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SOUTH SEAS CHINESE AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN FUKIEN AND  
KWANGTUNG. By Ta Chen. Changsha: The Commercial Press.  
1938. pp. 305. (In Chinese.) \$1.80. 91

OF THE nearly seven million Chinese outside of China, no less than four million are in the South Seas, which is a popular Chinese term covering British Malaya, Netherlands India, the Philippines, Siam and Indochina. More than 90 per cent of the Chinese in the South Seas come from the two southernmost provinces of Fukien and Kuangtung. In Fukien the center of emigration consists of six districts near Amoy, and in Kuangtung it comprises four districts north and west of Swatow. Professor Ta Chen of the Sociological Department of Tsing Hua University, at the request of the China Institute of Pacific Relations, traveled with his assistants in these 10 districts in 1934 in order to make sociological and economic observations. Later, three places were designated for specific investigation: one was immediately northeast and another not far northwest of Amoy, and the third was northeast of Swatow. At each place four to seven investigators spent four to ten weeks collecting general data from a total of 1,348 families who were either returned from or had some of their members still in the South Seas. In addition there was a family budget investigation from October 1934 to February 1936 among 100 families in the third place mentioned above, and also among another 100 families in a vicinity from which there has been very little emigration. The statistical results of field investigations, profusely seasoned with travel notes as well as records embodied in the Chinese local chronicles, constitute the present report, the English edition of which, edited by Mr. Bruno Lasker, will be published in 1939, under the auspices of the China I. P. R. 92

The first 60 pages deal with the traditional mode of life and recent tendencies of change in districts closely connected with the South Seas. Thanks to that all-inclusive and wonderful sociological term—the mode of living—the author has given a well-nigh encyclopedic exposition of the geographical, sociological, religious and psychological settings, including the average weight and height of the people in Fukien and Kuangtung, both male and female. Modernization in China and emigration to the South Seas are considered as the chief factors in the change of the mode. It should be noticed, however, that of the 905 emigrant families investigated, 70 per cent were motivated by economic pressure, either individual or of the family, and only 20 per cent were attracted by their relatives or friends already abroad. Again, no less than 20 per cent of all the emigrants have had to become shopkeepers of no particular skill. 92

Effect of emigration is a theme to which the rest of this report is devoted. There are chapters describing the vocations and remittances of the emigrants, and living conditions, education, hygiene, and religion, as well as attitudes toward marriage, family and business in (92)

what may be called emigration districts. But just how emigration has affected the community in general has yet to be made clear and definite. One reads that the overseas Chinese have invested nearly 10 million Chinese dollars in real estate at Amoy, 70 per cent of this having come from four individuals; and that the marriage fees and wedding expenditures have been almost trebled in these districts. One still wishes to know more concretely whether or not the emigrants and the returned emigrants have raised the standard of living of the entire district. The investigation directed by Professor Ta Chen has nevertheless ascertained the higher standard of living of the emigrant or returned emigrant family as compared with the family which is in no way connected with emigration. In 1934-36 the average monthly expenditure of the former was 65 Chinese dollars, whereas that of the latter was only a little over 20 dollars. While house rent of the former constituted 16 per cent of the total expenditure, that of the latter was only 8 per cent. Taking the item of miscellaneous expenses alone, the emigrant family spent 14 per cent for education and hygiene, as compared with 8 per cent in the case of the non-emigrant family. There can be no doubt that in the centers of emigration, either because of overseas remittances or because of returned emigrants, or both, the cost of living of the locality has gone up considerably. Whether the total production and income of the entire community can cope with this rise of living costs is open to question. 93

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