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- Cover calligraphy Yan Zhenqing 顏真卿, Tang calligrapher and statesman
- Cover illustration Detail from Chinese *Anti-opium poster*, c. 1895. “*Quan shi jieshi dayan wen*” [Essay Urging the World to Give Up Opium]



West Lake from Wang Villa (*Wang Zhuang*), *Lois Conner*, 2008

The editor and editorial board of *East Asian History* would like to acknowledge the contribution made to the journal by Professor Geremie Barmé.

Geremie has been editor of *East Asian History* since it began under this title in 1991, and was editor of its predecessor *Papers on Far Eastern History* from 1989. In this period, he has sustained and promoted the importance of the journal as a forum for rigorous and original historical scholarship on China, Korea and Japan. Encouraging and exacting in equal measures, he has been generous to scholars taking their first steps in learned publication. During Geremie's tenure, *East Asian History* has become a major journal in the field, noted for its consistently high standards of scholarship and the care taken in its production. His editorship stands as an example and a challenge to the new editorial team.

Sometimes words flow easily  
As soon as he grasps the brush;  
Sometimes he sits vacantly,  
Nibbling at it.

Lu Ji, from *Literature: A Rhapsody*

Translated by Achilles Fang, "Rhymeprose on Literature: The Wen-Fu of Lu Chi (A.D. 261–303)", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 14, 3/4 (Dec., 1951): 527–66, p.534

或操觚以率爾或含毫而邈然  
陸機文賦

The editor and editorial board of *East Asian History* would like to acknowledge the contribution made to the journal by Marion Weeks.

Marion joined what was then the Department of Far Eastern History in 1977. From that time, she was involved in various capacities with, first, *Papers on Far Eastern History*, and then *East Asian History*, for which she served as business manager from its inception. By the time of her retirement from the Division of Pacific and Asian History in November 2007, Marion had become the heart and soul of the journal.

Over the years she worked with many editors—Andrew Fraser, John Fincher, Sydney Crawcour, Ian McComas Taylor, Jennifer Holmgren, Geremie Barmé, Benjamin Penny—as well as numerous associate editors, copy editors, printers and, of course, countless authors and manuscript readers. All owe her an immense debt of gratitude.

*East Asian History* would certainly not have been the same without Marion—at times, without her, *East Asian History* may not have been at all.



Imperial Summer Retreat, Chengde, Lois Conner, 2000

# NARCOTICS, NATIONALISM AND CLASS IN CHINA: THE TRANSITION FROM OPIUM TO MORPHINE AND HEROIN IN EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY SHANXI

 *Henrietta Harrison*

Er Linlin: What's the brand?

Li Dacheng: Pine Bamboo Plum, the best; it's got a slight taste of fruit wine.

Er Linlin: I've never smoked it.

Li Dacheng: If you'd smoked it you would know how great it is! If you smoke this split you won't need to put up a ladder to reach the roof, and if you don't watch out you'll be flying up into the sky—just like going in an aeroplane.

“Making the Break with Heroin” [Duan liaozhi]<sup>1</sup>

The ferocity of narcotics is worse than that of floods or savage beasts. They are not only responsible for damaging people and destroying families, but also for the destruction of the country and the extermination of the race. If you overlook a problem as serious as this and do not pay special attention to it then you are not fulfilling your duty as officials to be shepherds of the people.

Yan Xishan, “Complete Writings on the Government of Shanxi”<sup>2</sup>

The use of narcotic drugs, that is to say opium and its derivatives morphine and heroin, was a major social phenomenon in rural north China in the early twentieth century. Villagers who were children in the 1930s and 1940s readily remember relatives and neighbours taking opium or heroin and the cries of the heroin peddler as he hawked small twists of the drug through the village streets. In this paper I use the case of central Shanxi 山西 to examine the transition between the smoking of opium and the use of

I am grateful to the British Academy for funding this research, which is part of a joint project with Bi Yuan 毕苑 of Beijing Normal University. Bi Yuan's research has been published as “Yandu wenti yu jindai Shanxi shehui” [The Drug Problem and Modern Shanxi Society], *Jinyang xuekan* [Shanxi Academic Journal], /OVER

/forthcoming. I am also grateful to Alan Baumlér, Rana Mitter and Frank Dikötter for comments on earlier drafts.

