

The Long History of a village as emigrant basement(僑鄉) of Jinmen Island:
a consideration on Qiaobao(僑報) and local newspaper

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Preface

Jinmen Island is located at southern part of Fukkien Province, in front of Xiamen city and ruled by ROC now. Historically, this island was an important base for transportation and migrant. Each village, which was so-called mono-family named village(單姓村), had specific destination to migrate in SEA or other areas. But after 1949, this island came to be a frontier between PRC and ROC. The separation of China under the formation of the Cold War in East Asia, influences Jinmen's history so crucially. The People's Liberation Army of CCP landed and this island came to be a battlefield in 1949. In 1950's especially under the Korean War, PLA also made operations of bombarding and landing toward this island. In 1958, several million cannonballs from surrounding islands belonging to PRC, were showered down all over Jinmen island. On this process, especially in 1950's, its traditional buildings and most of cultural heritage were destroyed, and its traditional function of migration base was also disappeared. All of the residents, including female and children, of Jinmen were mobilized by the National Army of ROC and organized 'self-defense troop' to support the Army. The social structure of the island was also changed dramatically. The population of soldier became almost as same as that of its own residence, about 1 billion more, and some of them lived in the villages. After 1949, the island was under the order of total mobilization in the wartime. The residents couldn't go abroad freely, and it came to be so difficult to receive remittance(僑匯) from their relatives in foreign countries smoothly. Furthermore, the exchange rate both of Taiwan and Jinmen currency were set highly, the amount of remittance which they could get was so less than which they had got after 1949. Taiwan's martial law enforced in 1949, was abolished in 1987. But this abolishment didn't take affect in Jinmen Island. The 'liberation' of Jinmen was realized after 1992, when Taiwan abolished anti-CCP/PRC policy. Now that Jinmen gets free status relatively, and gropes/struggles new ways to survive as the important base for cross-straight transportation and migration on three mini-links, and the special island for tourists and national park of natural environments and cultural heritage. And some traditional networks among villages in Jinmen, some organizations of lineage(almost same as villages) at migrant points in SEA and

relatives all over the world was gradually re-animated. This presentation focused on the village history as base of emigration and discuss about the continuity/discontinuity of this character beyond the drastic change in 1949-1992 when Jinmen was military base toward mainland China.

1. A 'Modern' at Jimen Emigrant Villages



After 19 century, most of male in Jinmen Island got chance to emigrate toward Japan and SEA. For example, Wang Family went to Nagasaki and the family company Taiyihao(泰益號) developed at East Asia. Wang Family built basement at Kobe city and in 20c, they supported Sun Yatsen's revolutionary movement. And they return their own interests back to their village in Jinmen Island, built a large-scale collective residences with several kinds of worthy ornaments.

Most of villages in Jinmen experienced so specific modern. Because villages pushed so many emigrants toward other Asia, and these villages received many remittances from them to build elementary schools and other infrastructures, and did sanitary activities in their villages. These villages also enjoyed overseas 'modern' experiences from them, to build a new-styled high buildings with bungalow style and to make some values and customs, for example about public health, penetrate into daily life in the villages. The community inner village and overseas emigrant community kept communication by the coming and goings of them, and some media, letters and village newspapers which published at mother village and mailed to overseas communities. Except for some coastal island came to be a foreigner's settlements, such kind of modern experience probably was shared at most of coast area of Southern China under loose reign of central and provincial authorities, which promoted nation-building.

2. Japanese Occupation and New problems in Jinmen

In 1937, Japanese navy landed Jinmen Island and built her basement to attack southern China. Japanese navy and army accompanied many Taiwanese as the mediator between Japan and local society. After Japan occupied most of major coastal cities in southern China and the importance of Jinmen as the military basement was decreasing, Japanese company Fukudai company(福大公司) started to exploit materials and salt. Jinmen people were mobilized to construct military airport and other facilities, and

were compelled to plant opium in the island.

Under Japanese control, it seemed that Jinmen people were restricted their comings and goings and remittance, and the 'modernity' based on overseas remittance and their experience was disappeared clearly.

