have to go to school?

Not all poor children can get to school. The communist tried to educate everyone. Even the adults who are never educated, they built schools for them. But the high standard is gone, they cut down to standard.

What happened to your mother in Hong Kong?

When my mother came to Hong Kong, the ex-boyfriend's business failed and he didn't live long. The next boyfriend was nice to her and gave her every penny he earned. But my mother didn't live with him. My mother spent a lot of money for my brother's education (he is a professor at a California State University) and for my sister. This new boyfriend helped her a lot, but he was a drug user and finally he died of a drug overdose. She was working very hard as an insurance agent and did well

later. She became the American Insurance Company's district manager. Then she married my stepfather and came to the United States. My stepfather was from a very rich family, his father used to be a newspaper man. My mother is not very happy because my stepfather's family has this madness, crazy history mental problems. My stepfather's mother died of mental problems, so he got kind of crazy sometimes. He talks crazy.

My mother has two sisters and four brothers and two stepbrothers. One brother was a banker (this was the one who was surrounded by the Communist interrogators), second worked for the Japanese for a while, and after the revolution, he committed suicide. The third brother went to Japan to study political science. The fourth brother worked with American Secret Service. I remember he always had a gun. After revolution he left China for Japan and married a Japanese girl and had a son. Not too many years later, he got killed. My grandmother was still in China and until she died she didn't know he had died. No one told her, the family kept it a secret. Secret Service agents probably killed him. He was the one who didn't like to study and always go after girls.

Tell me about your second sister?

My second oldest sister was at university then and she was very active politically, and she believed in the

Communist point of view. Not like me, I always doubted about Communism. She was very active in school and she was the leader of her class. She was very clever, good student; she did a lot of things for the school.

The Communist Government would often come up with a new movement and one day they started a "right-wing hat" movement. The Intelligence people saying would ask people, "do you have any suggestions about the politics of the government?" or "Do you have any objections to the Government?" and then some people, like my sister, are always involved and they talk frankly, "I think this, and this and that." Then afterwards, the government get a conclusion and decided that this guy has some right-wing bad thinking against the government.

Well, they thought this about my sister so they sent her to a right wing camp into the countryside right after she graduated. She didn't get any good job because they sent her to do farm work--she became a farmer!! She got the Chinese political hat--right-wing hat! This is the Communist's enemy and she got a lot of suffering, she got disease, she suffered a lot for two or three years. China had a big starvation period and this is just because of Mao's policy is wrong from 1958-1960. So she suffered and we send her food to her and luckily she survived.

After two years, they needed a teacher and, as she was trained as a high school teacher, she was given the job of teaching in the country. But for nineteen years, she wore a "right-wing hat."

Where was your father?

During this time my father was in the countryside. He was sent to country (he had been working as clerk in a factory) to help the county government in a faraway place in Qinghai. This was a very backward, underdeveloped place. I think probably he said something they disagreed with, so they put him in a jail in county and he died there. After he died in 1960, they sent us a letter and we asked, "Where did you guys bury him?" Just no answer and we couldn't find him. He was forty-nine years old.

That was sad.

Yes. Then in 1980's, the government decided that all "right-wings" could take the hats off. (laughter) I have a cousin who was a member of the Communist Party before revolution so he was called an "old revolutionary guy" and he had a high position in Foreign Department. But some people where he worked became jealous of him, he lost his political office and got a "right-wing hat" and was sent to Shanxi, where he stayed for nineteen years. After Mao died, his former boss was released from political camp and decided to get my cousin back from Shanxi and give him a

high position again. In China, most people like to stay in the city. Life is different there, it is more convenient and easier. So my cousin comes back from Shanxi to Shanghai and he helped my sister get back from the country and find her a job. She is coming here soon. I am sponsoring her to come in now. She is still in China and pretty soon she will come over to live.

When did you get married?

I married in 1957. He was my cousin's husband's brother and he worked at Beijing Review--majoring in International Law, and so he knows how to talk; he came over and finally I married him. After I married, my mother decided to bring my brother and youngest sister to Hong Kong.

Tell me how and why you got married?

After school I went to college for an art program for two years. I had broken up with my first boyfriend and I have a couple of other boyfriends, but I always compare them with the first one and I don't want to marry them. But my husband came along, with very careful and cautious words. He knew how to please women, he was experienced and we didn't date for very long. Just marry, because I feel homeless. The maid tortured me and nobody cared for me. All the relatives stayed away because--four kids

without parents! He came along and I thought he would take care of me, and I didn't have much alternative.

My marriage was not so glamorous as my mother's wedding, very simple wedding, actually no wedding at all. Just nothing, because during that time my mother was in Hong Kong, my father never showed up, nobody takes care of us. So we had a very simple wedding. Just family and a few friends get together in his brother's house and signed documents. He was very poor and he didn't have any money. He just got back from England, he had been there to take his Masters at London University. He got a degree in International Law. He is very lawful, he argues all the time!

His father had built a huge house next to Madam Sun Yatsen which is a mansion, and another fine house for fifth son which was never used because the Communists took it. We had our wedding in this house and restaurant come in to cater the food.

What kind of wedding dress did you have?

I had a Chinese simple dress because my husband used all his money. He was spoilt; he never saved. My mother sent money for food and cake. We didn't buy any furniture. We went to hotel and after three days we came back to his brother's house in Shanghai; my husband went to Beijing. I slept in their living room in their house

but they didn't like me to stay there. So when my brother and sister left for Hong Kong I went back to our humble house. But my cousin tried to use my room to trade with another family so finally I moved to Beijing.

What was your house like in Beijing? What went on in everyday living?

