4. Expressive *wanglai* in life cycle events (II)

This is the second Chapter on expressive *wanglai*, which deals with the time from the focal person's marriage to his or her parent(s)' death. This period mainly involves house construction, family division, care of the elderly and funerals.[1] This chapter will show how a family's *lishang-wanglai* networks are maintained and updated during this period of the life cycle.

4.1. House construction

House construction became a main event for Kaixiangong villagers during the period from 1981 to 2000 (See Figure 6). The main reason villagers built new houses during this particular period was that they were allowed by the state and were also able financially for the first time to build new houses since the rural reform in the early 1980s. I include house construction as one of the life cycle events because Kaixiangong villagers treated it as a kind of family event, rather than a kind of family investment, as the ESRC social support project assumed. I found the complex project of house construction made a showcase of villagers' talents to arrange different resources through expressive *wanglai* in family networks. House construction also relates to family division and elderly care, which affects the family structure and composition in the village.

4.1.1. Expressive *wanglai*

In 1996 house building took two to three months, using 20-30 labourers per day, before raising the roof-beams, with a total cost of about 100,000 *yuan*[2] for building materials, food for labourers, payment to bricklayers, carpenters, and a chef, as well as many associated events. Section 5.3 shows the major events of house construction. "Ceremony for setting a foundation stone (*baidipan*)" offers respect to the land god. "Putting up the second storey (*jialouban*)" was a new way to demonstrate one's standard of living had increased. "Putting up the roof-beams (*shangliang*)" shows that a new house is nearly complete. "Moving into the new house (*shengqian*)" was to tell the ancestors and everybody else that the new house is ready for occupation. "Completed a new house tea party (*kaichaguan*)" is the way in which women show each other their new houses and exchange ideas. The

arrangements of the events in house construction involve almost all the relations on a family's *lishang-wanglai* networks. *Lishang-wanglai* and social support, therefore, can be studied at work within a short timescale by examining the process of house construction.

The first five rows of part 3 of Table 7 show the involvement of expressive *wanglai* in both horizontal and vertical ways. It starts from laying a foundation stone through putting up the first floor, putting on the roof-beam, and then through moving into a new house down to a completed house tea party. There are only two bold arrows in the row of the putting up the roof-beam feast. It shows that this is the most important feast because the old generation, both agnatic and non-agnatic kin, attend it together with the other relations. The columns of agnatic kin, neighbours, and fellow villagers are full which means they have been invited for all the events throughout the house construction because they are involved in the process as helpers or household equipment providers. The columns of non agnatic kin, mother's brother or wife's natal family and father's sister or married out daughter show they take part in the major events in which important financial and material support is provided by them (see 5.3).

Friends only appeared on one occasion, that of putting up roof-beams during the house construction period. The obligation of a friend on this occasion is either to give the upper part of a pig leg, a big piece of pork, or equivalent gift money, say 50 *yuan*. In terms of whose friends should be invited to this occasion, according to the local custom the family should invite only one set of friends: either the father's friends if the family's son has not got married, or a newly married son's friends. However, the villagers created a new custom for a family which takes a son-in-law into the family. Tan told me that the reason friends of son-in-laws were invited on this occasion might be because they are male and can accompany the male helpers, neighbours and fellow villagers during the meal time. This new custom was confirmed by two other informants when they told me the difference between married out daughters and sons. As I mentioned in section 3.2, a new wife and her friends normally ended their relationship at the visit to her natal family one month after she got married, whereas for a family taking a son-in-law into it the

son-in-law is supposed to end the relationship with his friends after the putting on the roof-beam feast for his house.

The row of completed house tea party shows that only wives of agnatic kin, neighbours, and fellow villagers are invited for this tea party. This is a new event which first appeared in the village in the middle of the 1980s. In my sampled households 96 per cent said they had such tea parties, the exception being one family which still lived in an old house. Although I did not discover which family started it, this small event adds the finishing touch to the different kinds of events in which women have special importance in the arrangement of the rituals. The women were in charge of the rituals and show a new generation how to deal with all kinds of relationships, such as relationships with the land god, the ancestors, and people (kin, neighbours, friends etc.). It was the women who invited different people to attend the various rituals on behalf of their families. Women knew how to perform the rituals. They asked men to help them to put all the gifts from the non-agnatic kin in the middle of the foundations or in the hall of a new building, and to take the gifts away after the rituals. They burned incense and paper money, lit candles and put offerings on tables for the land god or the ancestors, and at the same time they asked an appropriate man to let off firecrackers. Women also knew how to offer different food for labourers at the break. The wet rice ball (*tuyuan*) was for the "ceremony for setting a foundation stone (*baidipan*)"; the egg cake (*dangao*) was for "putting up the second storey (*jialouban*)"; the pyramid-shaped dumpling made of glutinous rice wrapped in bamboo leaves (*zongzi*) was for the "putting up the roof-beams (*shangliang*)"; the dumpling ball made of glutinous rice flour (*tuanzi*) was for the "moving into the new house (*shengqian*)", etc. Although the above food as gifts is carried by men with *longti*, a handcart or a small boat, women always determine and arrange the gifts for them. The organisation of gifts, both practically and socially, is a complicated matter, in which women need to take great care to avoid giving offence. I have shown a case of changing a relationship from expressive *wanglai* to negative *wanglai* between a given family and in-law's family due to lack of consideration of the correct gifts (see Chang, 1999:167-68).

For a given family in house construction vertical expressive *wanglai* is also involved. This is *wanglai* between different generations of family members (See

section of “elderly care” later), between villagers and village cadres, collective and local officials of township, between villagers and ancestors and gods, etc. The column for the collective in Table 7 shows it has been involved in house construction from laying the foundation stone to moving to a new house. The way in which the village collective affected house construction materially was by letting its warehouses to villagers, free of charge. Every housebuilding family had to borrow a group’s warehouse for the family to live in from the beginning to the end of house construction. In terms of financial support the village collective used to be one source as a kind of welfare in the pre-1980s for houses seriously damaged by natural disasters. This should still be a case in the post-1980s, although no such case has happened in the past two decades, according to the head of the Village Committee. The village collective’s involvements in house construction can also be seen from mediating neighbourhood disputes on the site of houses and going through administrative formalities for the villagers (see 4.2.2: “Top down vertical instrumental *wanglai*”).

The column for ancestors in Table 7 also shows that the ancestors are invited once for the moving to new house feast, whereas the column of local gods or spirits shows they are involved in house construction twice. The rituals of worshipping ancestors and gods are more or less the same as for other family events. The meanings are different. The villagers invited their ancestors (*qing shangzu*) for a celebration when the family moved into a new house. At the same time this settles them in the new house, where it is hoped they will protect the family living peacefully after the move. As I mentioned in section 3.2 the villagers distinguish between established gods and visiting gods. The two worships of gods during the house construction period were to establish gods in the new house. The first was for the land god (*tudi gonggong*) and to ask other spirits including ghosts their forgiveness for touching the land (*dong tu*). The second was for both land god and kitchen god to settle them into the new house and ask a blessing and protection from them. Having a ritual for ancestors and gods during house construction indicates that the villagers regard them as an important part of their relations and resources (See more from “religious sense” of *lishang*).

4.1.2. *Lishang* criteria

The reasons for the above house construction events and motivation for the arrangements of resources from family *lishang-wanglai* networks can be seen more clearly through different criteria of *lishang.*

(1) Moral judgement played an important role in sorting out disputes between different relationships. During the house construction period there were always different problems in arranging different relationships, such as quantities or varieties of gifts between a close non-agnatic kin to a given family, boundary disputes with neighbours of the new house or from public spaces, etc. As explained in "instrumental *wanglai*" in the section of 4.2, in 1983 the village collective issued a regulation on villagers' house construction based on the township government's related regulations. I will give more details here to show that moral judgement is sometimes more powerful than a regulation in the village. The regulation said, "all the new houses must be fitted into the "new countryside plan (*xin nongcui guihua tu*)": 7.1m (D) x 3.5m (W) per *jian* for a house site, 2, 3, or 4 *jian*, 3m (D) x 7m (W) for a pigsty or sheepfold site which should be kept 6m away from a house. … one child families are allowed to have 4 *jian* and two child families 6 *jian.* If the second child is 17 years old the family is allowed to have 7 *jian*, but if the second child of any family with two children was born after 1st January 1973 then the family is only allowed to have 4 *jian* due to the One Child Family Policy… Any over-large foundation site would be fined 3 *yuan* per square meter per day, etc."[3] This regulation caused many disputes between villagers and the village collective because the villagers felt "*lizhi qizhuang* (literally, the villagers were bold and assured with *qi* of justice on their side)". These disputes rested on three arguments from the villagers' points of view: (a) it was morally wrong to pay for a foundation site where their families had lived for generations; (b) it was also wrong to make definite measurements for foundation sites of houses, courtyards, and pigsties or sheepfolds because the village is located around a winding river and by the meandering Lake of Tai; (c) it was even more wrong to make different standards for foundation sites based on the numbers of children and their dates of birth. So the villagers ignored the above regulations because they thought they were in the right (*youli*). The village collective did not impose a fine on anybody because it

was unable to advance any further argument. As an informant said "the law is not able to punish the masses (*fa bu ze zhong*)". The hidden meaning is that if a law or regulation was wrong it is weaker than the power of morality and will be changed eventually.

The villagers were proved right within two years. The village collective issued a new regulation in 1985. It said "building site: a house covers a ground space of $20m^2$ per person, an extra $20m^2$ preferential treatment for a one child family, $20m^2$ for indoor production, $20m^2$ for a pigsty or sheepfold site, a fine for exceeding space 130 *yuan* per square meter; courtyard site: $40m^2$ per person, a fine for exceeding space 106 *yuan* per square meter".[4] JM Wang, the head of the Village Committee, told me that it was easy to implement the new regulation because the villagers thought the new regulation was reasonable (*heli*), although some villagers still complained that they did not see the reason why a one child family should live in a bigger house. This case shows villagers' judgement for the above regulation based on *li* (right or wrong, reasonable or not) rather than law or policy because they believed a rational argument covered by a moral cloth would be a stronger case.

For villagers, the process of creating a new custom or discarding outdated customs in house construction is regarded as an honourable endeavour, and as a way to accumulate merit (*jide*). In 1982 when the first two-storey building, the Xu family's, appeared in the village the events in house construction were not fully developed. There was no such event of putting up the first floor, nor the custom of one helper from each family for house building, nor the "completed house tea party", etc. However, these customs appeared gradually. Tan, the father in the case of taking a son-in-law into family (see 5.6), told me proudly that he was the person who proposed a way to use labour support in 1984, namely, one of each family within the same group to help each other in turn. It was almost immediately accepted and spread quickly in the village, although the situation changed again a few years later. In 1996 when I was there I heard that a family hired a construction contract team (*jianzhu baogong dui*)[5] for house construction. I asked Tan what he thought about a way, which was different from his proposed mutual help in house construction. Tan admitted that to be able to discard an outdated custom which

originally came from his idea also accumulates merit (*jide*). I then quoted an ancient moral statement that "*shi shiwu zhe wei junjie* (a wise man submits to circumstances)". We all laughed. Then Tan pointed out that the family who hired a construction team for house building was a rich family and rebuilt its house. Under this circumstance fellow villagers should not be involved in labour support according to the villagers' moral judgement "*bang qiong bu bang fu* (help poor rather than rich)". It is true there were some other richer families that started to rebuild their new house when I was there, as did the Zhou family, which caused a big problem in a relationship with its in-law's family (See Chang, 1999:167-68). Handling the changing situation is not a pure skill in the art of personal relationships: in the adaptation of these customs of house construction moral considerations play a considerable part.

(2) In house construction human feelings can be seen in many different ways. An informant told me that he always helped people to set off firecrackers because this was one way villagers express their happy feelings. All the feasts in the events were also their way of enjoying their successes in different stages of house construction. The purpose of the completed house tea party is, in particular, for women to share the happiness with others by showing the new house to their neighbours and fellow villagers. However, there were also negative feelings during the house construction period, such as discomfort, embarrassment and anger, which could lead to the break up of a relationship. For example, the newly adapted custom between in-laws families of a whole pig, half pig, and a quarter of a pig respectively for first, second and third time building of a new house appears to be a rational calculation or a moral code: the richer the less help can be gained. It was actually based on a sense of helping the weak and small, and relates to human feelings. It can be expressed in a Chinese phrase "*tongqing ruozhe* (sympathy with weak and small)" which the villagers often used.

For labour support there was a similar problem. I found a few women who helped with a family's house building. I asked for the reason for their appearance. They said their husbands had already helped the family at the first time of building the house. When it was time to rebuild the house they felt uncomfortable providing such help again. They also felt embarrassed (*buhao yisi*) to refuse the family which

requested labour support. The compromise was to send a woman for such help. The households which rebuilt their houses also felt uneasy about asking their neighbours for such labour support again. Along with the introduction of the free market system the problem of labour support in house building has solved itself. JM Wang, the head of the Village Committee, told me that some families who had already rebuilt a house simply hired a construction team to rebuild a new house instead of asking for fellow villagers' help. This new way spread in the village from 1998 along with the privatisation of the collective system. However, Wang said, it didn't mean the previous custom of labour support in housing was out of date. It was commonly agreed that if any family built its house for the first time it could still get labour support from its agnatic kin, neighbours, and fellow villagers in return. The villagers have the saying "*renqing haishi yao jiang de* (always have consideration for villagers' human feelings and customary practice however the situation changes").

