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a Hong Kong Village: Population Mobility
and Its Economic Implication

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IN A HONG KONG VILLAGE: POPULATION
MOBILITY AND ITS ECONOMIC IMPLICATION

By

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THE FADING OF EARTHBOUND COMPULSION IN A HONG KONG VILLAGE:
POPULATION MOBILITY AND ITS ECONOMIC IMPLICATION

(Summary)

This paper attempts to examine the effects of population mobility on the economic life of a Chinese rural community. The village under study is located in the New Territories of Hong Kong.

As a result of the rapid industrialization and urbanization in Hong Kong over the last few decades, the population in the village has become increasingly mobile. There have been an increasing number of outsiders immigrating to the community, of villagers outmigrating to other places, and of daily commuters between the village and the outside world. These various types of population mobility under the impact of industrial-urbanism have caused fundamental changes in the economic structure of the village. The primary change in agriculture is the shift from self-sufficient farming to commercial farming. More important is that farming has gradually lost its importance and given way to industrial production and services. It is noteworthy that such a "spontaneous" change of economic types has done more good than harm to the material well-being of the village dwellers.

THE FADING OF EARTHBOUND COMPULSION IN A HONG KONG VILLAGE:
POPULATION MOBILITY AND ITS ECONOMIC IMPLICATION*

Earthbound compulsion has been widely recognized as a central characteristic of the traditional structure of peasant societies. For many centuries, for instance, village folks in China were relatively immobile. To be born and to die in the same place was regarded as most desirable. By contrast, to leave one's homeland was viewed as a tragic event.

In view of the relatively self-contained farm economy in traditional villages, the emergence and persistence of the earthbound psychology appears to be a natural consequence. Urban dwellers may not be so conscious of the importance of the soil, but the livelihood of peasants are almost entirely dependent on the soil in the village. To the farmer, it is the soil that keeps him and his family members alive. Away from the soil, they may face the possibility of hunger and the threat of death. Naturally there is a close emotional tie between peasants and their homelands. In traditional peasant societies, population immobility is a "normal" phenomenon whereas mobility is "abnormal".

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Industrialization and urbanization have become common processes in most countries today. The traditional social structure of peasant communities and their changes under the impact of industrial-urbanism have been well-documented (see, for instance, the various articles in Potter, Diaz and Foster, 1967; and in Shanin, 1971). In the case of Chinese villages there are, for example, studies by Fei (1939), Yang (1948), Gamble (1954), Freedman (1958), and Yang (1959) in the Chinese Mainland, by Gallin (1967), Wu (1973), and Wen and his associates (1975) in Taiwan, and by Baker (1968) and Potter (1968) in Hong Kong. In this paper, I shall focus on the effects of industrialization and urbanization upon the earth-bound characteristic of a village in Hong Kong, and then examine the subsequent effects on the internal economic life of the village. Some of the specific questions to be raised are: (1) How extensive has been population mobility in the village under study in recent years? (2) How has it been associated with the industrial and urban growth of Hong Kong? and (3) How has population mobility under the impact of industrial-urbanism affected the material well-being of the village dwellers? Three types of population mobility will be examined; they are immigration, outmigration, and the commuting of village dwellers to work outside.

The Growth of Industrial-Urbanism in Hong Kong

Hong Kong is located on the southeast coast of the Chinese Mainland. The total land area is 1,045 square Km., of which about 12 per cent are cultivated land. The mid-year population in 1975 was estimated at 4,366,600, which is about two and a half times

that in 1948 (1,800,000). There has thus been a rapid growth of population size since the Communist takeover of the Chinese Mainland in 1949. Currently, an overwhelming majority (over 98%) of the total population are Chinese in place of origin.

About 88 per cent of the total population in Hong Kong concentrate in the urban sector which comprises only 18 per cent of the total land area, whereas the rural New Territories, comprising 82 per cent of the total land area, accommodate only 13 per cent of the total population. Apparently Hong Kong has become a highly urbanized society.

Concomitant to population and urban growth is the rapid industrialization of Hong Kong's economy in the past few decades. For instance, the proportion of working population engaged in manufacturing has increased from less than 10 per cent in 1948 to over one half in 1975, and electricity consumption has risen from 3,499 million Kilowatt-hours in 1968 to 6,424 million in 1975. Hong Kong, therefore, is a Chinese society with rapid industrialization and urbanization. The rise and growth of industrial-urbanism has had a number of ramifications on the settlers in various villages of the New Territories.