We had to move from our first house because the government wanted to make it into a kindergarten. The second house was similar although smaller: Chinese four-sided. We lived on the side facing the west. The west wing has a lady from Shanghai. She was from a good, well-educated family but her mother forced her to marry a man she didn't like. Then one day, the government sent her husband to the countryside. While he was away a boyfriend came to live with her and she had a baby; but this boy was engaged to someone else and he left her. She was a beautiful lady; but when he left, she was very upset and played around. She found a foreigner to go out with and the government, during that time, didn't allow us to have a relationship with foreigner and so they sent her to jail. Later when her husband came back, she got out of jail and they moved away where no one knew what had happened.

Did you like living in Beijing?

Life was better in Shanghai. Beijing was cold and windy. I didn't want to move. He forced me to quit my job and go. My husband was a lawyer, but there no lawyers in China, so he worked in newspaper, "Beijing Review." They have an English and Japanese edition, in fact editions in five languages (he worked in English section). I lived in Beijing for twenty years from 1958-78. I was there all through the Cultural Revolution. My husband had a job on newspaper, but he had a bad temper and sometimes he threw work on floor and embarrassed his boss. In China, the Communist have a movement--raise a question and pick people and question them. During this movement they picked on my husband. They tried to re-educated him and wash his brain--put him in a room and questioned him. He was ambitious but he never got on. People push him to the bottom because of his bad temper. He didn't get along with anybody. He writes good articles and now is the leader on the newspaper, just in the English part in Shanghai.

Right after I moved to Beijing, I find out what I mistake I have made in marrying my husband. He had rented a house--this was a three-sided house, whole front was the gate and walls, and on the three sides were three separate houses with a yard in the middle. We rented one side. The first argument we had was when he moved a lot of stuff

home from his dormitory (every company has a dormitory for employees to live in). He moved in a whole bunch of stuff and his diary. I had to clean his things and I read the diary and found out he was a playboy and then I started to suspect him and little by little he showed his true face. He treated me badly. If he had changed and became a good husband, it would have been all right. I have one daughter then and cannot find work and have nothing to do and a neighbor lent me a record player. When my husband came home, he started to yell at me, "The guy has some purpose to do this," and so I said, "OK, I'll take it back," and he followed me far away and when I came out from this guy's house he was behind the tree and he is peeking. Don't you think this is terrible? I started to feel he was crazy.

When I lost my key, he can complained and lectured me from night to morning, the whole night, no sleep at all! Telling me, "I never lost anything!" Once I lost my umbrella; he wanted to lecture me. Then my dream all broken, but what can I do? My husband told everyone I had married him for his money, but he didn't have any money until after his father died. I cannot stand it. Then I apply to leave. I applied to leave in 1957 for the first time. This was at the beginning of the right-wing movement. I became more and more afraid of the Communist

Government so I wanted to leave, but my husband didn't have confidence to go to a foreign country. I was young, but he was twelve years older than me and had just got back from England, and so he decided to stay in China and later on in every movement he caught it! He didn't know how to be careful about what he said and wrote. I decided to try and take my kids out of China because, as a mother, I couldn't leave them. I had pictures taken together for the passport; he didn't know. But the government wouldn't let me go. The reason they didn't let me go was because my father was dying in Qinghai Province. They had put him in prison and he died there and they were afraid I would take revenge and say something against the government.

When my husband's father died the contents of two safety deposit boxes were divided between the five brothers and sisters. There were 280 big bars of gold, 16 ounces each, and three 6-carat diamond rings and a couple of one-carat diamond rings. This is when I got the big diamond. I had it from 1958-66. I had a fake diamond ring made exactly the same as the real one so I could interchanged them. I figured that if I had to bring two kids out of China, I cannot ask any money from my husband and so I will smuggle the diamond to Hong Kong and to sell it to live on. But I lost it in the Cultural Revolution! Most of my jewelry I had came from my husband's family. I

got it easy and I lost it easy. I didn't care that much. In my whole life, I don't care too much about those things.

My mother was busy with her own things. She told everyone she only had two kids--the two kids she had with her in Hong Kong! I stuck in China for twenty years.

Ming resented being left in Shanghai with her younger sisters and brother. She felt bitter because their relatives did not want to be involved with four children without parents. Her mother may have felt it was an economical and practical decision to leave the four children in China, but she could not have realized the changes the revolution would make to people's lives, or how the maid would become so important in the new society.

The maid attended Communist Party meetings and absorbed the doctrination. She obviously felt certain her duty was to destroy this bourgeois family. She took over the management of the money that the mother sent and actively worked to break down the family, or re-educate them, as they were an example of the old structure which needed to be changed. Ming felt that the maid tortured her and that nobody cared about her. The maid told

stories about Ming to the family of Ming's boyfriend, who then deserted her.

In the absence of parental guidance, Ming learned to solve her own problems, and she often says that she gained strength because of this situation. Ming felt very lost and lonely at this time. She used to visit a girl friend every evening, walking five miles in both directions. She had little food and lost a lot of weight. In spite of these troubles, she managed to finish art college and begin her teaching career. This is the first evidence of her determination and strength of character.

Life did not get any easier for Ming after she married in 1957. At that time, she had no family to help arrange a marriage. She made the choice, after a short courtship, to marry an in-law of her cousin. She explains her actions by saying, "Just marry because I feel homeless. I thought he would care for me." She mentions how her wedding was not as nice as her mother's. Of course it could not have been, since the new marriage laws spelled out that there should be no elaborate ceremonies, just a light tea party with close relatives and friends (Yang, 1959, p. 176).