(3) Rational calculation can be seen in many ways in arranging resources for house construction. To build a new house cost on average 100,000 *yuan* in the village in 1995. As many other major family events, in house construction on average the villagers arranged more than 65 per cent of the financial resources from themselves and the rest through social support from their *lishang-wanglai* networks. There were two ways to arrange financial sources in house construction. One was a vertical way of using resources built up over many years. Almost all the households interviewed by me purchased building materials over a period of years, and they also reuse materials from the old house to avoid lump sum payments. The other was a horizontal way through social support. There were divisions among different relations for different resources in their family based *lishang-wanglai* networks. This was also true in house construction. The villagers normally arrange financial support from non-agnatic kin and friends, unless in an emergency when they would go to the collective or other sources. Labour and materials support mainly come from agnatic kin, neighbours, and fellow villagers.

Just as there was a division among a given family's relations for financial support in weddings and other events, so there was also such a division in house construction. For example, Table 10 shows that YM Zhou received 10,360 *yuan*

financial support from the family's relations. This can be seen as a big pig, which came from 32 families. Amongst them agnatic kin only gave 180 *yuan* for the putting up roof-beam feast since they were also labour providers. Gifts and gift money worth 720 *yuan* came from friends of a male head of the family. The gifts and gift money were partly used, e.g. a bar of pork was cooked for the feast. There were 14 families of non-agnatic kin. According to local custom Mrs Zhou's natal family should play an important role in events throughout the period of house construction. However, her natal family lived in Wanping Township with different customs. The family had to find a proper arrangement mainly based on a rational calculation. They invited two families for the foundation stone laying event. They were Mrs Zhou's quasi-daughter's family and Mr Zhou's mother's quasi-son's family. They brought gifts worth 120 *yuan* from each family with the same varieties. They were 100 small square-shaped rice cakes, one upper part of pig leg, 2 *jin* sweets, and 6 big fire crackers. Three families were invited for the putting up 1st floor event. They were Mr Zhou's mother's other quasi-son and Mr Zhou's father's married out brother's two sons' families. They brought gift and gift money totalling 300 to 320 *yuan* each (see "laying 1st floor" for details). Some of the above families were invited again for the putting up roof-beam event in which considerable amounts of gifts and gift money would be given again. As an adaptation of the usual custom, Mr Zhou's natal family's resources were only mobilised once, because they were difficult to organise for all the events due to her brothers being busy with their work as officials, technicians, drivers and businessmen. They brought 600 to 800 *yuan* of gift money each for the putting up the roof-beam feast.

Necessary material support is always provided by agnatic kin, neighbours, and fellow villagers. There are ways of obtaining and outfitting housing through social support, which do not require money. For example, borrowing a hall for carpentry from agnatic kin or neighbours; borrowing a storehouse with a stove from their group head to use as temporary living space; borrowing tables, benches, dishes, bowls and chopsticks from their agnatic kin.

Labour support is mostly provided by agnatic kin, neighbours and fellow villagers. In 1996 building a new house needed twenty to thirty people per day on average

for the building work. Normally a household needs to hire the craftsmen, such as bricklayers, carpenters, a chef, and also pays for consultation with professionals. However, it is not necessary to pay for most of the general labour needed. For example, unloading sand, crushing stones, bricks, reinforcing bars, woods, cement, etc. building materials from boats, digging foundations, putting up scaffolding, mixing crushed stones, sand, and cement mixture, delivering bricks to bricklayers, etc, may all be done casually through non-paid labour support. Otherwise the cost of hire of these helpers can be 5,000 to 8,000 *yuan*. The arrangement of labour support thus saves the above cost: a household can get two labourers from each agnatic family and one from every household in the same group, according to local custom.

The above support given from one family to another is like growing and fattening a pig. What is given or obtained gradually over a period of time can be recovered or repaid all at once when required. However, the appearance of contract construction teams seems to have changed this custom of labour support. According to rational calculation the contract construction team was the most effective way of using labour for building a house towards the end of the last century. Wang, the head of the Village Committee, gave me some calculations in 2000 through a telephone conversation. The construction team normally includes 3 to 5 carpenters, 8 to 10 bricklayers and one chef for cooking lunch, who are called *da gong*, and 10 to 14 helpers for carrying materials who are called *xiao gong*. *Da gong* cost 35 *yuan* per day and *xiao gong* cost 20 *yuan* per day. The total cost per day is therefore about 600 *yuan*. The building work normally takes 20 to 30 days dependent on the size of the house and the decoration takes a further 3 - 5 months dependent on the house size and standard. In the decoration period only a few specialists, e.g. plasterer, painter, lacquerer, electrician, plumber, etc. would be involved, which requires less organisation. No doubt the house construction team's appearance replaces the function of labour mutual aid between agnatic kin, neighbours, and fellow villagers. Together with the compatible customary practice of reducing support the second and third time a family build a house, which I have shown in "moral judgment", this practice altered the contents and quantity of the gifts flowing among non-agnatic kin families. They mark the ending or significant reduction of

social support in major expenditures in house construction, e.g. financial and labour support along with the ending of house construction.

(4) I will show below how a religious sense was embodied in the above five events during the house construction period. Although the financial and labour support ended along with the majority of families hiring house construction teams, it didn't stop the villagers from having the five events (see 5.3), even during the second or third waves of house construction. A helper, building FN Wang family's house, told me that building a house is a dangerous business. In order to reduce the accidental risk all the heavenly gods and ghosts should be prayed to (*laotian xiaogui dou yao bai*) throughout the process of house construction, because any of them could be the cause of an accident. This kind of religious sense was very common for the villagers. In order to avoid evil (*bixie*) villagers worship the land god before laying the foundation stone, eat a kind of rice ball (*tuyuan*) which is specially designed to keep them safe from ghosts (*yegui*) before starting work on the foundation, wrap red cloth on top of the four boundary stakes and hang up a red flag all the way throughout the construction period, set off big firecrackers, put a millstone in a lower middle of screen wall in order to lay ghosts (*zhengui*) if a house is located by a road, etc. The customs of worshipping the land god and moving the bed into the new house before sunrise also come from the same concern to ward off misfortune.

Another common religious sense of fortune, luckiness, and happiness can be seen in other ways. Although there was no ritual for pulling down the old house, the date of it is important for the villagers. The Huang family got a date for pulling down the old house from a fortune-teller. It was the 16th of the second lunar month. Both date and month were an even number, which symbolizes everlasting peace for the family in the house. In the ritual of throwing things, i.e. *zongzi*, steamed buns, sweets, oranges, cigarettes, etc. to the roof-beam (*paoliang*), a carpenter and a bricklayer were saying "*paoliang mantou pao de gao, daidai zisun jie de lao*" repeatedly while they were throwing things. This means the higher the things were thrown the better for continuing the family line.

Almost all the houses were located south facing based on the Feng shui principle, for they believed such a position would have an influence on the fortune of a family. Almost all the houses had a round solid flowerpot in the top middle of the roof, which also symbolizes everlasting peace for a family. This can be explained with the ritual of "*zuojie*" in which an evergreen was planted in the flowerpot when the roof is completed. In the "move into the new house" event there was a ritual of raising the large intestine of a pig (*tiaodachang*). The large pig intestine should be cooked whole and raised with chopsticks as high as possible after it is cooked. The length of the intestine symbolises the longevity of the house.

4.2. Family division (fenjia)

The meanings of "family division" in rural China are different from time to time. A typical meaning relates to family property flowing from parents to married children (Cohen, 1976) or members of family divided into two stoves within a joint family (Hu 1991). However, recently, some researchers have shown that family division mainly relates to the transfer of power from parents to married children since there was not enough family property to be divided in rural Chinese families during the Socialist society after 1949 (Yan, 1997, 1998 in Chinese). Other divided families continued working as one organization corporately in rural China (e.g. Ma, 1999), etc. My findings, on the one hand, will support Yan and Ma's ideas of power transfer from parents to married children, and continuity and cooperation of divided families as one organization. On the other hand I will show the difference between Kaixiangong and Yan's Xiajia where the triumph gained by conjugal power from their parents (Yan 1997, 2003).

Initially I found that the Kaixiangong Village collective's statistics for the average number of members in a family dropped from 4.15 in 1985 to 3.94 in 1996, which looked similar to Yan's finding in Xiajia which dropped from 5.3 in 1980 to 4.2 in 1991 (1997:194-95; 1998:75). Yan also found the percentage of nuclear families in Xiajia increased from 59 per cent in 1980 to 72 percent in 1991 and claimed the tendency of family structure moved from joint and stem families towards nuclear families (1997:194-95, 1998:75). Is there a move towards the nuclear family in Kaixiangong as well? My sampled households' average number of family members

was 5.31 in 1996, which was substantially higher than the village collective's statistics in the same year. I found three reasons for this. (a) There were two households that counted their future daughters-in-law as members of the family. QM Zhou's family members included him, his wife, son, and their future daughter-in-law. XH Yao's family counted himself, his mother, his son and his future daughter-in-law, but not his wife who died a few years ago. (b) Some families counted parents who lived separately but were financially still dependent on their families as members of the family. The RM Tan family counted his mother as part of the family because the family paid tax and fees and some living expenses for her, although physically she lived with her younger son after her husband passed away. JG Wang counted his mother as a member of his family because he was the only son of his parents and it was his responsibility to provide for her old age, although she lived separately from him because she could not get on with his wife. (c) Some families still included those members of an officially divided older son's family that would have been members before the division. For example, in March 1996 HL Wang told me that his family included 10 members: HL Wang himself, his mother, brother, wife, two sons and their wives and two grandchildren. But one of his sons said this family had already divided into three families in 1994 (I will demonstrate and analyse this case in this section later). This agrees with the village collective's statistics, which counted the two sons' families as two families. The reason the two sons' families registered as two nuclear families as soon as they got married was because their wives could then receive their share of fields and land from the collective.[6] It is clear that just because the Kaixiangong Village collective's figures looked similar to Yan's finding in Xiajia doesn't mean there is necessarily a great increase in nuclear families in Kaixiangong.

I found in Kaixiangong there were 78 per cent stem families, 18 per cent nuclear families and 4 per cent joint families and incomplete families in my sampled households in 1996. Although the joint family was divided into three families which included two nuclear families before I left the village, more than half of the nuclear families had turned into stem families by the end of 2004. From the whole village's perspective, Yao, the agricultural technician, gave me his estimate that that there were 65 per cent of household parents who lived with one of their

children's families, 20 per cent in nuclear families and 15 per cent in other types of families in the village. This means that the majority of married children still lived with their parents. The family structure seems not to have changed since the 1930s when according to Fei this was the result of a kind of obligation of the *yang* from the younger generation to the elderly (1939: 73-74).

In summary, nuclear families in Kaixiangong still play a relatively small part in villagers' everyday life. Looking closely at Xiajia's case I found there might be two reasons that caused the difference between Xiajia and Kaixiangong. They are (a) Xiajia is located in Heilongjiang Province where the farmland is plentiful which allows the married couples to build their own houses and live separately from their parents (Yan, 2003: 253). (b) Families in Xiajia have more children because the villagers' houses occupy much larger plots (Yan 2003: 197, 253).

Due to the above differences from Xiajia village Kaixiangong villagers arranged their family life differently. The main difference affects the ways of family division and elderly care (see 4.3). In "Establishing a marriage relationship (see section 3.2)" I have shown that the marriage system in Kaixiangong Village makes vertical reciprocal relationships between parents and children amongst the majority of families with one child, one son and one daughter, two daughters, or two sons. However, for some families with two or more sons in which the sons either do not want or have no possibility of being taken by a girl as a son-in-law, they have simply kept the traditional family arrangement, namely, both sons taking daughters-in-law into the family which results in family division. According to a 37 year old male villager interviewed by telephone in 2002 there were seven families with two sons involved in a family division between two brothers amongst about 700 families[7]. My fieldwork findings will show family division is a rearrangement of family life in many ways between parents and married sons' or daughters' families - if the daughters are taking sons-in-law into their families. It involves input from both parents and married sons or daughters for dividing family property, contracted land, responsibility of elderly care, childcare, housework, family networks, even debt, etc. The process of family division will show vertical and horizontal reciprocal *lishang-wanglai* among parents and children and their relatives.

4.2.1. Vertical and horizontal wanglai

In Kaixiangong this process of family division involves an expressive *wanglai* between parents and children. Family division, as a rearrangement of family life, mixes passing on family property generously to married children from parents with exchanging elderly care from married children instrumentally. There were written and unwritten items in family division contracts (*fenjia qiyue*) for both parents and married children. Expressive *wanglai* with a given family's networks would be involved in both the family division event and the process of practice of the family division agreement, which can be seen through the written and unwritten items in family division contracts.