The rural New Territories consists of about 230 islands and a large piece of the hinterland in the northern part of Hong Kong. It has been settled by the Chinese for almost ten centuries. There are currently about 900 villages, which are mostly occupied by a single clan.

The village of Lok is the site of our study. It is located in the mid-eastern coast of the New Territories, and is about a mile northwest of a market town called Taipo Hui. A railway and a public highway are along the west side of the village site. A bus stop is nearby and the railway station is only a mile way. It takes about 45 minutes by train or by automobile to commute from the village to the urban centers of Hong Kong.

A hill lies along the northern boundary of the village, and a main pathway runs through the village from west to east. When one walks into the village from the western entrance, one would see a number of small-scale cultivated fields (a total of about 30 acres) clustering on the right hand side (i.e., the south). On the left (north), one would first find a primary school and its playground, and a couple of retail shops. Walking further, one then sees blocks of houses constructed in traditional Chinese style with stones and bricks. These houses are arranged in a rectangular pattern, and are mostly used by natives for residence. A few houses, however, have been turned into small factories. In the midst of the houses is the Ancestor Hall, behind which is the watch-tower. Approaching the northeastern section, one would find a group of wooden shacks inhabited by immigrants, and also a number of cottage industries.

For many centuries the village was settled by a single clan of the Tangs (鄧) who were originally natives of Chi-Shui Hsien (吉水縣) of the Kiangsi (江西) Province. The clan moved to the New Territories around the year 973 A.D. They were not only

first comers, but also the largest and most influential clan in the New Territories. Lok is one of the villages established by the clan; it has a history of nearly 400 years. According to our major informants, relatively self-sufficient farming and population immobility were some of the marked characteristics of the village about twenty-odd years ago. The situation, however, has altered rapidly in recent years because of the drastic changes in the larger society.

Research Procedures

Under the general directorship of Professor S.L. Wong, our research project was begun in the fall of 1964 by making contacts with village leaders and by collecting preliminary information from major informants. A group of sociology students at The Chinese University of Hong Kong participated in the project as field workers under the supervision of several faculty members. Two village houses were rented, and were used as research office as well as dormitories for fieldworkers.

At the preliminary stage of the project, fieldworkers were mainly concerned with getting acquainted with individual families and collecting basic information through participant observation and informal interview. Seminar discussions were frequently held among faculty supervisors and student fieldworkers so as to exchange ideas and field experiences, to identify significant problems and phenomena, and to plan for the next task.

A complete set of demographic information were collected by the summer of 1966. A family file and a subject file were also built, where information on each family and on each topic were kept in separate folders so that the inflow of new data could be systematically compiled. Subsequently, several significant research areas were identified in the fall of 1966. Fieldworkers were then organized into several research teams, each of which took a special area for investigation. Data were collected through various methods, such as content analysis of historical documents, depth interview of major informants, field observation, and sample surveys with questionnaires.

A number of preliminary research reports were produced by the summer of 1969. Since the village has undergone a rapid growth of population over the past years, a second census-type survey was carried out. The data were analyzed and compared with the survey findings in the summer of 1966. In the spring of 1970, an economic survey was also conducted to find out the production and consumption patterns of all village families.

The present author has been a member of the project since its inception. This paper used part of the data to shed light on the previously raised questions concerning the pattern of population mobility and some of its economic implications.

Population Composition of the village

Since World War II, the growth of population in the village has been phenomenal. It was estimated that there were 95 people in

the year 1946, almost all of whom were clan members. According to our surveys, the numbers were 557 in the year 1966 and 596 in 1969. The population size in 1969 is six times that in 1946. The rapid growth can not be explained merely by natural increase which was estimated at only 2 per cent per year. The primary reason was the influx of immigrants to the village since the Second World War and particularly since the Communist takeover of the Chinese Mainland in 1949.

There were 169 clan members and 388 immigrants in 1966, and 156 clan members and 440 immigrants in 1969. In other words, only 30 per cent of the total population in 1966 and 26 per cent in 1969 were members of the clan. In both years, the clan group was outnumbered by the immigrant group. Moreover, a comparison of the two surveys indicates that over the 3 years, there has been a decrease of 8 per cent of the clan population, but an increase of 13.4 per cent of the immigrant population. It is evident that the population growth in the village was largely due to the inflow of outsiders.