Ming's marriage was not a success and she was very unhappy. It would appear that her husband was very domineering and probably had the old Chinese paternalistic

view of marriage. He was twelve years older than Ming and still had the old attitudes. At this time there was much propaganda from the government to ensure women understood that they were equal in marriage, but the traditional ways were hard to change. The development of intimacy in the young adulthood stage is important. Erik Erikson discusses with Richard Evans how, without the ability to fuse one's identity with somebody else, marriage is meaningless. This intimacy didn't happen for Ming and led to great unhappiness (Evans, 1967, pp. 48-49).

Ming remained married because she had no other choice, and two daughters were born. They continued to live through the waves of different government oppressions. This, added to the stress of the unhappy marriage and Ming's inability to find work in Beijing, caused her depression. Mao ran campaigns against different groups. In 1952, the bourgeoisie were accused of the three evils of corruption, waste, and bureaucracy. Then came the campaigns against business with the five evils of bribery, tax evasion, theft of state property, cheating on government contracts and stealing of economic information.

The Communists tried to change people's attitudes and values, but Ming did not accept these new philosophies. There are three distinct processes of 'compliance,'

'identification,' and 'internalization' which lead to different degrees of attitude change. H.C.Kelman discusses these processes in his article on "Three Processes of Social Influence." He was particularly interested in the Chinese Communists' methods of 'thought reform' which tried to bring about not only public conformity but a change in underlying beliefs. The challenge is to integrate the new attitude into a person's own value system (1970, p. 155).

Compliance occurs when the individual does what the other group wants him to do, but does not adopt the induced behavior. He/she learns to say or do the expected thing in special situations, regardless of what his private beliefs may be.

Identification occurs when the individual adopts the behavior derived from a person or group and defines his role in terms of the other person. The behavior of the brainwashed prisoner in Communist China provides one example of this type of identification. Kelman says, "By adopting the attitudes and beliefs of the prison authorities--including their evaluation of him--he attempts to retain his identity, which has been subjected to severe threats." (1970, p. 156).

The third process of internalization occurs when the person actually believes in the opinions and actions he

takes. In internalization the individual accepts influences because the behavior is congruent with his own value system.

In Ming's case she found herself unable to accept the political doctrines which were laid down and only accepted them on the compliance level. Hence she lived in great fear watching her words and trying to keep away from the authorities.

Similarly, an example of compliance is shown in the book Eighth Moon by Bette Lord. Lord helped her younger sister, Sansan, re-create some of the years of the Communist oppression. Sansan tells about the time in 1957 when all students were assigned weekly political discussions. Sansan discovered the consequences of expressing an opinion which was not "in line," when she supported a fellow student who was listening to dance music:

I had hardly finished when all hands went up and each person in turn reprimanded me. After that experience, I knew better than to speak my convictions. I realized that while it was not smart to keep quiet and thus arouse suspicion, I was expected to express only opinions that echoed the ones suggested by the group leader. Sometimes it was very hard to find a new way of saying the same thing, and I often spoke up early in the discussion so that no one else could steal my ideas. (1964, p. 48)

The Communists found it hard to change people's attitudes, opinions and values. Kenneth G. Lieberthal

reports in his book, Revolutions & Traditions in Tientsin, 1949-1952, that there was constant recruitment and training of people to implement Communist aims. Education was needed to ensure people understood and perpetuated the values of the Communists. In his book he explains the process by which the Communists used to gain control of a company. He documents the steps taken to break down the power and financial control of Mr. Wang, who was the Assistant Manager at the China Chemical Company (1980, p. 130).

In 1957 Mao began the campaign against the triple evils of subjectivism, sectarianism, and bureauratism which led to repulse the rightists' wild attacks. Ming saw her younger sister sent off to the country as a "rightist." In the book Son of the Revolution, Liang Liang, with Judith Shapiro, tells how Liang's mother was also sent off as a "rightist" and explains how difficult it was to intervene in these attacks. His father chose to divorce the mother to try to save the family from ruin (1983, pp. 8-14).

Ming said several times that she was not interested in politics; she never got involved in any movements at school and tried to ignore all political matters. But the political events changed her life dramatically. She went from being Daughter of the Landlord, with a strong

influential family behind her, to being the eldest of four abandoned children, held in the grips of a communist-minded maid. Ming lived through a period when the pattern of her life--of all the people's lives--changed.

Her attitude to life was one of quiet survival and determination. She hoped that by being married she would be safe but this was not the case. The society and structure of life changed. The top people went to the bottom; the bottom people were on top--nothing was the same or stable.

CHAPTER VII

The Cultural Revolution-1966

On the first day that the Red Guards went out into the street, Ming narrowly escaped arrest, and from then on she lived in fear. Ming tells about every day life during the Cultural Revolution. This fear, coupled with her unhappy marriage, put incredible stress on her health. Throughout this period she brought up two children, nursed her grandmother through cancer and eventual death, and survived a year's exile in the countryside.

Tell me about the Cultural Revolution.

In June 1966, when my children were five and seven and a half years old, I took them to Suzhou to see my grandmother. It was a very, very hot summer--the mosquitoes were terrible in Suzhou because there are a lot of rivers and we were not used to that kind of tropical environment. But we had a good time, and we stayed at my grandmother's friend's house and my grandmother was happy to have me and my children's company. We travelled around the Suzhou area. We went to the hills and stayed a month and we really had a good reunion. We really enjoyed it and my grandmother bought a lot of good food to feed us. But during that time, the government already has restrictions on my grandmother. She had a small piece of land, and I

don't know whether she said something wrong or not, but they asked her to move from Shanghai to Suzhou. They counted her as an landlord and so she cannot go wherever she wanted and so she had to report every month. She has to ask if she can go away, rather like we ask the boss if we can take a vacation. But she did come to Beijing once.