The family division row of Table 7 shows how family division uses vertical expressive *wanglai* between parents and married children (see 4.3), the given families (from one joint family to three families) and their ancestors and kitchen gods (see 5.4 and the religious sense of *lishang* later). The same row also shows that no agnatic kin, neighbours, fellow villagers and friends are involved in family division.

The non-agnatic kin are involved in family division horizontally. The joint family had nineteen non-agnatic families including Mr HL Wang's father's sister's son and daughter who took a son-in-law into the family, his father's brother's two sons', his mother's three brothers' five son's, his sister's daughter who took a son-in-law into the family and two sons', Mrs HL Wang's four brothers' including one quasi-brother, the older son's son's quasi-mother's, and both sons in-laws. The first nine families are the old generation of non-agnatic kin. For them the significance of this was that their close relationship with the joint family would be ended after the family division feasts. They would still be invited to weddings or funerals, the major family events, but would not be invited to Chinese New Year feasts every year any more. According to local custom HL Wang would no longer be host of the yearly Chinese New Year feasts of the joint family for the close non-agnatic kin after the disintegration of the joint family in 1996.

The rest of the 10 close non-agnatic kin were inherited by the two sons' families. The two son's families hosted Chinese New Year feasts from 1997 onwards. After the 2002 Chinese New Year feasts the older son told me that his family's non-agnatic kin included eight families. They are his parents-in-law, three *jiujiu*s, his son's quasi-mother, his wife's quasi-daughter, his quasi-son, and his father's sister's older daughter who took a husband into the family. The younger son's wife told me that her family had seven families on their Chinese New Year feasts' list. They are her natal family, three *jiujiu*s' families, her father's sister's older daughter who took a husband into the family, her father's sister's younger son's family who lived with her father's sister, her son's quasi-mother's family.

The above lists for Chinese New Year's feast are slightly different from the two sons' inherited lists. From the inherited lists the older son's family lost three close non-agnatic families, which are quasi-*jiujiu*'s family and his father's sister's two sons' families. At the same time his list gained two more families: those of his wife's quasi-daughter and of his own quasi-son's. The younger son's family in turn lost two families, his quasi-*jiujiu,* one of his father's sister's son's, and gained their son's quasi-mother's family. The way in which the close non-agnatic families stopped a relationship with them was simply by refusing to accept invitations by saying "do not bother with it (*bu yao mafan le*)" for the first Chinese New Year feasts hosted by the two sons' families separately after the family division. This is a common way to stop a relationship between two families without saying "no". The two sons then recognised that the close non-agnatic families did not want to have a close relationship with them any more and they removed them from their families' lists. They did not feet hurt or sorry at the loss because "*laiwang* can not be forced", the older son said. The younger son's wife said "one can always make a new relationship if both sides are happy to be related (*gaoxing laiwang*)".

4.2.2. Implications of *lishang* criteria

Four basic *lishang* criteria of morality, human feelings, rational calculation, and religious sense can be seen in family division as follows.

(1) Everybody agreed that morally it is right for family property and elderly care to be clearly divided in a written contract in order to avoid any future disagreement

between the two sons after the parents gave up the family property and power. It is also morally right to divide their family property fairly between the two sons in the first place. This is why all the *jiujiu*s are formally involved in the event (see 5.2). In contrast to the normally implicit speech of polite manners at this event they make it clear or in the villagers' words "I must tell you bluntly" or "I must tell you bad or ugly words" first (*chouhuo shuo zai xian*)" so should anything go wrong the responsibility is clear.

(2) Human feeling can also be seen from the family division. Normally family divisions always relate to human feelings between parents and married children vertically. The following case shows that family division can provide an opportunity to resolve an old couple's negative feelings by letting them live separately with different sons rather than get divorced. An old woman told me that four years ago her joint family divided into two families instead of three families. According to local custom a joint family with two sons dividing into two families where parents live separately, one with each son's family, is called *fen ren* (divided parents into two persons). In theory the father lived with the older son and the mother lived with the younger son because the latter was more likely to need childcare from his mother. In practice, physically there were different ways to handle the real situation. If the parents love each other or get on well (*ganqing hao* or *hedelai*) they would live together physically but separate in name, this is similar to HL Wang's case. If the parents no longer love each other (*ganqing buhao* or *hebulai*) the family division would be a chance for them to live separately both in name and in practice, as in an old woman's case, because there was no such thing as divorce for her age group in the village. The old woman told me happily: "it was great that the family division divided me from that old man eventually (*fenjia zhenhao zhongyu ba wo he laotouzi fenkai le*)". This case shows the villagers divided 'people' as well as property. The reason the parents lived separately with different children was because they did not get along well with each other or were temperamentally incompatible (*xingge buhe*), rather than any particular custom. Villagers never used the word 'love' to each other. If they said *xingge buhe* it means they did not love each other anymore. If there is a new wife the family relationship is even more complicated. The best solution was to let the no longer

loving parents live separately. This example shows that even for the older generation, feelings of love, or its reverse, can have an important effect on family structures.

(3) Rational calculation was a basic criterion in family division. Although a family division contract (see 5.2) specifies ownership of the family property clearly based on rational calculation of a fair division, the uses of the family house and foundation bases change along with the change in situation, and this involves rational choice. Recently, HL Wang's older son told me that two years ago he and his brother turned the semi-detached bungalow behind their main house into another semi-detached two storey two bedroom building. His family moved into the east part and his brother's family moved into the west part. Both families lived on the first floor and turned one part of the ground floor into a kitchen and living area, and the other part could be used as a workshop for knitting woollen sweaters. Both his parents lived in the old house comfortably. Although the new arrangement of the divided families' living situation was very different from the family division contract, everybody was happy with it due to the fairness of redistribution of the divided joint family's property.

Villagers even tried to involve a rational principle to explain the way of drawing lots (*chouqian*) in family property division. HL Wang told me that some families could not divide their property fairly between two sons. Drawing lots seemed the only way to stop their complaints because if one of them said it was not fair everybody could tell him it was the will of the heavenly god (*laotian de yisi*). However, drawing lots can be cheated. The common way of cheating was to make the two sets of lots with the same contents on each. This makes sure a particular son gets the share of family property which the parents wish, whatever lot he draws. In order to stop such cheating in the drawing of lots one of the *jiujiu*s (mother's brothers)' work is supervising lots (*jian qian*) by making sure the two lots represent different shares of the family property fairly.

Although villagers applied the rational principle in family division in many ways, HL Wang's younger son told me that such division was impossible 100 per cent fairly because the east location, which belongs to his brother, symbolised that his

brother's situation would be always better than his according to local custom. However, he would not argue for the east location because the village custom also made clear that the older son should occupy the east side and the younger son the west side. Although his family is much poorer than his brother's family, he attributed this to his fate which touched upon another criterion of *lishang* which is religious sense. This shows that the rational consideration of fairness is not the only factor that influences property division.

(4) Religious sense is also involved in family division in many ways. HL Wang's younger son gave me another reason to explain why his family did much less well than his older brother's family. He told me that there was a local custom that a family division should be on the 16th of the sixth lunar month of the year because it was in the middle of the year. The meanings of the date are that the even numbers symbolize luckiness in their family life after family division and the middle of the year means that it is even-handed between two brothers. If the date of family division were earlier than this date of the year it would be suspected of being partial to the older son, and vice versa. Wang's family division started on 23rd of the third lunar month 1994. Both date and month were odd numbers and in the first part of the year. Although he did not care much when this happened, recently he reflected that the dates did mean something to him. The way in which the younger son believed in fate can be seen from another angle. He said he would not have to be involved in a family division if he had been taken by a richer girl's family as son-in-law and his life could have been much easier. However, his wife came from a poorer family because her father died when she was young and she had a younger brother. According to local custom she had to be married out from her family, although she worked hard and became a nursery teacher in the village school. The younger son told me that as one of his little friends he always admired her when they were younger and she could easily have married a man from a richer family in the village. However, he believed it was fate that linked them together and they loved each other so much that they got married eventually. The younger son's parents and his mother-in-law also hoped the heavenly god (*laotian*) should help this loving couple. They did not just say it but also they behaved devoutly in the last part of family division ritual which I observed (see "worship of the kitchen

god" in section 5.2). Their wish realised largely, which explained with their new house, by 2004 when I visited the village again.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this section, HL Wang counted his older son's family as members of his joint family even two years after the family was divided from it. He insisted that the older son's family could not be calculated as a separate family before the family division was completed. In other words, it could not be said the family division was finished before the end of the ritual of worshipping the kitchen god, although officially the older son's family divided from the joint family in 1994. For him, before the end of all rituals of family division in May 1996 the joint family should be counted as one family based on the village customary practice. The phenomena can also be seen in a Hebei village as Ma (1999) claimed that it would not be counted as family division without a religious ritual of family division, even if members of the family ate from separate stoves and property was divided (114).

4.3. Elderly care

In 1995 when I conducted my fieldwork in Neiguan Village, Gansu Province, I heard an extreme case of a daughter-in-law who eventually killed her father-in-law "accidentally" after torturing him for two years. A few years later Guo Yuhua gave a talk at an LSE seminar in London on an elderly father who was tormented by his sons in a Hebei village (also see Guo, 2001). Yan Yunxiang (2003) even reported several tragic cases of suicide - an elderly couple (2003: 86) and an old man (2003:162), and other forms of abuse by sons and daughter-in-laws, e.g. an old woman who was forced to climb out a back window in a dark night, as a thief, to get remarried (2003: 169). He argues "[The] traditional mechanism of intergenerational reciprocity has broken down, mainly in response to the introduction of values associated with the market economy" (2003: 163). However, Kaixiangong's case will show that the traditional mechanism of intergenerational reciprocity is still there. I will show this with their everyday life, including changes of house structure, living arrangements between elderly parents and adult children and elders' birthday ceremonies, etc. I will then show how elderly care among Kaixiangong villagers is mainly expressive *wanglai*, although there are some

phenomena that can be seen as instrumental valued expressive *wanglai*, e.g. family division. In the end I will show that although the villagers used social support as a supplement of rural elderly care, it remains the case that intergenerational reciprocity still worked.

4.3.1. Intergenerational reciprocity in case of elderly

Amongst his rich observations and surveys, Yan's (2003) argument that the traditional mechanism of intergenerational reciprocity has broken down which touched upon the change in domestic space (112-24) and living arrangements (163-67). Although Kaixiangong's house structures changed very much in similar ways as Xiajia's the Kaixiangong villagers still kept the same family structure (e.g. stem and joint families made up 65 per cent of households in 2003) and arrangements of intergenerational reciprocity.

The old house structure in Xiajia (Yan 2003: 114-15) was very similar to Kaixiangong's (See 5.3) before the 1980s. The only difference was that the east room had two beds (*kang*) in Xiajia, but two bedrooms were divided in Kaixiangong, where the parents and married son always slept in different rooms. Yan's three house plans from 1985 onwards show the bedrooms increased from two to four and separate living areas increased respectively (2003: 118-21). This is also very similar to Kaixiangong's (see 5.3). The only difference is that the prevalent house style in Xiajia is the bungalow and in Kaixiangong is the two-storey house. The downstairs in Kaixiangong is an eating, living and working place, whereas the bedrooms are upstairs where there is typically an en-suite flat for a middle aged or newly married couple, and the other two or three bedrooms are for the couple's parents and children separately. Both Xiajia's bungalow and Kaixiangong's two-storey house styles are similar to ordinary family houses in UK. To live in such a house was a dream lifestyle for ordinary Chinese people before the 1980s. There was a popular saying that one's dream life is to eat Chinese food, to marry a Japanese wife, to earn an American salary and to live in an English house.[8] Although along with the introduction of the market economy the dream (at least with respect to housing!) is more and more realised, the traditional

mechanism of intergenerational reciprocity of respect for the elderly and love for the children (*zunlao aiyou*) is also continuously operating.

House construction events in Kaixiangong Village provide an opportunity to see the vertical expressive *wanglai* between parents or grandparents and married children (mainly sons). In Xiajia parents gave bridewealth to married children for them to build their own houses, therefore the family property transferred to the conjugal families and increased the proportion of nuclear families (Yan 1996b, 2003). Kaixiangong villagers either used a certain amount of dowry or bridewealth for decorating a bridal chamber (see Table 8) within a family house after the family's new house was built, or a house was built sometime after adult son(s) or daughter got married and shared between the elderly parents and the adult children. In short, in Xiajia the gift of a house from the parents is a new separate house for conjugal families, whereas in Kaixiangong the gift of a house is a bridal chamber in enlarged houses for both parents and married children. But in any case a new house is the most important gift from a parent to the next generation.