The 1969 survey reveals that there were then 95 immigrant families and 27 clan families. The average size of immigrant families was 4.6, while that of clan families was 5.8. There were thus more outsider families than native families, but the average family size of the former group was smaller. The figures about average family size, which are somewhat similar to the findings of many other studies in Chinese villages, dispell the common misconception that the Chinese always have a large family.

Figure 1

POPULATION PYRAMID OF LOK VILLAGE (1969)

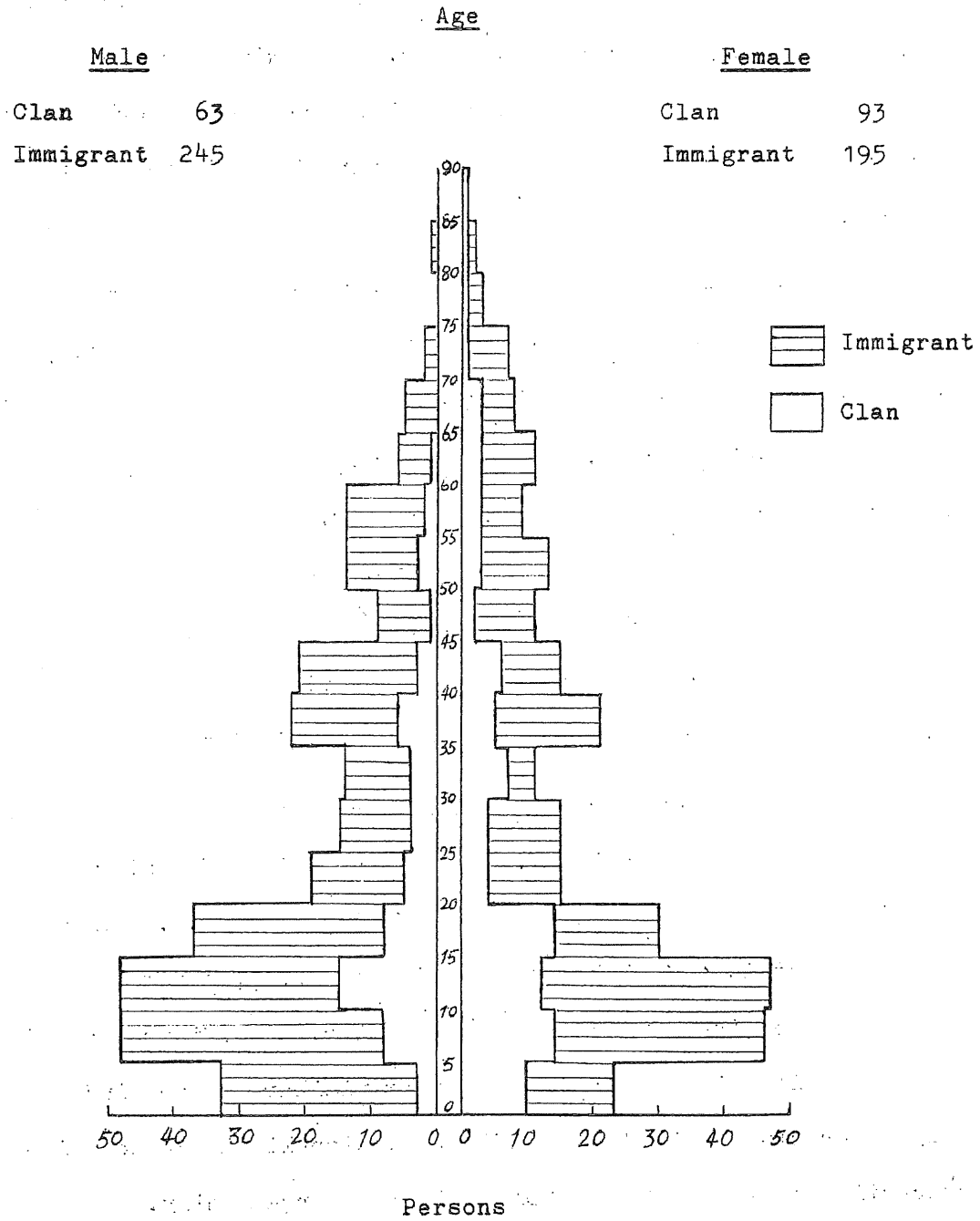


TABLE 1. EDUCATION BY SEX AMONG CLAN MEMBERS AND IMMIGRANTS
(Excluding those under 10 years old with no schooling)