Japan surrendered on 3th Oct. in 1945 at this island. ROC recovered her rule toward Jinmen, and sent a new prefectural governor. Jinmen village community also recovered original relationship with overseas relatives. At that time, except for economic problem, Jinmen villages were faced with some serious problem. Two of the most serious problems were sanitary and security problem. Because pest penetrated into villages, the sanitary office of the prefecture inoculated for one fourth of the population (about 60000)¹. At Zhusan village², which is located at western part of the island, six lives were lost by the pest, though the village promoted to inoculate two third of the population of the village³. Both public health and village's private sector made effort to solve the pest problem, but the situation was not changed in 1947 and the island came to be an epidemic area. The ships which anchored at Jinmen were the target of the medical inspection⁴.

The other serious problem, as same as the pest, was the security problem. At that time, villages were attacked by pirates and sea burglars. Actually, village houses also were militarized privately, but they couldn't defense their property when 20-30 burglars attacked. And the governor's office was also the target of the attack⁵. The police and KMT troops were

¹Li Hanmin(李幹民), The activities of the sanitary facilities in Jinmen prefecture (金門縣衛生院疫年來工作), *Xianying* (顯影), vol.17-4, 31th.,Jan.,1947,pp.4-5.

² Zhusan Village is located at western part of Jinmen Island. This village, which is also mono-surname(Hsue) village pushed emigrants to Manila and Boruneo, and had village newspaper *Xianying* (顯影), a Qiaobao (僑報) published at this Village in 1928-1949. A few years ago, this news paper was found at house of village chief in Zhusan village. This small newspaper is so valuable in Jinmen history, because this island experienced tremendous bombing in 1949, 1953 and 1958, most of village newspapers were burnt out. About this news paper, see Jiang Bowei, 'Apply Overseas Chinese's Newsletters to the Research of their Native Place: A Case Study on Shining Monthly of Ju-shan, Kinmen(Quemoy)(102-s-40s)', Academia Sinica, Taipei, vol.XII-IX,2005.

³ *Xianying* (顯影), vol.18-2, 31th.,May.,1947,p.16.

⁴ The quarantine of Xiamen maritime Customs declared peoples and good from/to Jinmen had to be quarantined, because Jinmen became the epidemic area (廈門海港檢疫所 宣布金門為疫區 來往旅客均須種疫), *Xianying* (顯影), vol.18-3, 30th.,Jun.,1946,pp.12-13.

⁵ The first serious burglar incident after the end of the war, pirates killed people at Shamei zhen, killed the member of the assembly and the cloth store was broken (光復後首次大劫 海匪劫殺沙美鎮 殺議員劫布店圍攻所), *Xianying* (顯影), vol.18-2, 31th.,May.,1947,pp.5-6.

stationed at the island, but they couldn't protect island residences⁶.

Then, did Jinmen people expect the state to interfere with public health and security fields in order to solve such serious problems much more than previous days? The answer was 'No'. The people in the island didn't welcome states authority penetrating into their life. The most serious pressure from the state was 'conscription' of ROC. The conscription was not obligation but selection. The selected men in Jinmen sometimes escape from their duty, or before the selection ceremony most of males left the villages. A village newspaper worried that this island was getting to be a female island⁷. The Jinmen Commercial Chamber at Singapore claimed that the family resister of the prefecture government was so old and wrong that the allocation of conscription was much more than correct number⁸. But the government didn't change its way of conscription.

3. Recovery of Jinmen's specific character --basement of emigration-- after 1945

After the end of the war with Japan, basic transformation, communication and remittance were recovered as previous day⁹. The remittances from relatives supported village's life and Jinmen's modern. The Minxinju(民信局), the small private bank, also re-started its business¹⁰. The prefectural government expected overseas Jinmen people's investment toward the island¹¹.

The remittance from overseas relatives supported family's revive, for

⁶ Some of pirates and burglars were arrested by the police. 'the whole story of 528 burglar incident(五二八劫案破獲經過)', *Xianying* (顯影), vol.18-5, 31th.,Aug.,1947,p.8.

⁷ After the election of conscription, most of the males escaped outside, if we don't find the way to improve this trend, this island comes to be a female island(兵役抽籤後 壯丁多向外逃 此風不設法糾正 金門將成女兒國), *Xianying* (顯影), vol.18-3, 30th.,Jun.,1947,p.9.

⁸ The letter from Jinmen prefectural government to Commercial chamber of Jinmen at Singapore(金門縣政府覆 覆星洲金門會館書) *Xianying* (顯影), vol.19-6, 10th.,May.,1947,pp.5-7.

⁹ Dutch East India finally started remittance(荷屬各地較晚才開僑匯) (*Xianying*(顯影), vol.16-6, 30th.,Sep.,1946,p.4. The other village newspapers were re-printed after 1945. Cultural situation this year in the island(本島一年來文化陳容), *Xianying* (顯影), vol.17-4, 31th.,Jan.,1947,p.10.