This gift contains material property, spiritual values, responsibility and the obligation of a given family. The vertical reciprocal circle works by the older generation giving a house to the younger generation and the acceptance of the gift entailing in particular the promise that the new generation will take responsibility for the care of the old. Yan's bottom up *xiaojing* gifts (1996b) from children to parents only show half of the process of gift giving. From the parents' point of view the *xiaojing* gifts can be seen as a shareholders' dividend from their investment (dowry, bridewealth, a house, etc.) to their children.

The way in which Kaixiangong's family structure is identical with its house structure is similar to some families in urban areas where stem families commonly lived in three or four bedrooms flats. It is also similar to many overseas Chinese families where the elderly always live with their married children and their grandchildren. Although Xiajia's family structure (e.g. 81 per cent nuclear families, Yan, 2003:89) was not identical with its house structure, the way in which the parents' and married children's houses are close to each other is similar to other families in urban areas where many nuclear families and empty nest families lived

in different flats close by. This was called “joint families living as neighbours (*jinlin shi zuhe jiating*)” by Chinese sociologists in the late 1980s. It is also similar to many English families’ arrangements where married children buy houses near to where their parents live or elderly couples sell their London houses and move to be near to their married children.

My point is that the increase in material living standards or living in different houses or having different life styles would not necessarily worsen the elderly care or even break the Chinese traditional mechanism of intergenerational reciprocity. The traditional mechanism of intergenerational reciprocity of respect for the elderly and love for the children (*zunlao aiyou*) can be seen as bottom up elderly care and top down child care. Nowadays more and more Kaixiangong villagers live in flats with their sons’ or daughters’ families to carry out this intergenerational reciprocity. This can be seen from many examples. In 2.1 I mentioned an old woman withdrawn from a labour support term for peeling soya beans because she and her husband moved to Suzhou City to live with their daughter’s family in a flat. I have shown the FY Tan family case in 1.1.1. I will use the family again here. FY had her own house in the village, which now is mainly used as a holiday house for major family events when the sons’ or grandsons’ families are reunited. FY’s elder son XR has his own flat in Miaogang but he and his mother FY lived in a flat with XR’s elder son’s family in Miaogang, because they collected FY’s great granddaughter from school and served her lunch; FY’s elder son’s wife lived in a flat with her younger grandson’s family in Wujiang City to look after her younger grandson’s daughter. The former head of the village Women’s Federation BY Zhou resigned from her post after her grandson was born, when she moved to Shengze Township and lived with her son’s family in a flat there. To live in a flat is a fashionable thing for anyone in the village. Many villagers, including both nuclear and stem families, have agreed happily to give up their houses and foundation land and move into flats above the shops instead when the village’s market place will be double the size in 2005.

So in Kaixiangong the family structure didn’t change much along with the change in house structure, nor was it in 2004 much different from my findings in 1996 (see 4.2). When I put Yan’s broken down figures together I found my finding was also

close to Yan's finding (2003: 164-66) that only 28 per cent of families headed by an adult above 45 year old were involved in nuclear family types of living arrangement[9], whereas 72 per cent of them lived with either parents, married children, or unmarried children.[10] This means in Xiajia the majority of families with elderly or middle-aged couples actually arranged their everyday life in a traditional intergenerational reciprocal way.

Intergenerational reciprocity in elderly care or expressive *wanglai* can also be seen horizontally between elderly parents and married out daughter(s) and her or their families. In the row of "elderly care" in Table 7 there is one event that involved daughter(s) in life cycle events. According to local custom the birthday ceremonies of old people are normally arranged by a married out daughter(s). Traditionally, villagers only celebrate the 66 year old birthday for their parents. Married out daughters should come back to their natal families with their own families for the celebrations. They should bring two *tizi* (upper part of a pig leg) and 4-5 *jin* of noodles for the birthday celebration feast. The symbolic meaning of the *tizi* is to raise their standard of life and the noodles are for their parents to have a long life. The daughters should also bring a new suit of clothes for their parents. After the birthday meal the elderly parents should give the daughter a red envelope with 20 *yuan* for best wishes for her life in her husband's family.

When asked why the elderly only have one birthday ceremony a villager told me that there is a special day that can be seen as an annual celebration for the elderly (see 5.4). It is the Double Ninth festival (*chongyangjie* - on the 9th day of the 9th lunar month). According to local custom, on the Double Ninth Festival members of the family should express their respect in particular to their elderly. On both the above occasions a vertical expressive *wanglai* exists between the adult children and their parents or grandparents. They express their respect with emotional concern and materials (good food and new clothes) to the old people. Yan's (1996b) *xiaojing* gift in Xiajia can also be seen as expressive *wanglai* between adult children and their parents. However, in recent years some villagers in Kaixiangong have also started to celebrate their parents' birthday every five years from the sixtieth birthday onwards. The gifts and feast of the ceremony are more or less as the same as for the 66 year old birthday, but without a new suit of clothes. This

phenomenon shows that along with the introduction of values associated with the market economy the villagers' life style has greatly changed, with the inclusion of a new way of celebrating old people's birthdays which is influenced by urban people.

I shall now use *lishang* criteria to provide more explanation. (1) Whenever I asked villagers how they treated their elderly parents I always got replies quoting the popular slogan that respect for the elderly and love of children is a Chinese traditional virtue (*zunlao-aiyou shi Zhonghua minzu de chuantong meide*). This is a moral judgement by the villagers. Yao told me proudly, on my revisit the village in 2004, that his daughter gave birth early the year and his family became a four generational family (*sishi tongtang*). To be able to hold four generations in one house and live peacefully in harmony is also a virtue and honours their family ancestors. However, in contrast to the Yao family, in many families who reported in 1996 that their sons were not reliable, it seems to me that moral restraint played a less important role. This can be seen from the way they fulfilled *bao'en* (paid the debt of gratitude). The cases of generous *wanglai* reported in section 1.1 shows only about 20 per cent of families were praised as models of *bao'en* to their parents by the villagers. Villagers also used the Chinese character of *xiao* (fulfil filial duty) in a negative way, i.e. to criticise a son who treated his parents badly (*ta dui fumu bu xiaoshun*), as FL Zhou's younger son did (see 1.3). Along with the introduction of values associated with the market economy the decline of moral restraint is true everywhere in China in general. As Yan (2003) has observed, moral standards throughout China appear to be declining with the rise in the market economy. Although my data shows that this may also be true in Kaixiangong I have no evidence that care of the elderly is affected more than any other area in moral sense.

(2) There are many local sayings that relate to human feelings. In contrast to the saying that a married daughter is spilled water (*jia chuqu de nu'er ru po chuqu de shui*), several women told me that a daughter is a mother's padded body vest (literally, a daughter is truly close to a mother compared with a son, *nuer shi mama de tiexin'ao*). I noticed that the villagers used the word "children" (*kao zinu*) rather than "son" to answer my question of who should be relied on for the elderly care.

This means that dependence is also on females. In contrast to showing filial respect to one's elders (*xiaojing*), filial duty or obligation (*xiaodao*) or filial obedience (*xiaoshun*) the villagers are more likely to invoke filial sentiments of heart (*xiaoxin*). For example, they sometimes quoted a Chinese saying "have a heart of parents' limitless benevolence and love of their children (*kelian tianxia fumuxin*)". Here *xin* (heart) of *xiaoxin* is the same character as *xin* of *tongqingxin* (sympathy) which has the same meaning as Liang's (1975) human heart (see section 6.3). The movement from showing filial respect to one's elders (*xiaojing*) to using filial sentiments of heart (*xiaoxin*) internalises the younger generation's behaviour towards the elderly. The former means "I have to do it due to the moral code of filial piety", whereas the latter means "I want to do it and enjoy doing it". Yan (2003) also discussed the strategies of parental investment for old age. He found many cases indicating parents' efforts to improve the emotional bonds with both their sons and their married daughters (163, 178-82). Therefore, Yan and I back up each other that the parents' emotional resources worked reciprocally with their children.

(3) The principle of the older generation giving a shared house as a gift to the younger generation can be seen as a kind of rational calculation. For the older generation, accumulating many years of building materials and building up resources from the broadest family networks can be understood as fattening pigs. For the new generation as soon as they have received the gift of a new house, this big pig, they start another cycle of fattening pigs and look after their parents in their old age, including giving *xiaojing* gift on their birthdays or on Double Ninth Day every year, and giving them a proper burial after they die. The parents can't get any guarantee from their children whether or not they will be well cared for or buried. It is therefore necessary to emphasise this commitment in associated events (see 5.3). JM Wang, the head of the Village Committee, explained that although house construction in the last couple of hundred years has only happened once every century on average in the village, as part of family property the house gift between older and new generations played an important role of reciprocal support along with life cycle events. The older generation's gift of a house to the younger generation is like fattening a pig in reverse in that what is given over a period of

time can be recovered when required, the main difference being that the younger generation receives the biggest gift first and returns it to the older generation in daily care and so on in the future.

(4) Religious sense can also be seen from many events. In house construction the different rituals indicate a religious sense in many ways (see 5.3). The rituals mark this transaction between generations, invoking the land god, the ancestors, and, of more practical importance, all of the assembled people. They demonstrate that house construction in Kaixiangong is not just connected to finance, materials or labours, but it is also a good way of transferring the local customs and family networks to the new generation.

I was given two reasons by the villagers for why the 66 year old birthday is so important. One is its symbolic meaning. The number six itself is a lucky number, the double six as an even number means more lucky which also true in many other areas in China. I also heard another saying “when an old person gets to 66 years old he or she could lose weight heavily (meaning get a serious illness) if he or she doesn’t die (*liushiliu bushi yeyao diao shen rou*)”. This means that in one’s life journey the 66 year old birthday is regarded as a big bridge. If one didn’t pass the bridge the new suit of clothes was used as grave clothes. If one passed it one would have double happiness in later life.

4.3.2. A case study of family division for elderly care

In Kaixiangong Village family division normally happens in families with two or more sons. Family division sometimes also happens in a family with only one son in which the stem family is divided into one empty nest family and one nuclear family after the son gets married. In any case family division pokes “window paper” between parents and married children, which makes the hidden instrumental sense between parents and married children more visible. In other words, it pulls a purdah of benevolence off the traditional Chinese saying that one rears children against old age (*yang er fang lao*), which in fact embodies the instrumental idea between parents and children. Here, I introduced an “instrumentalised expressive *wanglai*” to distinguish expressive *wanglai* and instrumental *wanglai* between parents and married children.

Although the instrumentalised expressive *wanglai* is more likely to happen in families with two or more sons, it doesn't mean that intergenerational reciprocity in elderly care or expressive *wanglai* between elderly parents and sons' families must get worse after family division. As I mentioned in 4.2, according to HL Wang's older son only seven families with two married sons were involved in family division in 2002, which comprises one per cent of the families in the whole village. His family division case is typical. Let's examine again the relationship between parents and sons. As I mentioned in 4.2, the HL Wang's family division contract form is both written and unwritten. The written contracts made clear the ownership and uses of house and additional places, courtyard, and elderly care, etc. Among many details of the contracts the important written items are in two parts: the family property is transferred from parents to married sons and responsibility of the care (in the form of providing a regular pension) to sons for their parents. This can be seen as a vertical instrumentalised expressive *wanglai* between parents and sons. The property transfer is a top down gift from parents to married sons because this is the last investment in their children after the engagement, wedding, building of a house, decoration provided for one son and the same for another son according to the parents' points of view. The old-age care is a bottom up gift from married sons to their parents because elderly care is a kind of complicated giving.

The unwritten items include childcare, elderly care in everyday life as distinct from regular agreed pension payments, the parents' work for the responsibilities towards land which will be already divided between two sons' families, housework including arrangements for family events, family debt, family networks, arrangements of funerals, etc. The unwritten items in the contract also involve a vertical reciprocal *wanglai* between parents and married sons' families. Childcare and elderly care in everyday life is never written into the family division contracts. In the joint family the parents looked after their grandsons before they went to nursery. When I was there the younger son's son was only one year old and was sometimes even looked after by his great grandmother, who died later in 1999. Childcare and elderly care was a typical vertical reciprocal *wanglai* between members of a stem or joint family. However, the time of childcare is limited because after both older son's and younger son's children go to nursery, earlier or

later, such support from the grandparents becomes much smaller, whereas elderly care is a much longer process for the married sons, which is not included in written contracts. However, some of the elderly in Kaixiangong felt very strongly that their life was just like a silkworm with endless work until their death (*chuncan dao si si fang jin*), because they worked all the time. Normally they continue to help their children by looking after grandchildren, doing some housework, raising pigs or rabbits, etc. This means that after family division they have little property left but if they are healthy enough they could exchange resources with their children or look after themselves. This is not purely instrumental *wanglai* because the elderly told me that they enjoyed this kind of family arrangement because it kept their life busy. They actually valued this and felt useful and satisfied with their burden.