Education	Clan			Immigrant		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
No schooling	1.9	25.0	16.2	3.9	27.8	15.0
Primary school or equivalent	61.5	48.8	53.7	74.5	60.5	68.0
Secondary school or more	36.6	26.2	30.1	21.6	11.7	17.0
Total (N)	(52)	(84)	(136)	(208)	(180)	(388)

The sex-age characteristics of the clan and immigrant groups were presented in Figure 1. The pyramid was essentially shaped by the immigrants. In almost all sex-age categories, there were more immigrants than clan members. The sex-ratio of the immigrant group was 126, while that of the clan group was 68. There were thus more men than women in the immigrant group, but less men than women in the clan. The median age of immigrants was 18.9, while that of clan members was 18.6. Both population groups were relatively young; it was mainly due to the large number of children in both groups.

From Table 1, both clan members and immigrants, excluding those who were under the age of 10 with no schooling, were most likely to be with primary school education or equivalent (e.g.,

private tutoring). In general, the level of education was lower among immigrants than clan members. In both groups, women received less education than men.

Immigration: When, Where, Why

Lok has, in effect, ceased to be a single clan village. Population-wise, the clan group is rather small and is increasingly outnumbered by people from other places. Then, when did these outsiders move in to the village? Where were they from? Why did they move into the village? And what do they do now?

According to our 1969 survey, about 62 per cent of the immigrant families came during the decade 1959-69, 29 per cent during 1949-58, and 9 per cent came between the Second World War and the Communist takeover of the Chinese Mainland. The influx of outsiders to the village was hence a relatively recent phenomenon. It started during World War II and became more massive since the civil war in the late 1940's.

In the 1969 survey, the head of each immigrant family was asked to tell the single most important reason for moving into the village. It was found that 31 per cent reported "low cost of living in the village"; 26 per cent "work accessibility" (e.g., availability of jobs or business sites, and proximity to the place of work); 23 per cent "inducement of friends or relatives residing in the village"; and the remaining 20 per cent were in favor of the environmental setting in the village, such as "friendly and personal relationships

in a rural area," "fresh air and quiet atmosphere," and "availability of open space for children to play." Apparently, economic considerations were the dominant motives for immigration.

In recent years it has become rather expensive to live in city areas. The cost of living in a village community is usually lower, and thus pulls some people into the village. An average urban family, for example, normally shares a flat with several other families, and yet has to pay a sizable portion (around 20%) of its total income for the rent. Since a family can rent more space with much less money (about 10% of the total income) in the village, a number of people have thus chosen to settle in rural communities specially those, like the Village of Lok, which are accessible to a market town and urban centers through public transportation routes.

Work accessibility was another important economic consideration. It was found, for instance, that some of the immigrants moved into the village because they were (1) workers in retail shops, schools, or factories nearby the village, (2) business men in need of more space to store or sun-dry their goods, or of cheaper labor for industrial production, and (3) farmers who wanted to continue agricultural production in the village.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that immigration can not be explained by economic motives alone. As indicated, a substantial proportion of the immigrants reported reasons which were not economic. These immigrants, altogether about 43 per cent, mainly considered

the interpersonal relationships and the quality of the living environment in the community.

People arrived in the village at different periods of time, however, may not have the same reason. From Table 2, we found a significant change of primary reasons over the past few decades. Immigrants before 1949 were primarily induced by friends or relatives residing in the village. During the period 1949-58, inducement of friends or relatives became the next important reason, while the low-cost of living appeared as most important. From 1959 to 1969, work accessibility emerged as the prime reason, whereas the inducement of friends or relatives fell into the bottom of the list. Note also that environmental considerations have become more important in recent years.

As regards to the place of origin, most of the immigrant families moved directly from urban areas of Hong Kong and other parts (mostly nearby districts) of the New Territories. Only one-fifth of them moved directly from the Chinese Mainland to the village. Table 3 shows that among those who immigrated before 1949 were mostly from other parts of the rural New Territories. Since 1949, however, the proportion of immigrant families from urban areas of Hong Kong had increased rapidly.

The data in Table 4 reconfirm the importance of economic motivation in making people to move into the village site. It was the prime reason for immigrants from different places, especially those from urban areas of Hong Kong and from the Chinese Mainland.