After we visited grandma, we went to Shanghai because it is only two hours away from Suzhou by train. Shanghai is a good place to shop compared to Beijing, so I bought a lot of nice clothes and bags. We stayed another two weeks in Shanghai and I visited all my friends. Before I moved to Beijing, I left with my friend a big suitcase with all my old pictures, my father's pictures and my mother's old pictures and a lot of letters that some boys sent to me and so I think I better clean up my stuff. So I went through all this old stuff and burned a lot of letters and photographs. It was lucky I did this; otherwise, we will get into trouble because there were photographs of my father with the old government flag in his hand and his friends wearing old government military uniforms of the Guomindang. Then I returned to Beijing on July 16. The next day after I got home, I put on my new clothes, and because it is very hot, I just wear a shirt and skirt, no jacket and went to see my neighbor. I was not working at that time. This neighbor is a community leader [party

leader]. Her husband is a general. But though she is a community leader, she is quite nice and has a good relationship with me. I can't remember why I went to see her. Then I went back from her house to my house, which is about a half a block away, not too far. I walked and almost reached my door. (I lived on the fourth floor of a five-story building---with three bedrooms and two balconies, it is a nice place.) Then I walk to the front door of the first floor and an old lady, who lives on the first floor, looks strangely at me--her expression so strange and she waves at me, like this "hurry up, come on, come on." I hurry up and I feel so weird but I think something has happened, because I noticed somebody was following me, and so I hurry up and rushed into her door, and I heard a lot of people, probably five or six go fast and rush upstairs. Seems they were following me and they went upstairs and bang, bang on my door. Then about a couple of minutes (because I was hiding in this old lady's place and nobody was home), a teacher, who lives above me, come out and she yelled at them, "why are you guys doing this here?" They were teen-agers and they say, "She is a bourgeois person and so we want to question her." The teacher said, "How can you tell she is bourgeois?" They replied, "By her clothes, by the way she acts." The teacher says, "No, her husband just got back from

London--they are intellectuals." During that time intellectuals were a little bit better than bourgeois. Then the teacher tells them, "Go back and find out for sure. Then you can come back." And so they left. This is the day the Red Guards started their terror! They didn't do any research or they don't have any investigation. If they see you have nice clothes on and fashionable hair, they will pull you on the sidewalk and shave your hair and cut your skirt or something. Just from that, I was scared to death. After a while, some activities people come to my door and said, "Go to a meeting," and then I had no choice. I had to go to meeting. I was lucky to have another neighbor who watched out for me. She said, "You better change your clothes and watch out," and "Let's go to meeting," and I said, "OK," and went to meeting. Then I saw my other next door neighbor. She was rich and she always put on nice clothes and her home is very luxurious and I saw she was on the stage. Her whole family, her father (very rich), her mother and her brother and her sister, whole family (ten people) stand on the stage. All the rest of us sit down on the ground, on mud dirt, and then they start to talk. "Chairman Mao said we have to fight the bourgeois and all the rich and four old customs, old culture, old ideas, and old habits." They bound everyone and made everybody kneel down. After that they

shave all the women's hair. They treat them like an animals and the kids on street threw stones, pull them down.

What happened next?

That night, the Red Guards went to the people next door. They went to their home to destroyed everything, cut clothes up and tear pictures, do whatever they like to do. Take away everything. No law! The father of the lady next door is a Guomindang general and her father captured Mao's wife and killed her.

Did Mao know who she was?

Mao didn't kill too much, but the Red Guards killed. My neighbor had another two sisters. The Red Guards pulled them all out--they have a lot of pantihose and fabric. They bring the fabric from the balcony to the ground. The kids they do what ever they like. No one stopped them. Then took the people's money away. At night they stayed with the family. They didn't let them commit suicide. They don't let them go to sleep. They don't let them eat. My friend who controlled our area and wasn't too harsh on people and only one person committed suicide. Right away she would discussed with the Red Guards the people's homes they should go to. She cannot say, "No you better not go to somebody's home." But she can say this person is not that bad. But besides her there is a branch of the

security bureau branch--that's government controlled--so the security branch of our area finally became enemy with my friend because she wants to contain it, not let it spread too big but Security Bureau wanted it to spread all over. But we were scared. That night of this same long day they pulled out probably ten families. They thought they are bourgeois, or something just by looking at people's clothes and the way they live, no investigation. Then they say that person is bourgeois. So the whole night we cannot sleep. We can hear all the banging on this side, and that, very noisy. We are scared.

So right next day, my husband asked the Red Guards to come to our place to get whatever they wanted out of our house, refrigerator, couch, television, piano and the diamond ring. Everything gone. But they didn't take it right away. They locked it in a room. After a couple of months, they took it away. We hoped they would just take the "things" and our bodies will not be hurt. They put a seal on door, "this family already been cleaned." They took our money (I hid some) and savings but luckily my husband made pretty good money. Then I was very scared and I worry and I was not in very good health because the relationship with my husband. I was very skinny and I got fever every day and had to go to the doctor for check up often. Because this political thing happened, my health

got worse--for twenty days and twenty nights, I couldn't sleep. I was exhausted. Finally they had to take me to psychologist. I didn't act very bad; but my feeling was very, very bad. I thought I was going to die. I always think I should commit suicide. Two things--one is my relationship with my husband and secondly, I couldn't find I job. I imagine to go to somewhere else, to someone else's house and be their maid or something. Escape from him and China. Double stress. But no way to get out then, plus there is the political problem. I got really sick for six months. My mind was still clear though, I think I shouldn't go crazy. I better keep up. Then I started to play badminton and jogged and little by little I got better. But I got this rapid heart beat and once in a while it will come back to me.