The older son of HL Wang told me that it was not so important whether or not some items were written in family division contracts. All of the contractual items can be changed along with the changes of situation. On the one hand, the written contracts have been adapted by the sons in the last few years in many ways. It would be much easier for the two sons simply to provide the elderly care specified in the contracts that the older son should look after the father and the younger son should look after the mother after they pass their 60th birthday by giving each of them 200 *yuan* of cash, 150 *jin* of grain, and 500 *jin* of faggot per year for the elderly care (*yanglao*). However, after the family division they created new ways of vertical *wanglai* between their parents and the sons' families. For example, when their parents were strong enough (up to 70 years old or more) to work on land and field he and his brother lent their shares of responsibility for land and field to their parents for as long as they were able to, and instead they did not have to pay for the above figures of cash or grain to their parents. The parents kept all the income from the land and field for themselves, and this was much greater than the above figures based on the family division contracts.

HL Wang's older son told me that this informal switch of responsibilities was actually done by many other people locally, before and during the period of family division. The reason the above new arrangement was not written into the family division contracts is because the land and field belong the state. My fieldwork notes show the joint family contracted responsibility was a paddy field (*tian*) of 6.3

mu and land (*di*) of 2 *mu*. The paddy field is mainly for rice and the land for mulberry trees. The land and field is divided so that both the older son's and the younger son's families have 2.8 *mu* paddy field and 0.6 *mu* land each, with the remaining land and fields allocated for the other family members. In addition both of the sons can also get their wives' and children's shares of land and field from the village collective.

When the parents got too old or too ill to work on land and field the sons would provide elderly care, which would be much greater than the figures in the written family division contracts. Thus the written contracts cover a limited amount of the necessary elderly care. It seems this worked quite well between parents and married sons' families among the majority of villagers in both stem families and divided joint families in my sampled households. Many researchers noticed such a phenomenon. Ma (1999) claimed one important element of rural Chinese family division is cooperation (*he*) which can be seen in different ways, e.g. economic, cultural, and defence, among parents' family and married children's nuclear families (115-117). From my point of view such cooperation (*he*), or "aggregate family" (Croll's term, 1987b), and "network family" (Zeng Yi, et al 1993, Yan 1998) can be understood as horizontal *wanglai* between them.

I will now use *lishang* criteria for more explanations. (1) Morally some villagers still used *bao'en* (pay a debt of gratitude) towards their parents in general, though in practice married children didn't use the character of *bao'en* when they considered elderly care as a written item in family division contracts. This is because when everybody faced the facts that family division not only divided family property but also family debt there wasn't much space for *en* (great debt of gratitude to parents). When the HL Wang family division started in 1994 the younger son's wedding had not yet been held. The family discussed wedding expenditure and debt with the above relatives during family division feasts. Everybody agreed the debt should be divided into two parts and repaid by the two sons. There was 40,000 *yuan* debt in total, 10,000 *yuan* came from the older son's wedding, and 30,000 *yuan* budgeted for the younger son's wedding. Although the older son's wedding debt was already paid off by the joint family, it was agreed that both sons should take their share of 20,000 *yuan* each to repay the debt. I asked

HL Wang why the items of debt was not written in the family division contracts? He told me that it was not honourable to put such things into the contracts because they could be kept for generations. “How can you guarantee that the two sons would pay back the debt?” He explained to me that most of the debt came from the above relatives, namely, the family networks. During the family division feasts these relatives of the family networks have also been passed onto the two nuclear families and agreed that from 1997 onwards both the older son’s and the younger son’s families would invite the non-agnatic kin for New Year feasts separately. This was how the parents passed their relationships to their younger generation and at the same time guaranteed the debt to be repaid by them. The reason the meals with relatives during family division are so important is because the family rearrangements were announced and approved within broader family networks which would play an important role in supervising fulfilment of the arrangements. This means although generally moral restraint played a less important role, the horizontal *wanglai* between the given family and its family networks had the same effect as moral restraint.

(2) Human feelings in family division can be seen from HL Wang and his wife. Within ten or fifteen years after the family division, HL Wang and his wife expected to find it difficult to work on land and field and have to pay for their yearly tax and fees by themselves. HL Wang told me that his family (he meant joint family) had a good relationship between all the members. His family also had more complicated arrangements which could help his and his wife’s later life. This family chose to divide one joint family into three families (*yi fen wei san*): two nuclear families and one stem family. He and his wife lived with his mother and his unmarried brother, who worked in a private industry, and formed a stem family. It was his and his brother’s duty to pay for their mother’s elderly care and funeral[11]. They could also work hard for their own pension. In 2003 I checked with HL Wang’s two sons how they are going to take care of their parents when they get too old to work on the land and field. They told me that although their parents belonged to a different family from them in name, they actually divided into two persons and belonged to the sons’ families in practice. In other words, although their parents slept in different rooms in the next door houses which belonged to

each son, they worked together during the daytime and ate at the same stove. The old brother said that in the future they would take their shares to pay for their parents' living expenses because the relationship between parents and sons is a very intimate relationship of bone and flesh (*gurou qinqing*). The younger brother agreed happily with this. HL Wang said that his parents treated him and his sisters very well when they were young, so he will treat them very well when they get old. He believed confidently that his sons would treat him and his wife very well in the future because they had treated them very well when they were young, and vice versa.[12] This saying accorded with Chen Jieming's (1998) survey in urban Chinese families. According to Chen there is an interrelationship between parents' investment in their children and elderly care from them later on. When parents transferred the knowledge of how to take care of the elderly (*shanyang laoren*) to their children over many years' training, embodied in different kinds of investment, the idea of voluntarily elderly care would be turned into an obligation within members of family (134-135).

(3) Rational calculation is also involved in family division between the parents and their married children and the children's children. If the middle generation son's family is divided away from the joint family the rest of the family would be a stem family. The interfamily relationship between the younger son's couple and the rest of the family is represented physically by the relationship between the bridal-chamber and the whole family house. According to the local customs a new couple was expected to take over the family's power within three years, which includes arrangements with all the family relations. It says "parents take responsibility for their children up to three years after the new couple married and they should in return look after them in their old age and give them a proper burial after they die (*yeniang hunhou guan sannian, zinu guan tamen hou bansheng*)". None of the villagers knew when this rational custom first appeared in the village. It obviously helped elderly parents adjust their position in the family with their married children, especially where they lived in the same house. A retired township cadre also told me after his retirement his priorities would be changed to take care of his own health rather than gaining materials for the whole family. He believes if he is healthy he would bother his children much less. Although the local custom

requests the new couple to take charge of running the whole family within three years, this was not what everybody wanted or was able to do. A younger mother told me that she didn't think she would be able to take charge of the family within three years because as an only daughter of the family she took a husband into the family. She already had a baby and couldn't work away from home to earn a large amount of money. Besides she didn't think she wanted to move away from her parents' family, to which she was very much attached. For all the above concerns she would rather stay at home and take care of her parents when they got older. So the local custom is a guideline, which can be modified, and provides place for expressive *wanglai* between elderly parents and married children.

(4) Religious sense can be seen from references to fortunate or luck (*fu*), etc. Villagers normally admired some families which took good care of their elderly parents in sickness with the characters of *fuqi* (fortunate, lucky lots). On the contrary, in Neiguan - my other fieldwork village, Gansu Province, I heard an old man say that traditionally there is a saying that the more sons the more fortunate (*duozi duofu*), but nowadays this has become that the more sons the more unfortunate (*duozi duohuo*). In Yan's (2003) Xiajia there were many cases of negative *wanglai* between parents or father and their sons (168-71), which back up this idea. However, from 1993 onwards there was no third birth in Xiajia village (197), which might affect the parent abuse and intergenerational conflicts. In Kaixiangong I found one of the important reasons for care of the elderly being fulfilled related to a religious sense. The two nuclear families can be restrained by agnatic kin since most of them live nearby and can have frequent horizontal *wanglai* with the given families in many kinds of family events, especially in events related to ancestor worship. This can be proved from Ma's (1999:114-117) study. From his fieldwork in a village of Hebei Province Ma found families combined *ji* (continuity), in particular continuation of the family surname, and elderly care (*ji zhong you yang*), as well as ancestor worship. According to local custom the oldest son can have an extra share of family property for the expenses of ancestor worship (115).

4.3.3. Social support as a supplement in elderly care

In Kaixiangong the broadest view of elderly care involves family support and social support. The family based support for elderly care is the traditional elderly care idea that one rears children against old age (*yang er fang lao*). It involves relations between parents and adult children - married or not, son(s) or daughter(s), living together or separately, etc. According to Lu's fieldwork notes in the ESRC social support project in 1991, about 90 per cent of respondents showed that they expected to rely on their children. One childless respondent expected to live in the old people's home (*yanglaoyuan*), and a few young couples said they were going to consider social insurance for the aged. Thus in 1991 the majority of Kaixiangong villagers still carried out the traditional family based elderly care. However, in 1996 my restudy of the ESRC project showed 82 per cent the elderly did not want to rely on their children to look after them in their old age (*yanglao*). Some of the elderly complained that their sons were not reliable (*erzi kao buzhu*) because they always forgot their mothers after they had got wives (*qu le laopo wang le ma*). This is similar to Yan's finding in Xiajia that the most common complaint from elderly parents was the lack of respect and concern or even lack of filial piety (*buxiaoshun*) from their adult children and daughters-in-law (2003:170). It seems along with the introduction of values associated with market economy the parents' and adult children's relationship or intergenerational relationship is getting worse. Yan and other researchers (e.g. Guo 2001) even reported many cases of negative *wanglai* in elderly care in rural China since the 1990s. The question is whether or not "the traditional mechanism of intergenerational reciprocity has broken down" in rural China (Yan 2003:163) due to the elderly complaining about their sons?

As I argued earlier, there are still more than half the villagers carrying on expressive *wanglai* between elderly parents and their children and grandchildren in different ways. I have also touched upon instrumentalised expressive *wanglai* in house construction and family division cases. Yan's extreme cases (1997 and 2003, and 1998 in Chinese), as well as Guo's in Hebei (2001), may be atypical, and apply to one generation in which there was not enough family property to be divided in rural Chinese families during the socialist society (Yan, 1997, 1998 in Chinese). They seem to have some historical basis because, in Yan's own words, the unusual

cases of abuse to parents existed in the families that had always had a history of disputes (2003:170). This backs up my finding that negative *wanglai* in elderly care within family members and close relatives only comprises a small proportion of cases (see 1.3). Here I will argue that an ego based family takes care of its elderly through social support just as it does for weddings or funerals, and this doesn't alter the meaning of intergenerational reciprocity. In other words, social support can be a supplement to family elderly care.

In 1996 when I looked at social support for elderly care this mainly related to those elderly people who were without children and family (five guarantee households, *wubaohu*) [13] and involved sources from fellow villagers and collective, etc. However, I found a case of children who paid for Miaogang *jinglaoyuan* (home of respect for the aged) to care for their mother. Miaogang *jinglaoyuan* is located in the town, like most of the *jinglaoyuan* in rural areas. A head of the *jinglaoyuan*, Cui told me it was built in 1986 to implement a policy. According to the policy it is a virtue that all the elderly should be looked after in our society (*lao you suo yang*). In order to establish the *jinglaoyuan* the town government appropriated fixed assets of 50,000 *yuan* including property and daily necessities, plus 20,000 *yuan* cash. It was the only such elderly home in the whole township and was designed for the five guarantee households living alone with difficulties. The local government mobilized (*dongyuan*) eight old people who came to register (*baodao*) to live in the *jinglaoyuan* from the whole town. By 1996 there were 22 old people, 13 male and night female. The oldest was 93, and the youngest was 62 years old. Four of them came from Kaixiangong. The living expenses increased to 200 *yuan* per month. The *jinglaoyuan* has a common room, one washing machine, and two chefs to cook for them. If they became ill *jinglaoyuan* would pay fees for medical care.

In the *jinglaoyuan* I interviewed an 89 year old woman who was BY Zhou's aunt. The old woman told me that she had three children who moved to Shanghai a few years ago. They rented a room for her because she did not want to live in Shanghai. In 1993 her children sent her to *jinglaoyuan* because she had difficulties living alone. This way was specially made by her children who offered to pay for the *jinglaoyuan* and signed a contract with it. Apart from paying living expenses of 210 *yuan* per month for her, they also took some share of the donation to the

jinglaoyuan. This was the first such case of *jiyang* (financial self-support) in the *Jinglaoyuan*. This case can be seen as indirect elderly care via bottom up expressive *wanglai* from the children. In 1996 there was a total of two such cases in the *jinglaoyuan*. In addition, BY told me that she offered emotional support to her aunt by visiting her from time to time because she was obligated to her aunt who had looked after her for two years when she was young (*yangyu yiwu*). This kind of emotional support is also considered to be *yang* of *yanglao* (a kind of care of the elderly) according to the villagers.