TABLE 2. PRIMARY REASON FOR IN-MOVE AMONG IMMIGRANT FAMILIES BY PERIOD OF TIME

Reasons	Period			Total
	Before 1949	1949-58	1959-69	
	%	%	%	%
Low-cost of living	25.0	53.8	21.4	31.1
Work accessibility	25.0	7.7	33.9	25.6
Inducement of friends or relatives	50.0	30.8	16.1	23.3
Others	0.0	7.7	28.6	20.0
Total (N)	(8)	(26)	(56)	(90)

TABLE 3. PLACE OF ORIGIN AMONG IMMIGRANT FAMILIES BY PERIOD OF TIME

Place of Origin	Period			Total
	Before 1949	1949-58	1959-69	
	%	%	%	%
Urban Hong Kong	25.0	46.2	41.0	41.1
Other parts of New Territories	50.0	30.7	42.9	40.0
Mainland China	25.0	23.1	16.1	18.9
Total (N)	(8)	(26)	(56)	(90)

TABLE 4. PRIMARY REASON FOR IN-MOVE AMONG IMMIGRANT FAMILIES BY PLACE OF ORIGIN

Reason	Place of Origin			Total
	Urban Hong Kong	Other parts of New Territories	Mainland	
	%	%	%	%
Low cost of living	32.5	27.8	35.3	31.1
Work accessibility	29.7	13.8	41.1	25.6
Inducement of friends or relatives	24.3	27.8	11.8	23.3
Environmental quality	13.5	30.6	11.8	20.0
Total (N)	(37)	(36)	(17)	(90)

On the basis of the above information, let us make an attempt to reconstruct the story of immigration to the Village of Lok. As a single clan entity, the village was exclusive of outsiders for many centuries. Soon after the World War II, however, outsiders began to move in to the village. The immigrants were then mostly from other parts of the rural New Territories. They were able to break the traditional rule of exclusiveness, probably because of their particularistic relationships with some members of the community. As reported by these immigrants, their primary reason of in-move was the inducement of friends or relatives residing in the village.

Since the Communist takeover of the Mainland in 1949, the influx of immigrants to the village had increased at an accelerated rate. A number of them came directly from urban areas of Hong Kong. Economic considerations became the prime motivation for immigration. It was probably due to changes in the Hong Kong society as a whole. As suggested previously, since the year 1949 the growth of population and of industrial-urbanism in Hong Kong have been remarkable. Consequently the living cost and the land value in city areas have been rapidly rising. As houses were available for residence at a lower rate and as cheaper land and labor were available for industrial production or commercial pursuits, it has become more profitable to move and stay in the village rather than the city. The question comes: Why were these outsiders accepted by the natives? As I shall explain later in this paper, it was probably due to the fact that these newcomers had brought a significant amount of economic benefit to the clan.

It was noted that in recent years the quality of the living environment in the village has become more influential in attracting immigrants. As city areas become more crowded, more impersonal, and more polluted in the years to come, we would expect that more people will come and settle in the village. It is in a rural community that people can still find the warm and personal feelings in the good old days, enjoy more open space, and inhale "fresh" air.

Outmigration

The rapid population growth in the village was largely due to the influx of outsiders. Concomitant to immigration, however, was the emigration of some village members to other places. The growth of industrial-urbanism, plus the village's accessibility to the outside world, has led to an increasing rate of outmigration in recent years.

According to our observation, there were very few cases where the entire families moved away from the village. Most often, some members of a family emigrated while others remained. Therefore, we shall here focus on those emigrants whose families still have some members residing in the village. The 1969 census survey indicates that there were 72 such emigrants, of whom 33 were males and 39 were females. They belonged to 34 families in the village. More specifically, 23 emigrants belonged to 9 clan families, while 49 emigrants belonged to 25 outsider families. As there were a total number of 156 clan members and 440 immigrants residing in the community in 1969, the ratio of emigrants to residents in the clan group was about 16 to 100, whereas the ratio in the immigrant group was 11 to 100. The ratios suggest that natives were more likely than outsiders to emigrate. It was, however, found that nearly one out of four outsider families had one or more members moving away. These once mobile people did not very easily settle down.

Villagers were most likely to emigrate as young adults. Almost one-half of the emigrants left the village between the ages 15 and 29, while about one-fourth moved between the ages 30 and 54. In other words, three out of four emigrants left between the ages of 15 and 54. This pattern existed among both males and females, and among both the clan and the outsider groups. The data lends support to the proposition that villagers tend to emigrate during their most productive ages.