<sup>1</sup> *Duan liaozhi* [Making the Break with Heroin], a central Shanxi *yangge*, MS from the collection of Xue Guifen 薛贵芬, Jinzhong diqu wenhuaju [Central Shanxi Region Cultural Office], Qixian, Shanxi. These texts are part of an oral tradition and were collected between the 1950s and the 1980s. They can be dated on the basis of internal evidence, especially references to anti-drug campaigns and the constantly changing slang terms for drugs. This particular text appears to be c. 1928–37.

<sup>2</sup> Yan Bochuan [Yan Xishan], *Zhi Jin zhengwu quanshu* [Complete Writings on the Government of Shanxi] (n.d.), p. 203.

<sup>3</sup> For example, Timothy Brook and Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, eds, *Opium Regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839–1952*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Keith McMahon, *The Fall of the God of Money: Opium Smoking in Nineteenth-Century China* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002); Joyce A. Madancy, *The Troublesome Legacy of Commissioner Lin: The Opium Trade and Opium Suppression in Fujian Province, 1820s to 1920s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003); Zheng Yangwen, *The Social Life of Opium in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> Frank Dikötter, Lars Laaman and Zhou Xun, *Narcotic Culture: A History of Drugs in China* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003).

morphine and heroin in the early twentieth century. The history of opium in China has been the subject of several excellent recent studies, but there has been much less work done on the adoption of refined drugs.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, because I have looked at an inland, rural area my findings are different from those of previous studies of drug use in China, which have focussed on the eastern coastal regions of the country. Indeed, the one recent study that does deal with refined narcotics discusses them mainly in terms of the practice of injection, something that was common in the major east-coast cities but is scarcely reported for Shanxi.<sup>4</sup> Like much of China's rural interior, Shanxi declined economically in the early twentieth century and the local experience of narcotics was heavily influenced by this decline: refined narcotics came to be associated with the lower classes, in a way that was never true of opium. As various studies have suggested, the association of refined narcotics with the lower classes was due to the need for forms of the drug that could be taken faster, shifts in fashion among the élite, and government attempts to enact and enforce anti-drug laws. However, I will argue that it was also related to the growing association between nationalism and individual social status: as public demonstrations of nationalism became a characteristic of the modern citizen, abstaining from narcotics became a way in which people could demonstrate their status as citizens. Most previous studies have dated the link between nationalist feeling and opposition to drugs to the First Opium War or even earlier. This may indeed be true for national élites and southeastern coastal areas, but my research suggests that this type of thinking reached rural Shanxi only in the twentieth century. There the link between nationalism and opposition to drugs did not affect usage until the 1910s and 1920s, precisely the time when morphine began to reach the area in large quantities. Local nationalist feeling inevitably reacted particularly strongly against refined narcotics, but such nationalism was largely associated with the urban élite and the use of morphine and heroin was popular (though increasingly associated with lower-class men) until the communist campaign against drug use in the early 1950s.

### *Shanxi's Drug Problem*

This paper focuses on three counties, Taiyuan 太原, Taigu 太谷 and Xugou 徐溝, which are located in the basin of the Fen 汾 River to the south of Taiyuan city. All three are rural with a mixture of villages and small towns scattered across the fertile but drought-prone Fen River basin. The area had been wealthy since the fifteenth century, when its merchants had become involved in provisioning troops stationed on the northwest frontier. Out of this grew the great national trading networks for which