Whether or not the elderly live in the *Jinglaoyuan* is not solely determined by the willingness of the old person's adult children take care of them or not. From 1986 to 1996 there were six old women who transferred back to *wubaohu* and returned to their villages because they argued strongly that, according to the policy, they were able to live alone. The reasons some elderly did not want to come were because they had misgivings about losing freedom and would receive less money than when they stayed outside, etc. At that time they could only receive expenses of less than 100 *yuan* per month in the *jinglaoyuan.* The six old women returned to their own home shows clearly that they didn't want to live away, as is similarly the case for many of the elderly in the UK. However, a retired cadre even made a case for getting into the *Jinglaoyuan* by using the case of the children who paid a fee for caring for their mother. He wanted to live in it but he was disqualified because he was not a *wubaohu*. He also argued that since the pre-1949 *yanglaoyuan* (elderly home) was open to all the elderly (this is similar to a kind of nursing home in UK), why should the *Jinglaoyuan* (home of respect for the aged) in post-1949 society discriminate against the elderly with money? So the retired cadre got into the *jinglaoyuan* by paying 210 *yuan* per month. He lived in a single room, which was of a much better standard than the shared rooms.

In 2000 the *jinglaoyuan* moved to a much bigger place, big enough for 40 old people. The necessary funds came from the civil administration of the Wujiang City, the local government, welfare factories, and self employed donations, etc. In recent years a new policy was issued which allowed the *jinglaoyuan* to take more elderly for *jiyang* from the society. The *jinglaoyuan* has become more popular also

because it receives more regular funds from different sources including individuals' payment.

Children who pay for their parents to live in an old-age home consider this to be vertical expressive *wanglai*, whereas villagers paying fees for the elderly without children was considered as horizontal expressive *wanglai*. The row indicating elderly care in Table 7 also shows fellow villagers and the collective involved in those elderly without children, namely, the five guarantee households. I interviewed an old single man called Aming in 1996. His main financial support came from the relief fee of 1000 *yuan* per year from the Miaogang Township. He lived in one of the guestrooms of the village and looked after other rooms. He charged 4 *yuan* per night per bed because these rooms were shared. The fee would be paid to the village. He charged 3 *yuan* per day per head half board for the cost price. Both the charges were paid for his upkeep of the rooms and therefore partly came back to him, which made additional income on top of the 1000 yuan from Miaogang Township. He also raised a few pigs including a male pig for insemination. He charged 10 to 20 *yuan* per insemination. The success rates from this natural copulation were higher than from artificial insemination, and his business was successful. Aming's total income was about 2000 *yuan* per year. However, his pig insemination business was not allowed by a policy from the township because it was "a base act". Aming had to stop it during the time I was doing my fieldwork.

Aming's case involved fellow villagers' support indirectly. His relief fee of 1000 *yuan* per year from the Miaogang Township was actually raised from fellow villagers and redistributed from the township to him. The villagers told me they had to pay for more than 30 different kinds of fees to the local government. They couldn't remember what they were but one item was called the welfare fee (*fuli fei*), for looking after people with special difficulties including those who are elderly and without children. They complained about all the above fees except the fee for those elderly, because they believed that it is a misfortune for a person to be without a family and a child. This is in line with a traditional idea that the greatest misfortune is to be without male offspring (*wuhou wei da*). The additional way that Aming made a living, looking after the guestrooms, was provided by the village

collective. However, in 1998 the village collective sold the guestroom house so Aming moved back to his own old house. But his living standard didn't drop because his skill at inseminating pigs was allowed due to a new policy of privatisation. Aming's skill at inseminating pigs not only supplemented his living standard but also provided more chances for him to have expressive *wanglai* with fellow villagers directly.

4.4. Funeral ceremony and postfuneral rituals

No matter whether in the West or the East, in urban or rural China, a funeral or related mortuary event (*zangli* or *jili*) is required for any death, although the procedure and detailed arrangements can be very different. Based on his and other anthropologists' related work James Watson was "convinced that there is an overarching ritual structure that is distinguished from non-Chinese rites" (1988: 133) and specifically considered that the related study would be helpful to understand the question of "What held Chinese society together?" (1988: 3). For me, Watson's structure of funeral rites that contains the ideological domain and the performative domain can be interpreted with *lishang-wanglai*. On the one hand, "the notion of continued exchange between living and dead is the foundation of late imperial China's ideological domain" (1988: 9) states there is a *wanglai* relationship between the living and dead in a vertical direction or the living with each other in a horizontal direction. On the other hand, there was "a prescribed set of ritual actions that had to be performed before a corpse could be expelled from the community and buried" (11-12), which can all be explained with *lishang* criteria.

However, the difference between James Watson's summary of funeral activities in rural China (1988: 12-15) and Kaixiangong is that the former excluded all the postfuneral ritual activities (Cohen's term, 1988:181) apart from some descriptions from Feuchtwang (1974), Naquin (1988) and Kipnis (1997). I also noticed that the difference between urban China and Kaixiangong is that the former's funeral and memorial ceremony is always combined as *zhuidaohui* (memorial meeting), and the difference between the cases I witnessed in the UK[14] and Kaixiangong is that the UK's postfuneral ritual is a memorial for the deceased amongst the living. So

instead of entitling this section “funeral” I examined the funeral ceremony and postfuneral rituals side by side, just as I titled the section on weddings “Establishing a marriage relationship” in section 3.2, and considered the process as an entirety. In this section I will show how vertical and horizontal expressive *wanglai* is involved in the whole process of mortuary events and give explanations using *lishang*.

4.4.1. Expressive wanglai

In Kaixiangong the various activities during the mourning period are called *zuo sushi* (for funerals are a plain colour event compared with red colourful wedding) and *ban houshi* (for postfuneral affairs for settling the death in the nether world). Based on the case of XQ Wang’s mother’s death, section 5.7 shows that the whole mourning process includes announcing notification of death (*baosang*), paying condolence to the deceased (*puxiang*), funeral ceremony (*shushijiu*), cremation and burying the ash box (*huohua*), “do the sevens (*zuo qi*)” (Feuchtwang 1974:327; Naquin 1988:59), wearing the mourning material (*daixiao*) and sweeping a grave at Qingming Festival (*shang fen*). It can last for a few weeks, a few months, or even up to a three year period. The above death rituals are consistent with Stuart Thompson’s (1988) three prevalent facets. “First, ritual aims to transform. In the case of mortuary ritual the main problem is transforming the discontinuity of biological death into a social continuity, of transforming the corpse into an ancestor. … Second, ritual involves exchanges between the living and the dead, on more or less reciprocal bases. … Third, ritual is concerned with identity. To be Chinese is to perform Chinese rituals and vice versa;…” (73). Here I will demonstrate how the dead person discontinued its mortal relations and established its *yin* being (Feuchtwang’s term[15]) relations.

The first three rows of Table 7 shows that amongst the above rituals funerals mainly related to the dead and his or her family’s social relations. The rituals consist of paying condolence to the deceased, taking part in the funeral feast (*sushi jiu*) – a send-off party, and cremation of the corpse. On the one hand, it is “the last-stop for individuals in this world and also the final opportunity to be involved in the networks of social exchange” (Yan, 1996b: 59). The funeral feasts, like

wedding feasts, provided the living with an opportunity to maintain social networks as other anthropologists observed (Naquin 1988; Thompson 1998) or "manipulate *ganqing*, social hierarchies, and magnetic fields of human feelings" and building, producing or creating *guanxi* (Kipnis, 1997: 97, 98, and 102). On the other hand, for Kaixiangong villagers a funeral event is one way of *song* (seeing off) in the reciprocal *wanglai* circle with human beings. After the funeral the *wanglai* relationship between the deceased and most of her social networks had stopped.[16] The discontinued horizontal relations are with all the fellow villagers who lived in the same group, villagers who shared the same surname, the deceased son's friends, XQ Wang's mother's late husband's prentice, agnatic and non-agnatic kin of the family, except the intimate family members.

The last six rows of Table 7 show the postfuneral ritual activities which started from the burial of XQ Wang's mother's ash box and ended with sweeping the grave at Qingming Festival in the third year. The starting point of burying the ash box is different from what the villagers used to do in the past, when burying a corpse was the end of the funeral ritual. Nowadays from the villagers' point of view the cremation of the corpse ends the funeral because from then on the corpse has gone forever. This is why the villagers simply named *huohua* (cremation) as the last step of the funeral. At the last step of *song* (seeing off) is actually mixed with *ying* (Stafford's term, welcome) due to the cremation system which has been introduced to this area. It can be described with a Chinese phrase of seeing off those who depart and welcoming those who arrive (*songwang-yinglai*). In this case *song* (seeing off), *wang* (go), *ying* (welcome) and *lai* (come) happened at the same occasion, but mean different things: as I mentioned in the previous paragraph the cremation event ended the dead person's social relationships, whereas the burial of the ash box started her spiritual relationships. Borrowing Feuchtwang's imagery the last step of the funeral constitutes a process of *songwang-yinglai* "simultaneously of cutting threads and of tying threads of continuity" (1974: 375). To me it means that as soon as the corpse was burned her social *wanglai* had been cut off from her and at the same time a spiritual *wanglai* has been tied up between the deceased and her intimate family members.

The participants involved are intimate family adult members, i.e. her son and his wife, the wife of the deceased married-out son (who dead), daughter (husband is not required) and quasi daughter, in a horizontal direction, and Taoist priests, ancestors and spirits in a vertical direction. The postfuneral ritual activities are mainly for establishing different types of relationship for the deceased, i.e. to join with other ancestors, to keep ghosts away from her, to ask land gods to accept her and other gods, e.g. the Jade Emperor, to protect her in the underworld. The row relating to "the fifth seven-day" of Table 7 shows that on the last day of the period agnatic and non-agnatic kin took part in this event. It is a celebration of the deceased turning successfully into one of the ancestors. This is how XQ Wang's family added his mother to his family's ancestors' list. The way in which the villagers settle the deceased in the nether world is very similar to what they did to settle a new arrival, e.g. a baby or a wife, in a new family in this world. But this time the XQ Wang's family didn't invite the family's old generational agnatic and non-agnatic kin, i.e. both XQ Wang's passed away parents' uncle and aunt's generation, for the event of "the fifth seven-days". This is how XQ Wang's family removed them as close relatives from the family *lishang-wanglai* networks (see section 6.2) without a word. At the same time the others removed his family from their families' networks. Therefore, to complete the whole process of the mortuary events is a proper way of upgrading the dead person's family *lishang-wanglai* networks: not just living social networks in this world, but those with the nether world as well.

4.4.2. *Lishang* criteria

There are many rituals in mortuary rites, e.g. wailing or laments of women, kowtowing, bowing, mourning dress, gifts, music, monk or priest chanting, banquet, sacrificial offerings, burning paper money and materials, candles, incense, oil lamp, etc. Charles Stafford's (2000c) ritualised etiquette - separation and reunion, provides an important new angle of view. It is in particular helpful to understand the performative domain (J. Watson's term) related to the *wanglai* between living and dead or this world and nether world. Stafford shows details from his two fieldwork villages of how people performed rituals of summoning (*qing*), receiving (*jie*), detaining (*liu*), and sending off (*song*) gods, dead, ancestors,

and ghosts, etc. (2000c: 70-86). He states: if care is not taken for the dead they "will became ghosts and suffer terribly, but they will also bring suffering to the living. By contrast, properly buried and worshipped ancestors – by definition those properly 'sent off' and then routinely 'welcomed back' – bring blessings to their descendants" (2000c: 82). For me this statement involves all the criteria of *lishang*. I illustrate this by using *lishang* criteria as an outline to find out more information in order to understand why the rituals of separation and reunion are important in *wanglai* between the living and the dead. I will also show how each *lishang* criterion is mobilised and weighted and altered in different types of *wanglai* relationship between the living and the dead.

(1) It is right morally that one should correctly bury and care for one's ancestors. This is why James Watson argues "that Chinese state had no effective means of controlling beliefs regarding the afterlife" (1988: 11). However, there are different understandings of burying well in different parts of China. Watson found in two Cantonese villages that it was the corpse handlers' job, which is the lowest job, to carry corpses because of the danger that death pollution would affect male essence (*yang*) (1988: 112-115 & 124-126). In other parts of China people didn't care about the "death pollution" because they believed morally that to carry the corpses of one's parents or close relatives was the last chance to express their faithfulness and attachment to their beloved. As I have shown in section 5.7, XQ Wang and the closest male family member carried his mother's corpse as was determined by a traditional moral code of filial piety (*jinxiaodao*). It was the same in Shenyang. When I was doing my fieldwork in a Gansu village one of my mother's older sisters passed away. My brother and one of my close cousins carried her head and two other cousins carried her feet on and off a stretcher because they were her closest nephews. As the closest male relatives carried the corpse the closest female wailed very hard by or on the corpse without consideration of the "death pollution". This is also a proper way of expressing oneself physically while burying one's parents.