Did your husband treat you better then?

During my sick time, he is better, but I don't trust him anymore. I cannot get on with him. He was a bad husband; I did everything. He picked at food and he wouldn't let me out to see my friends, and I didn't know too many friends in Beijing! I didn't get enough sleep. I have no place to go and I finally bring the kids to Suzhou to my grandmother. But my grandmother, she was old "minded" (fashioned) and she didn't want me to get

divorced, so I had to go back and keep suffering for every day so many years.

So the Cultural Revolution started from that day and later on I heard from my sister in the countryside that the people went into her house and destroyed everything. All my relations were affected. My grandma have to go outside and sweep streets every day. My aunt in Shanghai. Everybody. After a couple of months their target moved to the intellectuals. Burn the books. They concentrated on the professors and teachers. They left us alone. Left me alone. In 1967-68, they kept my husband in the office--day and night they slapped him. Sometimes when he got home, his clothes were torn like this.

Did the meetings still go on?

Yes, the meetings went on all through this time--for hours and hours. Whenever they call you. You know, in every company, in every organization, there is some leader, they organize this big meeting so wherever you are, you have to go to meetings, small meetings, big meetings and they call the struggle (fight) with intellectual people. They just let you sit there and say something--agree with them. They say, "we have to destroy the old culture," then nobody can say, "NO, we have to keep it." Nobody can say that. If you say that, they put you in the jail right away.

You told me one that people used to stuff money and jewelry into public toilets. Why did they do this?

Because they didn't want the Communists to think they were capitalism minded and then they would have you sweep the floor and do all dirty work every day. My grandmother, they picked on her. She was seventy-five years old then and they made her put a tag on her clothes saying, "So and so is a landlord." Some naughty kids throw a stones at her. She had to walk around wearing a label with children throwing stones at her.

What do you think were the reasons for the Cultural revolution?

Liu Shaoqi is the President and he was leader of the government leader and Mao was the leader of the Communist Party, and against this government leader. That's why he wanted to use his power to force Liu Shaoqi to leave his position. Mao tried to get young people (Red Guards) on his side and send them out to destroy the current government so he could get his power back. He pretended to use the teen-agers to fight again the bourgeois, but actually he wants to make the thing big, so the purpose is to pull Liu down from his position, and he made it.

It is surprising he could do that!

His wife helped him. In Cultural Revolution times, Mao still had this high reputation and so nobody dare to go

against him so whatever he said, the people had to follow him because he still had a lot of respect. So whatever he ordered them to do, the people would follow him.

And so after they fight with intellectuals, the community leaders divide into two groups. Mao has one group and Liu has the other group. So they both have their own gangs and they fight. Liu and Mao's people fight each other and tried to pull civilians into it and the people in the companies. There was fighting with guns in Suzhou for two months.

So many of the Red Guards just put the jewelry in their pockets. When Mao sees lots of Red Guards in the Tiananmen Square--millions of them each time--they were crowded and squashed together so that some of the jewels came out of their pockets and fell to the ground. When the crowds go, Mao can see jewels and realizes what is happening. Jewels all over the Square and he knows something is wrong and he has a problem. So he sent the Red Guards out to the countryside to help the peasants and many died there. But the adults were scared to death.

Not too long later, my grandmother wrote me a letter. She got sick with cancer, and I went to Suzhou to take care of her in 1969, and finally she died of breast cancer.

After I came back to Beijing, the company [Beijing Review] wanted all intellectuals to move to countryside.

Did you move too?

Yes, I had to move but I kept the house in town and I didn't take anything good. I took cheap stuff and rags to countryside. The government paid the expense to move. We went to Hunan.

What were you supposed to do there?

We went to be a peasant, to be a farmer, work in the fields. When I came home from work in the fields, I had to make stuff to burn. They make it with a mixture of powder, earth and water. Keep until it is dry and then you can put on stove. I stayed there a year. Luckily I kept the house in Beijing, so when we move back we still have the home. We learnt to be a peasant. Everybody went. I went home after a year because there is not enough room in the schools for the children. They also allowed me to return because I didn't actually work in the company [Beijing Review]. My husband stayed there for another six months--he stayed totally a year-and-a-half. Actually he had a better life then. In a family, you have to be nice. But you can imagine I wasn't easy to live with! (chuckle) I had to make this coal and do all kinds of farm work I never did, right? He always blamed me if he was in a bad mood. He gave others in his family a hard time. He was very scared and when he came home, he could be the boss there.

In 1966, the Cultural Revolution began its nightmare reign, and Ming was one of the first people who was chased by the members of the Red Guard. She escaped that day but the fear of being caught never left her. Luckily she had good neighbors who helped her, warned her how to behave, told her what clothes to wear, and took her to meetings to make sure she conformed.

Similarly, Nien Cheng, who lived in Shanghai during this period, writes eloquently about how she observed the Red Guards treating a less fortunate girl in her book, Life and Death in Shanghai

While one Red Guard held her, another removed her shoes and a third one cut the legs of her slacks open. The Red Guards were shouting, "Why do you wear shoes with pointed toes?" "Why do you wear slacks with narrow legs?" In the struggle, the Red Guards removed her slacks altogether, much to the amusement of the crowd that had gathered to watch the scene. The onlookers were laughing and jeering. One of the Red Guard slapped the girl's face to stop her from struggling. (1987, p. 65)

The purge was mainly aimed at mayors, provincial governors, industrial managers, writers, teachers, professors and entertainers. Millions of Red Guards pulled top officials from their desks and made them stand on tables to be reviled and then paraded through the street; some were killed and others driven to suicide (Bonovia, 1984, p. 27).