As reported, outsiders began to arrive in the village after World War II. With the exception of one person who outmigrated in 1932, all emigrants left the village after the Second World War. More specifically, 2 persons emigrated between World War II and the year 1948, 8 between 1949 and 1958, and 61 between 1959 and 1969. Apparently, the number of emigrants had increased rapidly over the last few decades.

Why did they leave the village? Let us first examine their educational background before emigration. Should we exclude those who were under 10 years old with no schooling at the time of outmigration, then 9.1 per cent of the remaining emigrants (a total of 55) were without schooling, 58.2 per cent with primary school education or equivalent, and 32.7 per cent with secondary school education or above. As indicated previously, the corresponding figures among the current residents in the village were 15.3 per cent, 64.3 per cent, and 20.4 per cent. Emigrants generally had a higher level of education than current residents in the village,

suggesting that education may be a major factor fostering out-migration. Here comes a dilemma in the area of education and manpower development. The introduction of modern education, that is needed for the development of manpower in a rural community, may encourage the young generation to desert the village.

What were the reasons for outmigration? According to our respondents in the 1969 survey, "better job opportunity" was the most important reason (54%) for male emigrants, followed by "inducement of friends or relatives" (26%). For the female emigrants, "marriage" was the prime reason (33%), followed by "better job opportunity" (22%). Economic motivation was thus a major cause of outmigration.

What did they do immediately after emigration? We found that except for one woman, none of the emigrants were engaged in farming. Of the male emigrants, most (74.4%) were engaged in industrial or commercial activities, while the rest (25.6%) went to school. Most of the female emigrants were housewives (46.1%), followed by industrial or commercial workers (28.2%), students (23.1%), and farmers (2.6%).

In recent years, a number of villagers in the New Territories have emigrated to foreign countries for the purpose of seeking better economic opportunities. In the case of Lok, we found that 33.2 per cent of the male emigrants and 24.2 per cent of the female emigrants have moved to other countries including England, Netherlands, The United States, and Canada. Most of them

emigrated in the early 1960's. All these emigrants, except for three in England, were members of the clan.

Moreover, about 33.4 per cent of the male emigrants and 35.2 per cent of the female emigrants left for urban areas of Hong Kong, while 33.4 per cent of the men and 40.5 per cent of the women went to other parts of the New Territories. Within Hong Kong, therefore, the rural to rural migration was as frequent as the rural to urban migration. Should we also include the emigrants to foreign countries, the proportion of emigrants to urban places (66.6% of males and 59.5% of females) then exceeded the proportion to other rural regions (33.4% of males and 40.5% of females).

We have thus seen that people in the village were no longer tied to the soil. The number of emigrants has increased in recent decades. The rate of outmigration was relatively higher in the clan group than the outsider group. Emigrants were equipped with better education than those who remained to reside in the village. Most of them left for urban areas of Hong Kong or other countries during their productive ages, in order to pursue better economic opportunities. Subsequently, they were mostly engaged in non-farming occupations.

The Commuting of Workers

In addition to immigration and outmigration, there is also a third type of population mobility, i.e., the commuting of village dwellers to work in places outside the community. In a traditional

village, peasants normally lived and worked there as well. There was little differentiation between the place of work and the place of residence. Under the impact of industrial-urbanism, this kind of earthbound practice has been fading away.

We conducted an economic survey of all village families in the spring of 1970. 202 of the 567 village dwellers covered by the survey were found to be economically active. More specifically, 44 per cent of the 298 males and 26.4 per cent of the 269 females were economically active. Among them, only 12 men and 6 women were engaged in farming and fowl raising. About two-third of these farmers were immigrants. The remaining 184 workers were widely scattered in various types of industrial or commercial occupations such as factory worker, small business proprietor, waiter, office clerk, nurse, teacher, construction worker, bus driver, and seaman. Apparently, agricultural production has ceased to be the economic base of the village community. The economy of the village has undergone the process of sectoral reallocation from agricultural production to manufacturing production and services.

As a result of the sectoral change, members of the village do not have to be earthbound in their economic pursuits. They could choose to work outside rather than inside the village confines. It was found that among the 184 persons engaged in non-farming occupations, only one-fourth (mostly women) were employed inside the village as workers in the small factories, as store keepers, or as attendants in the village school. A great majority

(about three-fourth) of the working population was thus engaged in jobs outside the village. For them, the village is a place to live but not a place to work. They have to commute to the outside world to earn their living almost everyday. This overwhelmingly large but highly mobile portion of the population has, in effect, turned the village into a dormitory site. The immobile characteristic of the traditional village was thus radically changed.