Financially the villagers considered that a reasonable expenditure on a proper burial for their parents is not an extravagance. For example, XQ Wang paid the Taoist priests 660 *yuan* for their two nights' and half a day's work. They didn't

stint on the expenditure because the ritual of turning the dead person into one of the ancestors and settling it in the nether world is very important. The family also paid 260 *yuan* for hiring a hearse from Wujiang Crematorium and 650 *yuan* for cremation. They could also saved on the expenditure for hiring a hearse because the village collective provided a vehicle free of charge and they could get a refund on the cost for cremation from the local government. According to the local policy the cremation fee could be refunded in full in the 1970s and half from the 1980s on to the late 1990s. This was one way that the government introduced cremation in this area. However, XQ Wang's family, as with most of the villagers, insisted on paying in full for the related cost of cremation because they thought, again, it was the last chance of filial piety. They even behaved very well in terms of obeying regulations in the Crematorium when their local custom conflicted with the regulations. I noticed they brought lots of mock money, candles, firecrackers with them which the villagers used when they buried the corpse in the ground in the past, but they didn't use them at all in the Crematorium because there were signs saying "Burning mock money is forbidden" and "Superstitious activities are forbidden", etc. They even bought back some plastic flowers and wreaths from the Crematorium shop. This is how they learnt a new way of burying their beloved from the urban people. They placed this on the grave after they buried the ash box (see 5.7).

All the mourners' quick reactions to pay condolence to the deceased, take part in the funeral feast, and accompany the corpse to crematorium were counted as moral support because the more people who came the more honour the deceased and the family gained. It is the same in Xiajia that "the more guests who attend and the longer they stay, the more the host gains social prestige and 'face'" (Yan 1996b: 95-96). For them these occasions provided arenas to express their moral judgment: if you treat others badly you could receive your lesson of losing a big face, and vice versa. Instead of "spiritual support" in Xiajia, Kaixiangong villagers used "moral support" for the idea of giving someone face on funeral or other critical occasions.

However, unlike some onlookers around during the funeral event in other parts of China (Yan 1996b; Stafford 2000c) there were hardly ever onlookers in

Kaixiangong because nearly all the mourners were involved as participants since they were part of their family networks. This is an outcome of the family's input of yearly based generous *wanglai*. The number of mourners is dependent on the size of the family networks, and whether the deceased are male or female. I noticed there were much fewer mourners for the village vet, Huang's father's funeral, because his family had fewer interests and was not good at making *lishang-wanglai* networks (see "Disease of farm animals" in 5.8).

(2) People can't bear their ancestors to suffer and are afraid themselves to suffer or they expect a blessing from ancestors. Stafford's second point mainly relates to the postfuneral activities which relates to human feelings. Weddings and funerals, the two biggest life events, in Chinese popular saying are called red and white happy events (*hong-bai xishi*). The reason the human feeling of happiness is involved in funerals is because people generally felt it is a relief for both the living and dead when it is the time for them to depart. However, in Kaixiangong villagers used a term of *sushi* for funeral. It means a funeral event involving a plain colour and vegetarian food. It reflects the involvement of complicated human feelings at a funeral. They are: grief of losing the beloved, dread from fear of the corpse, expression of one's own depressed feelings, as well as happy relief for both living and dead.

It is natural for mourners, both male and female, to cry when seeing off the deceased. The natural expression of human feeling forms a sharp characteristic of expressive *wanglai* in the funeral situation. In this the mourners express the feeling that they are reluctant to part with the deceased as a Chinese saying puts it: see off somebody a part of the way and another and another (*song le yicheng you yicheng*). Apart from wailing at the funeral the periodical mourning is regarded as an expression of kinship tie's affection (Fei, 1939:77), which can also be understood as the human feeling of *lishang*. However, some women also express their own depressed feelings by wailing in a funeral. This is similar to Elizabeth Johnson's (1988) finding that women's funeral laments use other people's funerals to release personal sorrow (*yong bieren de zangli xuanxie ziji de beishang*).

"The rituals associated with settling the soul reflect in some way the ambivalent feelings of mourners as well as the dread arising from fear of the corpse" (Watson 1988: xii). This can also been seen from Kaixiangong's case. In the previous chapters I mentioned two cases involving suicides (e.g. 1.3.4) which were buried with honours (*houzang*). The hidden reason for the lavish funerals is fear of the dead. An informant told me that the dead suicides are more likely to turn into ghosts. So to settle well their bodies and souls is necessary to avoid trouble from them. This was also noticed by other anthropologists (e.g. Martin 1988; Margery Wolf 1975).

(3) The rituals of "sending off", routinely "welcoming back" and "visiting (sweep grave)" must be properly done as they are determined by rational choice. Whereas the most important guests at weddings are *jiujiu*s (mother's brothers), the most important guests at funerals are daughters (sons play other important ritual roles), according to the village custom. When XQ Wang's father passed away the older daughter, XQ Wang's older sister, played an important role. She smashed the tile on the door (*qiaomen tuanzi*), she paid the related cost of cremation, she provided the largest quantity of gifts, and she cried falling over herself, etc. This time when XQ Wang's mother passed away it should have been the younger daughter's turn to do this. XQ Wang only had one older sister and one younger brother. The younger brother was married out of the family as a son-in-law to another villager's family. According to the local custom he should be treated as a daughter. Unfortunately, he died in an accident a few years ago so his wife played his role at his mother's funeral, e.g. smashed a tile on a door, etc., but the costs relating to cremation were shared with the older sister and older brother since her family was poorer. The reason daughters should be the most important people in the funeral were determined by rational calculation. They explained that XQ Wang was his older sister's son's *jiujiu*. He made contributions to his nephew before he was born until he got married (see Chapters 3 and 4 on life cycle events). Therefore, XQ Wang's older sister should play the important role in looking after her parents in their old age and give them a proper burial after death (*yanglao songzhong*). The activities required are: the old-age birthday ceremonies, physically taking care of

the disabled elderly or when he or she is near death, and contributions to the funeral and postfuneral rituals, etc.

Rational calculation can also be seen from social support. (a) Material support was the first thing I saw in 1996. All the mourners brought gifts for condolence (*puxiang*). The sheets of white cloth can be used for making mourning clothes and belts, the yellow and silver paper for making mock money, candles, incense, and food, etc. (b) Labour support was also involved. After the condolence the women made gold and silver shoe-shaped stuff (*yuanbao*) with yellow and silver paper which looked like money in feudal China. They also prepared materials for the mourning dress, e.g. cut white cloth in various sizes, i.e. 6 inch width by length of 11, 9, 7 and 5 feet belts; or cut black cloth and wool in pieces. At the same time in the courtyard men carried tables and benches into the living room. Male agnatic kin borrow them from the houses of neighbours who have not been invited for the funeral because they are not agnatic kin or share the same surname. Although a chef was hired for cooking six meals and feasts over the three days, the kitchen assistants were agnatic kin: males kill hens or fish, whereas females peel quail eggs or sort out vegetables, etc. After lunch, the female agnatic kin did all the tidying up and washing up, whereas the males returned the tables and benches to the neighbours' houses. It was not a simple job to return 60 benches (4 for each table and 15 tables) and sort out which belonged to which family, e.g. I saw a person checking marks and names under benches in the weak light. (c) Financial support came from XQ Wang's family's broadest list which contained 34 families. Amongst them 562 *yuan* came from 12 agnatic kin, 1209 *yuan* from 15 non-agnatic kin and 147 *yuan* from 7 friends. So the Wang family received 1918 *yuan* gift money in total and repaid 412 *yuan* to the above relatives wearing mourning clothes or materials (see next point). According to the local custom the friends are not requested to wear mourning clothes or materials. (d) Spiritual support also occurred. I noticed everybody got his or her red bag back with 10 or 20 per cent of whatever was his or her gift money. It was paid with thanks for the participants who wore mourning clothes or materials. According to the local custom the more people who wore mourning clothes or materials the better for both the dead and the living of the family, hence to wear unpleasant mourning clothes or materials is

considered as a kind of spiritual support for the family. In fact this kind of social support in the village has its tradition. Even Fei noticed two kinds of social support in the funeral period. According to Fei (1939) the ceremonies not only related the dead person's social relations sentimentally, they performed an essential function in social life, such as financial support through kinship tie from long run (131-132) and immediate labour support from neighbours because the family members are under heavy mourning and not able to work (75).

Although during the funeral period rational choice can be seen from arrangements according to local custom, the local customs adapt themselves from time to time. Kipnis (1997) reviewed how Fengjia's funeral activities changed from time to time due to political interferences after 1948 (141-43). For Kaixiangong villagers the adaptation of funeral ritual for whatever reasons is also a practice of rational choice. For them although the local custom of details of funeral, mourning and sacrifice, etc. can be changed along with changing situations, villagers adapted their arrangements rationally from time to time. (a) The villagers kept some traditions from Fei's (1939) time, such as that the son, daughter-in-law, daughter and son-in-law's heads should be tied with a long white belt down to the ground, and short belts are worn by grandchildren (75). But instead of the son's generation wearing coarse hempen cloth and grandchildren wearing white clothes I saw they both wore white clothes and distinguished between the males and females by long white and short white clothes. This adaptation is for a practical concern because the white long clothes are a doctor's and chef's uniform, which are much easier to buy or borrow than to get coarse hempen cloth. (b) In Fei's time after a person has died "a packet of clothes will be burnt with a paper chair before the front door" (75) before a funeral. In my fieldwork this happened after a funeral and the corpse was burnt in an incinerator. This adaptation occurred after the cremation system was accepted from the 1970s in this area. The villagers also burnt all the deceased's clothes, beddings, bed, the wooden board laid with the corpse, and paper house, paper chair, etc. because this is the way to send them together with him or her to heaven. (c) The replacement of a system from inhumation to cremation also made other adaptations for related details. Instead of the eldest son holding the head of the deceased and younger son the feet to put the corpse into a coffin (75), I saw the

corpse was laid on a wooden board and the son and a son-in-law carried the side with the head of the deceased and another son-in-law and a close cousin the feet side onto a vehicle to go to a crematorium. Instead of moving the coffin onto land among the mulberry trees and covering it with a shelter built with or without bricks and tiles (75), they buried a bone ash box of the deceased in land among the mulberry trees and built a little house shaped grave with bricks and cement and put a concrete gravestone in front it. (d) Compared with Fei's fieldwork in 1930s instead of repairing the shelter of their ancestors' coffins up to five generations and complicated periodical mourning activities (76-79), the villagers told me the custom is very much simplified and the young generation should only offer sacrifices for three years. After the three years they do not need to look after the grave anymore, even at Qing Ming. Instead of, e.g. the daughter and daughter-in-law wearing yellow cord for two years and 60 days (78), they wore yellow or orange wool cord for one year. They only mourned for the first seven days (*touqi*), the third seven days (*san qi*) and the fifth seven days (*wu qi*); and Tomb-sweeping Day (*qingming* festival) for the first three years and their birth and death days.

(4) Funeral and postfuneral activities are rooted in the villagers' religious sense. This can be seen from many customs. For instance, in Kaixiangong a dying person had to be transferred to a special bed, a flat board, which was then moved to the living room or hall of the house because to die in bed was unlucky according to the village custom. This also happened in North China. According to Susan Naquin (1998) it was unlucky for anyone to die on the communal *kang* (a brick platform commonly used as a bed in North China) and be moved away from this to a flat board (39). The idea of lucky and unlucky can be changed from place to place and from person to person. In a funeral speech in the UK I heard that my husband's grandmother was lucky to have died in her own home in her own bed, rather than in a nursing home or hospital. It is a kind of counterpoint to the Chinese idea. However, recently on Chinese internet news I saw the word of "lucky" again for a Chinese lady - Mayling Soong, Madame Chiang Kai-shek, who died in her sleep at her New York home.

There were many cases involving religious sense in colour, shape, number, directions, symbolic meanings, etc. The messenger who notified the news of the death (*baosang*) to related families should put a piece of white cloth into a pocket. He should get into exactly the correct houses. It would be seen as big misfortune if the person went into a house which was not related to the dead person. The villagers decorated the family mourning hall with a little bit of red paper or cloth on the window bolts and nails on the wall for avoiding evil spirits. The dead person's family gave "elderly tofu" to each senior female of the group for keeping their life healthy in old age. This is similar to people in Mountain Street in Taiwan, who gave spring onions and dried squid in abundance to their non-agnatic kin for the luck of living (Feuchtwang 1974:329). Directions were also important to them. The corpse was laid by the northern wall of the family mourning hall. Its head pointed east and its feet to the west. After the corpse was taken from the house family members set up an altar table for the dead person by the northwest end of the living room. The picture of the dead person hung on the west wall and the spirit tablet stood on the altar table against the west way. The movement from east to the west means they sent the dead person to the Western Heaven (*xitian*). Instead of candles for ancestors there was an oil lamp by a spirit tablet on the altar table, together with sacrifice offerings. The oil lamp is called *changmingdeng* and is kept burning day and night until the end of the ritual of the five seventh days. It is for lightening up the road in the underworld for the dead person to meet the family's ancestors. In terms of numbers the obvious example is "seven". Not only Kaixiangong villagers use sevens in postfuneral activities, although it is reduced from seven "seven days" to five "seven days"; other parts of China also do it. In North China, where they still do seven "seventh days", for the first three years the longest mourning was supposed to last for twenty seven months (Naquin, 1988). In Kipnis's (1997) Fengjia village the funeral itself lasted for seven days before 1948 (141). All these "sevens" mean the family protects its dead person from being attacked by ghosts while crossing dangerous places or from being turned into a ghost in the underworld. The offerings, e.g. oval shaped rice cakes with filling (*tabing*), wonton, glutinous rice dumpling (*zongzi*) were built as a pyramid shape which symbolised a tomb. The upper part of the little tomb for a single dead person's ash box also looked like a pyramid shape. The structure of the little tomb

for a dead couple looked like a standard suburban London semi detached house, although there wasn't any real house of that shape in the village. The villagers put an evergreen plant on top of the tomb just as they put an evergreen on top of the roof when they completed a new house. It symbolised that the house and their life should last forever, in this case, the dead person lives in the nether world forever.