In the book, Son of the Revolution, (1983) Liang Heng et al. attested how Liang's father threw out papers which he felt would be incriminating to the family. In the same way Ming destroyed her old photographs and letters she had saved in a suitcase (p. 59).

The fear that Ming experienced caused her to become very thin and ill, and for twenty days and nights she could not sleep. She was taken to doctors and psychiatrists, but eventually she came out of the depression herself, understanding it was caused by her intolerable situation, which she could not change. Often she expressed the desire to go somewhere and become a housekeeper to get out of her home situation. One of the causes of her depression was her lack of work; the educational system was in confusion, and cultural subjects, such as art, were not being taught. Ming repeatedly said that Mao was scared to have people well educated. He didn't want them to be able to think.

The government sent members of the "Beijing Review," where her husband worked, to the country for re-education. She was sent with her husband and children for manual labor and political study. Here are her survival techniques again--most people accepted this move and took all their belongings with them. Ming took only old clothes and furniture to the country and kept her

apartment rented for her eventual return. In fact, she manages to arrange an early return for herself and the children, with the excuse that there was no school available in the country for her children. Ming was able to form relationships with the cadre (community leaders) and, when necessary, enlist their help.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Alexandra Tolstoy also suffered a similar fate in Russia. She was put in jail and spent time in the country for re-education. She says about survival:

I have no strength left, I am utterly exhausted, my feet will not hold me; but I must go on, one more effort, another There is a limit to patience and strength, but seems to advance with difficulties. One gets used to suffering and learns how to bear it. (1981, p. 112)

How did Ming survive the many years of oppression and the hard life in the country? Perhaps by laying low and trying to be nondescript and unnoticed, she learned to blend into the background. She wanted not to be seen, or have anyone pick her out as being "bourgeois" or "intellectual." She lived in a violent society where one could be arrested for one's appearance or for getting words mixed up in a sentence. Han Suyin, the author, describes the same atmosphere and explains how, when on a visit to China in 1966, her eardrums were assaulted by loudspeakers drumming out perpetual noise of shouting, screaming and singing. She wondered how anyone could

remain sane in the noise. She goes on to say how she found her sister hacking off the low heels of shoes which Suyin had brought her from Hong Kong. Says her sister, "it's a sign of bourgeois behavior, high heels. . . those dresses you've given me . . . can you take them back? . . . There are house searches" (1982, p. 54).

Han Suyin interviewed many people in China after the Cultural Revolution and most of the comments were similar. Rewi Alley told her, "Well, one thing can be said: Where there's life there's hope . . . Survival. All China believes in survival . . ." (1982, p. 112). Another person told her, "Now I shall never be afraid of anything, or anyone" (1982, p. 108).

The political events continued to impact Ming's life even more dramatically in this segment. She lived in fear for thirty years. Underneath this fear though was a strong determination to survive and escape. She continued every year to apply for permission to leave.

CHAPTER VIII

The End is in Sight.

In 1973 President Nixon visited China and thereafter the relationship between the United States and China became more amicable. In 1978 Ming was given permission to leave.

Ming's experiences on arrival in the United States are probably not much different from those of thousands of other immigrants. At first she lived with friends and relatives and worked in lowly paid jobs. She worked hard, studied, obtained a well-paid position and brought her daughters and sister out of China.

When did the political situation in China become easier.

In 1973, after Nixon visited China. Then my younger sister, who lives in Hawaii, was able to visit us. She helped me; she told my mother about my life and that I cannot stand it anymore. I had begged my mother many times, but she didn't do anything. She was busy in her own love life and busy with my brother--she had an "old mind"--the boy is important. She had re-married and moved to Los Angeles. Anyway, she wanted me to stay in China to take care of my grandmother, which I did. I really loved

my grandmother, and she was the only one in my memory that treated me nice.

Were you able to work in the years between 1972 and 1978?

In 1974, I went back to teaching, but before then I started working in a clothes shop and I learned tailoring.

Did you have enough money?

My mother sent me money, a little bit. My husband earned good money, but my mother's money gave me extra; she always helped me. Otherwise, I couldn't afford to buy the ticket to come here. Totally it took ten years to get through the Cultural Revolution.

When you got the OK to leave, did your husband mind?

He minded a lot, but I separated from him; I slept with my daughters. So he can do nothing: I tell him if you disagree with this, my leaving, I will never go back to you. So he figures it is no fun, better just let me go. Besides, I think he wants his kids to come out. Finally I just ran away. He didn't know what day I would get on the plane. I ran away. I paid for my ticket with mother's money. All his money I gave back to him. I handed it to my oldest daughter and let her give it to her father.

Why do you think that after you had tried to leave for seventeen years the government finally decide to let you go?

I think it was because Mao died. Mao died and then this person who took his place figured it was better to loosen a little bit.

Did you go to Hong Kong or straight to America?

I came straight to here via Japan lines because we have to go through Japan. There is no connection between United States and China.

How did you feel when you got permission to come?

Excited, in the Japanese airport I walk on the shiny floor with my pair of (old) shoes and they looked so funny. For ten years China hadn't opened their doors to foreigners, so all Chinese people are very poor clothed. I looked at my shoes and they don't match with the floor (giggle) I felt very strange.