The question arises: Why do these people continue to reside in, rather than move away from, the village site? In an effort to answer to this question, we interviewed a sample of 10 clan families and 15 outsider families which had settled in the village for 9 years or more. It was found that the primary reason for both groups was the low cost of living in the village, especially the relatively cheap rents and school fees.

The second reason was about the quality of the living environment, such as fresh air, open space, relatively simple life and quiet atmosphere. Note also that many villagers were quite happy with the recent improvement of public facilities in the village, such as the supply of water and electricity.

The third reason was economic opportunity. The village was considered as a good place to make their living. It was observed that the village factories have provided domestic handicraft work for housewives, children, and the aged, and thus become an important source of supplementary income for many families in the village.

In short, many villagers did not emigrate because they perceived that the cost of living in the village was low, that the quality of the living environment was satisfactory, and that economic opportunities were available. Under these considerations, they remained to reside in the village site, even though many of them had to work in other places.

Economic Implication

The change from population immobility to mobility under the impact of industrial-urbanism may produce multiple effects on the social, political, and economic life of the village. To delimit the scope of discussion in this paper, I shall focus on some of the changes in family income and living standard. Our question is: How do the people in the village benefit, at least economically, from the mobility?

Before the arrival of immigrants after the World War II, farmers of the village were mainly engaged in growing rice. Because of the small-scale cultivation and primitive technology, the income of farmers remained low year after year. Those who had to pay land rent were on the subsistence level of living even in a good harvest year. Under the influence of the more sophisticated immigrant group, however, the income of the farmers has been substantially improved in recent years. From some of the newcomers, the native farmers learned some of the new technical know-how such as better seeds, improved irrigation and the use of more fertilizers.

More important, they learned to grow many varieties of seasonal vegetables and flowers to replace rice farming, thus bringing in more economic return from land cultivation. On the average, the economic return has gone up nearly ten times. To give a rather extreme example, one of the farmers in the clan gets his major income from growing peach blossom trees, and has become so wealthy that he recently spent 250 thousand Hong Kong dollars on building a new residence. This kind of upward mobility was utterly impossible in the old days. The livelihood of other farmers have also generally been improved as evidenced by their consuming pattern. Radio, television, refrigerator, electric fan and cooker were commonly found in every farmer's home.

The number of immigrants who came to the village for agricultural production were relatively few. Altogether, there were 12 individuals. A number of outsiders were found to have come to the village because of the availability of industrial site and labor force there. They brought with them a good amount of capital and set up small factories in the village. In recent years, the number of factories has increased to nearly 20, opening up more job opportunities to people in the village. As reported, many clan members as well as immigrants were in fact employed by these small industries either on full-time or part-time basis.

As jobs were available in the non-farming sectors inside or outside the community, clan members became less reluctant to sell their land inherited from ancestors. No less important is that the

pressure of population growth and the demand for commercial and industrial sites have boosted the land value in Hong Kong. Because of its proximity to a market town and its accessibility (through a railway and a public highway) to urban centers, the land value in the village has gone up nearly 20 times in the last two decades, although it is still considerably cheaper than the land value in city areas. Under these circumstances, the clan can hardly resist the temptation of relaxing the traditional rule of exclusiveness by permitting outsiders to live in and to set up business in the community. The native group has made a fortune by selling their land and investing the money in other economic enterprises.

Another source of income of the clan group was the renting of land and houses to the newcomers. The total sum was estimated at some 4,000 dollars per month. It enabled the hitherto soil-tilling farmers to join the ranks of the rent-collecting class and also permitted them to seek additional income from industrial or commercial employment inside or outside the village. As reported, most clan members had, in fact, shifted to non-farming jobs.

Remittance from emigrated relatives to foreign countries or urban centers of Hong Kong was also a significant source of income for some families in the village. 6 clan and 19 immigrant families were found to receive remittance regularly. On the average, each of these 25 families received HK\$179 per month. More specifically, it was \$275 for each clan family and \$148 for each immigrant family. As regards to remittance, the clan group seemed to have benefited more from emigration than the outsider group.

Adding all kinds of income together, we estimated that the average family income of the clan group as a whole was HK\$852 per month, while that of the immigrant group was HK\$695.