¹⁰ *Xianying* (顯影), vol.17-1, 31th.,Oct.,1947,p.19.

¹¹ Jinmen Bank Joint Stock Company success to collect investment to the stocks, the investment has already exceeded the amount which was expected(金門縣銀行股份公司募集極為圓滿 已超過原定資本額). *Xianying* (顯影), vol.18-1, 30th.,Apr.,1947,p.11.

example, to build new three or four storied house, and also supported village's revive, for example, to re-construct ancestor's shrine, its elementary school and public infrastructures, including public health.

The village newspaper re-started publishing. This media called for remittances to overseas relatives and printed the applause to relatives to donate to the village.

And overseas relatives sometimes sent representative to the mother island and proposed island recover-building. Such a proposal was not only private one, but also authorized one. Because the ROC government gave the overseas Chinese the title of *the representative of the national chamber*, their activity was recognized as not private, especially under the way to participate in the chamber held at Nanjing¹².

In 1945-49, the period of civil war between KMT and CCP, Jinmen recovered its relationship with overseas relatives and re-start constructing new villages, though the coming and goings was sustained by constriction, sanitary and security problems.

4. As the battlefield and military frontier after 1949

On midnight of 24th and 25th. Oct. in 1949, the anniversary of the restoration of China's rule toward Taiwan, PLA attached Jinmen Island. It was until 1992 that Jinmen was the military frontier between KMT and CCP. Over 28,000 PLA troops landed this island. But at that time, Jinmen was one of the military frontiers of the coastal area both CCP and KMT.

It is said that after the outbreak of Korean war in 1950, US decided to keep ROC at Taiwan. Under the Korean war, Jinmen was bombed from Xiamen, PLA troops fault to land Datan island which is located at west of Jinmen. Around the end of the Korean war, the situation of Jinmen was getting more stable, the prefectural government recovered its rule instead of the military service.

In 1954, because the independent war was made a truce temporally at Vietnam, CCP focused on Taiwan's liberation¹³. On 3rd. Sep, PLA bombed

¹² The representative Wang flies to Fuzhou to meet with the provincial governer Liu(王代表飛榕 會晤劉主席), *Xianying* (顯影) , vol.17-1, 31th.,Oct.,1946,p.8.

¹³Actually, The people's Daily printed the articles; 'we are sure to liberate Taiwan(一定要解放台灣,23/Jul) , 'the glory and mission of PLA(人民解放軍的光榮任務,24/Jul)' and so on. Zhu De and Zhou Enlai mentioned the liberation of Taiwan, and the demovratic parties announced the 'co-declaration of liberation of Taiwan(為解放台灣的聯合宣言)' on 22th, Aug.,1954.

Jinmen so seriously. This incident prompted to make the United States-Republic of China Mutual Defense Treaty. Then Jinmen became a symbol of the hostility not only between ROC and PRC, but also between East and West at East Asia¹⁴.



On this process that Jinmen came to be a battle field and military basement, its society changed so drastically. More than half of the population was occupied by the soldiers¹⁵. Ordinary life and productive activities were controlled and mobilized by the military service or the government. The lifeline, even flour, salt and oil, was distributed by the nation or the government¹⁶.

And because it was worried so seriously that some PLA soldiers were in hiding in the island, the family registration was managed strictly, and residents in the island could not move freely even in the island. Furthermore, they had to observe mutually. ROC soldiers lived in the villages and the life of residents was mobilized to the wartime¹⁷.

Under such situation, the communication between villages and overseas relatives was limited so much. They only could communicate by post-mail which was censored strictly. Actually, they could go overseas, and overseas relatives could come back to the island institutionally. But, they had to clear so many procedures, and they had to fulfill their plan with conditions, for example, the males coming to the island had to be enlisted for the military service.

The modern-building based on overseas relatives was disappeared, because the flourish remittance was limited to small amount. Actually, the government didn't restrict the remittance, even did prompted to increase it.

¹⁴ The Jinmen Prefectural Office ed., *The history of Jinmen Prefecture*, Jinmen Prefectural Office, 1992, pp.223-224.