But luckily I could understand everybody talking because I understood some English, otherwise, I would be stuck. But I missed a plane though, I didn't know I have to get another boarding card. I missed the plane. Luckily after four hours, another plane will go to the United States. My mother met me, with \$16 in my pocket!! I spent two dollars on the plane to listen to headphones and when they collect the money, they want two dollars, Oh! scared me--\$16 was all I had.

Where did you go?

When I got to the United States in 1978 I went to Los Angeles. It was very strange and different, but it wasn't as bad as China. I moved to six or seven places in a year when I first got here.

My stepfather is nice but crazy--talk a lot. I only stayed in my mother's house for two months, then I went to work in a garment factory (sweat shop) sewing and cooking for seven people. The owner put in a shower for me and I slept in the factory, alone, at night. One day I notice a mortuary across the street. I was scared to go to sleep, by myself, near a mortuary, but what could I do?

Then I made contact with my high school friend and I moved up to this area and stayed in her house for a month. Her husband suggested a new career for me and I went on a training course. I moved to a divorced Chinese woman's house and slept on a couch for a month. There are cockroaches and ants. How can they stand it? These were Chinese and Vietnamese women. They share a bedroom and I sleep on couch. Then I can't stand it any more and move to American divorced lady's house. She was nice but her two teen-age kids kept me awake. I was working during the day and training at night. I didn't get enough sleep.

What work did you do?

I did QA inspector work. I learned things in life for myself, otherwise, I cannot survive in the United States.

If my parents prepared everything for me, when I get here, I would have been lost. And so all the things that happened to me were important; they made me able to survive. I struggled for years. I deal with a difficult husband, that why I became stronger. I also deal with a difficult government.

You know, when I lived in China during the Vietnam war, they asked me at home to go out and write slogans. I accidentally wrote a wrong word, "Support America against Vietnam" instead of "Support Vietnam against America." (laughter) I hadn't finished the sentence and I said, "How come I write this?" I tore it up the paper and threw it on the floor. The person next to me heard this and reported me. The police came over and searched on the floor and found the paper and put it in my record. The Security Bureau have a chart on everyone and they put this in my chart. This is the job of these people to always to look for somebody to make a mistake. One day they called me up and questioned me. I said; "I don't have anything in my mind and no objection to the government," but they still they put my name in black book. All these things were against me: my sister's right wing hat, my father in prison, my mother's escape from China in Hong Kong, and my husband wrote the wrong things in the newspaper. I was a bad person in the Communists' eyes!

Ming never gave up her hope and wish to leave China. She never stopped requesting permission to leave, or asking her mother to help her get out of China. The death of Mao caused a relaxation in the attitude of the government, and Ming was finally allowed to leave. When she got permission to leave, she didn't hesitate; she left without money, possessions or her daughters. She began life again at the age of forty-four years in a new and foreign country.

In answer to questions about whether it was difficult to adjust to life in the United States, Ming replied, that because she had had to learn things for herself, without help from her parents, she was able to survive here; otherwise she would have been lost. She sees herself as strong and independent, and soon after arrival in the United States she took charge of her life. She found somewhere to live, independent from the family, started training for a new career, and brought her daughters out of China.

Although Ming feels she has adapted well, she is still uncertain about how to function in a capitalistic society. The purchase of expensive items seems to cause her stress. She hesitated for a long time before finally buying a home. She constantly worried about whether she should buy a house or not, and then regretted every lost opportunity.

Eventually she bought a small home and is happy with her decision. In the same way the purchase of large items of furniture still makes her anxious. Perhaps her worries are because she feels guilty about buying items which for many years were classified as being bourgeois or unworthy. She needs reassurance that her decisions are correct. In another example, Ming seldom wears jewelry, although she has some nice pieces given to her by her children. It seems as if she hesitates about acquiring things which were once taken away from her. Perhaps time will ease her concerns.

CHAPTER IX

Analysis and Conclusions

In studying the life of a Chinese person one has to try to comprehend the values and outlooks which are fundamentally different from those found in the contemporary West. Considerable research has been made to ensure that these values have been understood. Ann-ping Chin says in her book, Children of China:

In the Chinese perception, a person is born a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister; in time, he or she will become a father or a mother and a friend to others. A person is born into a web of human relatedness; he is a link in the human nexus, his identity predetermined by his relations to others. (1988, p. 18)

During discussions with Ming on the name of this project she suggested "Daughter of the Landlord," so this title has been used because it is a statement of Ming's identity.

Ming has lived through some drastic changes. There has been nothing dull in her life. In her time she has been the daughter of a rich landlord, an escapee from the Japanese, homeless, a survivor of the Cultural Revolution and, finally, an immigrant to a new land. Each time she has been able to adapt to her new role sufficiently to survive, while still retaining her own identity.

How Did She Survive?

Ming was lucky enough to have come from a strong, upright, well educated family, which was highly principled and well respected in the community. The values transmitted were the importance of the family, education and support systems of the women. Ming makes firm friendships among women. She is a very caring, sympathetic person and very supportive to other women. These support systems helped her in situations wherever she went. Added to this are her sharp intelligence and forethought. For example, during the time of the Cultural Revolution, she and her husband invited the Red Guards into their home for purification of bourgeois possessions, and in this way they were saved the humiliation of a cruel hunt and search investigation. Later, when she and her family were sent to the country for re-education, Ming took only old clothes and belongings and kept her apartment for eventual return. She is always anticipating and planning the action that will be best for her and her family.

Women in the Family

It is apparent that Ming comes from a long line of strong, capable women who did not accept society's norms of behavior--women who found ways to escape unhappy marriages. These women were resourceful and courageous enough to break away from traditional roles and make new

lives for themselves and their children. The knowledge of the achievements of the female members of her family, and her own strong character, guided Ming and enabled her to start a new life in a new country.