Regarding the household expenditures, the major items were food (about 60% of the total income), children's education (13%), and rent (10%). Taking other expenditures into account, each family on the average spent approximately HK\$480 per month. It was about \$518 for each clan family and \$469 for each immigrant family. The monthly balance was thus \$334 for each clan family, and \$226 for each immigrant family. Compared with urban dwellers of similar socioeconomic status, the people in Lok were in a more favorable financial situation. This explains why a number of people moved into, or remained to reside in, the village.

The above statistics lead to the conclusion that the livelihood of the villagers have been substantially improved. They have, however, paid a price: the previous self-sufficient farm economy was already replaced by an economy which is highly dependent on the outside world. As an overwhelming majority of the working population have shifted to manufacturing and services, their employment opportunities have to depend upon the job market in the larger society. Those remaining in farming have changed from the production of primary food to commercial crops which are also highly sensitive to price fluctuation in the urban market.

Some Generalized Remarks

Traditional villages were mostly with a relatively self-sufficient farm economy. The livelihood of peasants was primarily, if not entirely, dependent on the soil in the community. The earthbound psychology thus emerged and persisted for centuries. The village population was practically immobile.

There were at least three ways in which the earthbound compulsion was expressed. First, villagers were extremely reluctant to leave their homeland for places in the outside world. They preferred spending their lives in the place they were born. Second, the place of work and the place of residence were usually the same. People rarely just resided in the village but worked in other places. Third, the native villagers were exclusive of outsiders. Immigration to the village was a rare phenomenon. People saw the same old faces in the village almost everyday.

The rise and growth of industrial-urbanism in the modern era, however, has led to the breakdown of this long-time practice. There are outsiders immigrating to the village, and meanwhile insiders outmigrating to other places especially the urban centers. In addition to immigration and outmigration, there is also the daily commuting of the village's working population. A large segment of the economically active dwellers in the village have to commute to the outside world to acquire their economic ambitions, and have thus turned the village into a dormitory community. The population in the village is no longer static. Its earthbound

tradition was seriously eroded, as the people have become increasingly mobile.

The impact of industrial-urbanism is evidenced by the importance of economic motivation in guiding the various kinds of population movement including immigration, outmigration, and mobility of workers. Besides economic considerations, the expansion of school education, which is basically a product of industrial-urban growth, has also encouraged some of the young adults to leave the village in order to fulfill their occupational aspirations in urban areas. On the other hand, as the industrial-urban development makes the city areas more crowded, more polluted and more impersonal, more urban dwellers will move into the village and meanwhile more rural settlers will be reluctant to move out. In spite of the constant mobility, therefore, the residential population of the village may not decrease but may instead increase. This has been the case in the Village of Lok.

The importance of warfare in the breaking of earthbound compulsion can not be overstated. It dislocates individuals and forces them to move. Immigrants to the Village of Lok, for instance, were found to arrive after the Second World War and the last civil war in the Chinese Mainland. Without the rise and growth of industrial-urbanism, however, these outsiders may not be able to break through the wall of exclusiveness in the village. Even if they were able to find a place to settle, they would most probably become earthbound again. There were a number of wars in

the history of China, but the earthbound tradition in villages of various localities continued to survive until the modern age.

Population mobility under the impact of industrial-urbanism would cause fundamental changes in the economic structure of villages, especially those which are located nearby the major transportation routes. The primary change in agriculture is the shift from self-sufficient farming to commercial farming such as growing vegetables and flowers and raising fowl. Agricultural production becomes sensitively integrated to the outside market. More important is that farming gradually loses its importance and gives way to industrial production and services. In the case of Lok, for instance, an overwhelming majority of the working population has shifted to non-farming occupations inside or outside the village confines.

The change of economic types, resulting from the fading of earthbound compulsion under the impact of industrial-urbanism, may do more good than harm to the well-being, at least money-wise, of the people residing in a rural community. In the Village of Lok, the material conditions of its population and particularly the native group have been substantially improved. They are no longer on the subsistence level of living. To underscore the improvement of livelihood, let me quote a concluding remark made by Fei (1939: 282) on the basis of his village study in the Chinese Mainland about forty years ago:

"The essential problem in Chinese villages, putting it in the simplest terms, is that the income of the villagers has been reduced to such an extent that it is not sufficient even to meet the expenditure in securing the minimum requirements of livelihood. It is the hunger of the people that is the real issue in China."

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