¹⁵ On the sensus in 1951, the population of the island was 38680(except for soldiers). The gender balance on the population was male 17813/ female 20867. It was the specific character of emigrant community that the population of female exceeded that of male. But population of soldiers was mostly male. 'The new statistics of this island(本島人口有新統計)', *Zhengqi Zhinghuabao*(正氣中華報), 30th, Aug., 1951. At last, many soldiers married with female in the island.

¹⁶ 'We solve civil food problem. Taiwan province send us 100t rice every month(本島民食問題解決 台省每月配米百噸)', *Zhengqi Zhinghuabao*(正氣中華報), 9th, Apr., 1951. 'To distribute flour, oil and salt. To show the distribution ticket can buy as the resistrate population(配售麵粉油鹽 憑購買証計口配售)', *Zhengqi Zhinghuabao*(正氣中華報), 22nd, May., 1951.'

¹⁷ 'The co-operation between civil and military service to extinguish the Communists(軍民合作 消滅共匪)' *Zhengqi Zhinghuabao*(正氣中華報), 26th, Jan., 1950.'

But the exchange rate in ROC set that Taiwan dollar was too high than the currency of SEA. And the remittance network via Xiamen was destroyed after 1949, and it was so difficult to re-built new root of remittance via HK and Taiwan, though ROC intended to make Taiwan Bank to play a role of sending overseas Chinese remittance to Jinmen and Taiwan. The amount of remittance was decreasing so much to support the life in the island.

The villages couldn't build their infra by themselves, and could not keep their 'rich' life. Their gaudy life was restrained; females cosmetic, permanent hair style, camera, house light and radio were restrained¹⁸. It is interesting that military media strengthen the life in the island was so old fashioned and traditional that soldiers had mission to improve them. It was seems that such a discourse forgot the Jinmen's modern intentionally.

On the other hand, two big problem in 1945-49, the pest and security problem were basically overcome.

Epilogue-- How to estimate the continuity as the emigrant basement

Jinmen villages couldn't maintain their common lives after 1949. The previous transportation was cut off, and coming and goings also was influenced so heavily. The modern as the emigrant basement was apparently toured. This indicated the historical discontinuity.

But it was worthy to take attention that the remittance was sent with small extent, and the communication was maintained by post-mail, though the village newspaper couldn't publish.

And although it was difficult for the people in the island to emigrant, and for overseas relatives to come back, they had way to communicate directly, except for indirect way. KMT and official services collected donation from overseas Chinese and voluntary visitor who organized a group making a visit of condolence to the military frontier, Jinmen island. The voluntary visitor was not the target of conscription even in the island. The relatives of Jinmen people could have enough time to visit their own mother village during stay at the island¹⁹.

¹⁸ 'Female students in every school took attention, permanent hair style and rouge were prohibited(各校女生要注意 禁止燙髮塗口紅),' *Zhengqi Zhinghuabao*(正氣中華報),20th,Mar.,1951. 'Radio machine has to be resistarated to use, Wenshan regiment has already decided(本島照相機收音機 一律登記限制使用 文山部隊已有規定),' *Zhengqi Zhinghuabao*(正氣中華報),22th,Apr.,1951.

¹⁹ The member of chamber of inspection and the leaders of overseas Chinese arrived at Jinmen, inquired flying column soldiers, and the leaders from Jinmen visited relatives and friends personally(抵金監委及僑領等一行 昨慰問游擊戰士 金門籍僑領均分別訪問親

In the island, in 1953, the Overseas Chinese Association was organized to arrange the communication between the island and overseas and support the lives of homecoming overseas Chinese²⁰.

Although the modern-building based on overseas was disappeared after 1949, but the various communication between overseas and the island was continued with small extent.

Now that Jinmen comes to be a new exchange center between Taiwan and Mainland China under the small link. Jinmen people had specific identity which is different from that of Taiwanese. And Jinmen peoples and government re-built their own history as the basement of emigrant, for example editing family genealogy and prefecture history. It is natural that many Jinmen relatives in overseas invest and donate so much.

友), ' *Zhengqi Zhinghuabao*(正氣中華報),24th, Nov.,1953.

²⁰ On the statistics, double-digit overseas came back to the island every year after 1955. See the table; the number of homecoming overseas every year(歷年華僑返金人數統計表), The document committee of Jinmen prefectural office ed., The hisoty of Jinmen prefecture, Jinmen prefectural office, 1968, pp.197-198. Before 1990's, some Jinmen people came back to Minnan area instead of Jinmen, in order to escape conscription and other obligation. They organized the Chamber of Jinmen in Xiamen.