Ming's relationship with her mother is complex. She would often say that she and her mother "did not get along," and that they were very different. But perhaps these differences were caused because of the similarities in their nature or personality. Both were first-born children and strong-minded women. Both care about their family, friends and neighbors (her mother saved the life of the ferry boat owner). They both left their husbands, children and homeland to seek a better life for their families. Ming accuses her mother of being spoilt by her grandmother, but admits that she herself, was also spoilt by the same grandmother. At times she has felt abandoned by her mother, but fundamentally she is very proud of her mother, as she is also very proud of her grandmother and great-grandmother.

One interesting aspect which has come out of this investigation was the strength of the women in Ming's family. Never does she mention submissive, down-trodden women--we hear of women in charge of situations (even the unpleasant maid was certainly in charge of the situation). This is surprising and contrary to the literary image of

Chinese women confined to their homes with tiny bound feet. It appears in reality, however, that women did not allow these restrictions to interfere with their ambitions and responsibilities to their family. Is this only true of Ming and her family, or were other Chinese women also strong, even under the paternalistic rule? Margery Wolf asks a similar question in her introduction to Ida Pruitt's book, Old Madam Yin:

Strong character in Chinese women is recognized and admired only when they are old and is attributed to the fact of their age. But if they were dependents and incompetents before their hair turned white and their husband died, how did they suddenly acquire the skills and attributes necessary to dominate a household? A careful reading of Pruitt's books will answer that question and pose another: How did we not recognize half of the population of China for all these years? (Pruitt, 1979, p. vii)

Adaptations

Obviously at the time of her marriage and her life in Beijing, Ming did not make the adaptation necessary to survive an unhappy marriage and an oppressive government. Other people did make this adaptation. Her acceptance of the Communist doctrines was only in the compliance form. She didn't accept the Communist doctrines in the identification form, nor in the internalization form (Kelman, 1970, pp. 159-160).

Ming was always determined to remove herself, as soon as possible, from these circumstances. Her refusal to

adapt led to excessive stress which has caused her medical problems now. Adjustment to a foreign culture was easier for her than adapting to the political situation in her homeland.

Politics

Nowhere in our talks was there any resentment of the re-structuring of wealth which caused her family to lose everything. Her concerns were that her family didn't know how to function in this new society. Her anger was towards the government's inefficiencies which caused hardship to the people. She often said that Mao was a good revolutionary, but he did not know how to run a country.

Ming often talks of the Communist reign as "this government" and I think this is an interesting perspective. "This government" and their politics are obviously--in her mind--a segment of China's history. We, in the West, have tended to think of Communism as a regime that has been permanently established in China. However, the Chinese understand this is a part of their long history and they try to survive the various purges and upheavals, hoping for change that will make their lives easier.

Physical and Emotional Effects of Communism

The thirty years of persecution under Communist rule have influenced Ming greatly; it has not been easy for her to forget what has happened. Physically she still suffers

with heart trouble, which often requires medical attention. She is very cautious, constantly planning for the future and worrying about how she will support herself as she gets older. Sometimes the strain of the last thirty years can be seen on her face, but at other times, she will spontaneously burst into laughter over some incident, allowing one to see the young girl who enjoyed being smuggled into Hong Kong.

Family

Most of Ming's family is around her in California now. Her mother lives in Los Angeles with her stepfather, her brother is a professor at a California University and finally the other sister (who was sent to the country for nineteen years for being a rightist) is here now and lives in Los Angeles. The other of Ming's sisters is married and lives in Hong Kong. Ming's younger daughter is a computer engineer, happily married and living near to Ming. The young couple have a close supportive relationship with Ming, and help her with household projects. Ming's oldest daughter lives with her and is finishing her training as a medical doctor. She is also a caring, sympathetic, strong, modern young woman. She does not allow herself to be manipulated when her grandmother tries to find prospective marriage partners for her!

Conclusion

As I was completing this thesis, the April and May 1989 student pro-democracy protests were going on in Tiananmen Square, Beijing. The students were using, as their model, the 1919 May 4th Protest Movement, when Beijing students were able to reverse the Chinese government's position on the signing away of concessions to the Japanese at the Versailles Peace conference. Many of my young Chinese friends from Hong Kong and Taiwan were optimistic with hopes of change in China, but Ming was exceedingly skeptical. She worried about the welfare of the students and often could not sleep at night. She said, "You don't know this government; they will crack down and kill the students--they are so young and idealistic. The only way to bring about change is with the gun (army)." When I suggested that perhaps the students should return to school and work into positions of power themselves, and then change things, she said, "No, they should take over now while there were 100,000 of them in the square." This is a surprising comment from someone who seemed to have evaded politics for most of her life, but she said then: "This is what I have learned. Politics affect every aspect of a person's life. I didn't understand this when I was young and I wasn't interested in politics, but we must be concerned. It can change your whole life."

A few days later, in the early hours of Sunday, June 4th 1989, the People's Liberation Army went in and crushed the student movement, killing hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of young people. Ming had correctly foretold the end of the protest movement.

After being timid and retiring for most of her life Ming has now changed. She has been to the Chinese Embassy with a protest letter and has joined the protesters on marches in San Francisco. I find this attitude profoundly moving and wonder if it is an isolated incident or an indication of a change in the attitudes of other Chinese. Perhaps this is a part of a new movement to free China from the totalitarian aspect of Communism. As Ming says, "Politics affect every aspect of a person's life we must be concerned. It can change your whole life."

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