The most important thing in funerals and postfuneral rituals is that the religious priests must be involved. The villagers called priests *heshang*, which should be Buddhist monks in Chinese characters. In fact from what they did and what they wore one can easily tell they were actually Taoist priests. For the villagers it doesn't matter whether the priests belong to Taoism or Buddhism. It is important to have such professional religious people to perform for their funeral and postfuneral activities,[17] because they believed the rites performed by religious specialists could lift up the soul of the deceased to salvation, pay the soul's way through purgatory by burning spirit money, and give hope that the soul would be reborn in the western Heaven (Feuchtwang 1974:326; Cohen 1988:180). Throughout the funeral and postfuneral period, food, paper money, and especially on the fifth of the days seven paper clothes, beddings, houses goods, etc. were burnt. They were not only for settling the dead person, the meaning also involved expectation of receiving progeny, wealth and luckiness for the living in return.

The villagers' religious sense was consolidated in their everyday life. I heard that some people quarrelled on the evening before SM Yao's mother's corpse was sent to Wujiang Crematorium. One of them said to another that he was punished by Heavenly gods (*zao laotian baoying*). The fuse of the quarrel was that SM Yao couldn't find his father's grave because a person didn't take care of it when his family built a house there. According to local custom a grave should be located on a high position of land and far away from residential areas. SM Yao's father's bone ash box was buried in 1980, when the plot was used by his family (*ziliudi*). After the Household Contracted Land Responsibility System was applied in this area in 1985 situations changed very much. The residential area was greatly extended. The other person's house and courtyard was moved onto the original plot used by SM Yao's family where his father's grave was buried. The person promised SM Yao that he would move his father's bone ash box into a safe place and build a new

grave. SM Yao believed his words. SM Yao's family didn't hold any rituals for the resettlement of his father's "new grave" for two reasons. According to the local custom his family should let his father rest in peace (*anxi*) in the grave after sweeping it for three years by not disturbing it anymore. Besides his mother had just became a Christian and didn't want to be involved in any common customs. However, ten years later when SM Yao's mother passed away SM wanted to put his parents' graves together and discovered his father's bone ash box had disappeared since a person built his house there. He suddenly realised why this person became paralytic (*zhongfeng*) and lay down in bed for a whole year as soon as he moved into his new house. SM Yao believed it was the punishment from the Heavenly gods (*laotian baoying*) for him not keeping his word to build a new grave for SM Yao's father's bone ash box. The person admitted he was guilty and told SM that his family worshipped the land god, stove god and general Heavenly gods for the whole year while he was suffering from the paralysis until he fully recovered, contrary to nature. In the end the person bought a new bone ash box with some soil which came from the original grave place and sent it to the plot where SM Yao's mother's bone ash box would be buried.

In the village when a quarrel involves two parties the nastiest thing to curse the other with is: to say he will have a "bad death" (*bu de hao si*) (cf. Thompson 1988, Whyte 1998, Kipnis 1997), will have a short life (*daduanming*), will be punished by Heavenly gods (*zao laotian baoying*), or "may you die without sons" (*duanzi-juesun*). The last saying means the other would be one of the most unfilial people according to Mencius.[18] It is clear that all the above curse words relate to moral judgements, i.e. good or bad, and filial or unfilial, etc., as well as religious sense. Some people told me they believed the curse could be realized in either this world or in the nether world. According to the local custom a person who died after a long life would have a very good death. Death in illness without pain is also a good death, death in illness in pain is not a very bad death but to die in an accident or at a very young age is a bad death. When I went to JH Zhou's mother's funeral everybody admired her as a blissful person (*you fu*) because she died at age 92. I also heard people lament that XQ Wang's parents died in their sixties and not too long after their younger son's death. They were both involved in one of the three

most unfortunate things of life according to the Chinese common saying: that is for a white haired person to attend a black haired person's funeral (*baifaren song heifaren*). XQ Wang's younger brother's death in the village was called a "bad death". When I asked them why a good person would have a bad death, their explanation was he must have done something morally very wrong in his other life in the other world.

In this second chapter on the life cycle I have shown how some things were changed and others unchanged along with social reform and the introduction of the market economy in the late 1970s. I would like to draw out two points to conclude this chapter. (1) Although moral standards declined in China in general, the Chinese traditional mechanism of intergenerational reciprocity - to take care of the elderly and love the children (*zunlao-aiyou*) continued - operating with instrumentalised expressive *wanglai*. The new head of the village YL Zhou quoted a Chinese saying concerning thirty years on the east side of the river and thirty years on the west (*sanshinian hedong sanshinian hexi*), namely, one situation won't last for more than thirty years at one place and would be turned into another different situation, and vice versa at the other place. It reminds me one of Yan (1996b, 2003)arguments of the peculiar generation of old people who had limited property to exchange for old-age care with their sons, due to their living under socialism in China for thirty years (1949-1979). Will the middle aged parents who stored up enough property from 1979 onwards complain of the same thing when they are old? YL Zhou continued that the situations always change and over certain historical periods the ways of elderly care would have some historical peculiarities, but the nature of the relationship between parents and children would be always determined by positive human feelings, like expressive *wanglai*. Thus the current historical peculiarities on the elderly care are towards more instrumentalised expressive *wanglai* compared with the period before 1979. This can be seen from Kaixiangong villagers' creativities in arrangements for their family life, increasingly using money in various exchanges, e.g. hiring a construction team for rebuilding new houses, paying for rebuilding temples, paying for parents elderly care, etc. The village collective even hired a construction team, paid by the villagers, for building a village road between Kaixiangong Village and the village

(Xicaotian), which was added into Kaixiangong in 2001. To build a road, traditionally labourers were always mobilised from every family by the collective or local government, but nowadays a fund can be raised from the villagers. In 2004 the village is going to build another road from Xicaotian to Hengshan, a neighbouring township. The fund has not only been raised from the villagers and local rich self-employed business people, which can be seen as vertical instrumentalised expressive *wanglai*, the village collective even has applied for project funding from different institutional sources, which goes beyond *lishang-wanglai*.

(2) Although the Chinese traditional mechanism of intergenerational reciprocity of taking care of the elderly and loving children (*zunlao aiyou*) continued operation, there has been a movement towards a greater valuation of daughters compared with sons. I noticed that the idea of rearing sons against old age (*yang er fang lao*) has changed indeed from relying on sons to relying on children including daughters. This can be seen from many aspects. (a) Traditionally in Kaixiangong Village a marriage of taking a son-in-law (*zhaonuxu*) into a family was seen as kind of misfortune due to the family having no son and the son-in-law's social status was low since he was poor. Nowadays more and more families accept this kind of marriage model. Some people even admire such marriage arrangements, e.g. HL Wang's younger son said if he was taken into a richer family he wouldn't feel poor. Although uxorilocal marriage was always for the sons of the poor, the feelings of admiring such marriage and it being widely accepted by the villagers is an obvious change. The change of villagers to favour daughters rather than sons or to feel easy without sons might have been affected by the one child family policy, which applied from the early 1980s. The fact that about one half of all families had just one daughter changed the villagers' view and attitude towards uxorilocal marriage and also affected arrangement of elderly care. (b) Daughters married into other families are also expected to be able to take responsibility for arrangements of family events and updating the families' *lishang-wanglai* networks based on local customs. This custom was quite new compared with the new wives in the 1930s (Fei, 1939:45-50). The significant changing of a daughter-in-law's status is a kind of challenge for them because if they are not careful the mistake would cost the

married family loss of face or a source of resources, although it is not unwelcome: some women told me they enjoyed themselves very much making such arrangements. (c) The married out daughters also created opportunities to get close with their natal families. Traditionally the villagers only celebrate the one month, one year and sixteen year old birthday for children, and 66 year old birthday for the elderly as family events. Nowadays some families celebrate children's birthdays every year and elder's birthdays every five years from 60 years old onwards. This is influenced by urban people. Although the birthday ceremonies are relatively small, low key and had not yet been widely spread in the village, married out daughters involved their natal families in the birthday ceremonies one way or the other. (d) Like girls in Beijing or Shanghai who normally wouldn't want to move away from Beijing or Shanghai to other parts of China, Kaixiangong Village's girls also preferred to get married and settled in their life locally. This gave them opportunities to *wanglai* with their natal families conveniently for both annual events and life cycle events. For the natal families the daughters are no longer "spilled water that cannot be gathered up" as in Fei's time (1939:46). Instead they are now mothers' padded body vests (literally, a daughter is truly close to a mother compared with a son, *nuer shi mama de tiexinao*). Anyway, the movement towards a greater valuation of daughters indicates their status has changed significantly from the time of 60 years before.

[1] House construction and family division are not necessarily major events for every family as a part of life cycle events.

[2] My informants told me that, on average, the cost of construction of a house was 20,000-30,000 *yuan* in 1982, 40,000-50,000 *yuan* in 1990, 100,000 *yuan* in 1995, and 15,000-20,000 *yuan* in 2000. The most expensive house nowadays costs 50,000 *yuan*.

[3] A copy of a document in the Village Archives: *Kaixiangong dadui dang zhibu guanyu sheyuan jianfang de youguan guiding* (The related regulations of villagers' house construction by the Party Branch of Kaixiangong Great Brigade), 1983.

[4] A note came from Kaixiangong Village Archives.

[5] It was a model in Neiguan Village, Gansu Province, my other fieldwork village, due to the implication of the State aid-the-poor programme.

[6] The village collective redistributed the land and fields from time to time by taking the dead people's land and fields and distributing it to new wives.

[7] The increasing numbers of families was caused by a neighbouring village amalgamated into Kaixiangong in 2001.

[8] This saying changed a bit in the 1990s, like to eat French food, to earn a Germany salary, but to live in an English house never changed.

[9] The nuclear family type of living arrangement refers to nuclear household – a couple with one or two children, or single parent families.

[10] Although Yan (2003) shows there is 81 per cent nuclear family, 16 per cent stem family and 3 per cent incomplete family of overall family in Xiajia in 1998 (89), I am not sure whether or not the above general figures of family structure came from the village collective's statistic. I trust more his disaggregated figures (164-66).

[11] They did it until their mother died in 1999.

[12] HL Wang told me about such a case in the village, when a married son divided from his parents and lived separately, which was caused by bad feelings or relationship (*ganqing buhao*) with their

daughter-in-law on the surface. The deep down reason was the parents didn't treat the son well when he was young. The old couple's (husband is 75 years old and wife is 73 years old) son's family divided from the stem family twenty years ago because the daughter-in-law and mother-in-law could not get on well (*hebulai* or *mei ganqing*). It was not too bad for the old couple when their son's family first divided from the stem family because they were strong enough to work and support themselves. The problem started when both of them were not able to work on the land or field any more when they got older and hadn't enough savings. They even had a problem to pay for the yearly Tax and fees. A village cadre tried to ask their son to pay for them but their son refused to do so because they divided into two families such a long time ago. The relationship between the old couple and their son's family went beyond instrumental wanglai, which can be negative *wanglai* by the village's standard.

[13] The five guarantees are guaranteed food, clothing, medical care, housing and burial expenses for the elderly without children.

[14] The point of omitting a big literature review on funerals in the UK is that I want to make a simple comparison on procedure of mortuary events between rural Chinese society and the UK based on my observation of two cases in UK. It starts with announcing notification of death, then paying condolence to the deceased in the undertaker's a few days after a person's death, and a few days later there is a small funeral followed by cremation of the corpse or burial of the coffin in a crematory. It ends with a big memorial ceremony or service in a church in a week or two weeks' time. Sometimes people would hold a big funeral which would combine a memorial ceremony together with the cremation. Tea and drinks with snacks will be served separately for the attendants after each of the above activities at home or at a hotel with bar, etc. At the anniversary of the death there is also a ritual for the close family.

[15] "The Yin being is represented 1) as a body, to be well situated in the coffin and grave, 2) as efficacious soul (ling) to be pacified and housed, 3) as a fate and span of life, 4) as soul (*hun*) to be saved, and 5) to be converted into a male or female ancestor" (Feuchtwang 1974:330).

[16] This is similar to the relationship between her and her "little sisters"', which stopped after she married into XQ Wang's family (see section 3.2).

[17] It is the same in my other fieldwork village, Neiguan Village, Gansu Province, where *feng shui* master (*yinyangshi*) is always involved.

[18] There are three ways of being a bad son. The most serious is to have no heir (*buxiao you san, wuhou wei da*),《孟子》.