**Figure 1**

*A view over the Fen River plain. Photograph by author*



the province became famous: selling Chinese manufactures and tea to the Mongols and later to Russia. The early twentieth century saw the rapid decline of this wealth as trade was rerouted by ship and railway, and the traditional forms of finance in which Shanxi specialised were replaced by modern banks. Like many of the so-called warlords, Yan Xishan 閻錫山, who ruled the province from 1911 to 1937, was committed to a vision of nationalism and social change. Indeed he was so enthusiastic in bringing this about that Shanxi became known as the “model province”. The twin tales of economic decline and the rise of a rhetoric of nationalism are not unique to Shanxi—indeed they are features of much of China’s rural interior during this period—but because Shanxi had relatively stable and effective government compared to most provinces, their effects on the history of drug consumption are unusually visible.<sup>5</sup>

Shanxi is also a good place to research the transition from opium to refined narcotics simply because both kinds of drugs were so widely used. Observers thought that in the late nineteenth century between 80 and 90 per cent of the adult population of Taigu county town smoked

<sup>5</sup> For the history of Shanxi, see Donald D. Gillin, *Warlord: Yen Hsi-shan in Shansi Province 1911–1949* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967); Huang Jianhui, *Shanxi piaobao shi* [A History of the Shanxi Banks] (Taiyuan: Shanxi jingji chubanshe, 1992); Zhang Zhengming, *Jinshang xingshuai shi* [A History of the Rise and Fall of the Shanxi Merchants] (Taiyuan: Shanxi guji chubanshe, 1995).

<sup>6</sup> American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (hereafter ABCFM). Shanxi Mission. Minutes of the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Shanxi mission of the American Board, 1888; Letter from George L. Williams to Judson Smith (Yu Tao, 20 June 1893); Eva Jane Price, *China Journal 1889-1900: An American Missionary Family During the Boxer Rebellion* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1989), p.174.

<sup>7</sup> Liu Dapeng, *Tuixiangzhai riji* [Diary From the Chamber to Which One Retires to Ponder], ed. Qiao Zhiqiang (Taiyuan: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 1990), p.11.

<sup>8</sup> *North China Herald*, 22 March 1894, p.443; *Shanxi judubui baogaoshu* [Shanxi Anti-Opium Association Report] 11 (April 1923), p.21.

<sup>9</sup> Qu Shaomiao and Pang Yicai, *Shanxi waimao zhi* [An Account of Shanxi's Foreign Trade] (Taiyuan: Shanxi sheng difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui bangongshi, 1984), p.290. Most villages in the area had populations ranging from 200 to 1,500. Liu Wenbing, *Xugou xianzhi* [Xugou County Gazetteer] (Taiyuan: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 1992), pp.83-108.

<sup>10</sup> Liu Dapeng, *Tuixiangzhai riji*, p.400.

<sup>11</sup> Wu Shouming, "Taigu xian Guanjiabu cun" [Taigu County, Guanjiabu Village] (MS, Collection of Xing Long, Shanxi University, 1935), p.74; *Shanxi minzhong jiaoyu* [Shanxi Mass Education] 2.4 (15 August 1935), p.22.

<sup>12</sup> Lu Luoqing, "Wo suo zhidaode dupin qingkuang" [What I Know About the Narcotic Situation], *Taigu difang shizhi ziliao xuan* [Selected Materials From the Taigu Local Historical Gazetteer] 1 (n.d., c. 1990).

<sup>13</sup> Chang Hsin-pao, *Commissioner Lin and the Opium War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964); John K. Fairbank, *Trade and Diplomacy on the China Coast: The Opening of the Treaty Ports 1842-1854* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969); James M. Polachek, *The Inner Opium War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992).

<sup>14</sup> See Brook and Wakabayashi, *Opium Regimes*; Madancy, *The Troublesome Legacy*; Edward R. Slack, *Opium, State, and Society: China's Narco-Economy and the Guomin-dang* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001).

<sup>15</sup> R.K. Newman, "Opium Smoking in /OVER

opium. When a man in a neighbouring district was asked how many in his village of five hundred people did not smoke, he said about ten.<sup>6</sup> In both cases the estimates are recorded by missionaries and were intended to shock, but a local diarist writing about his own village with no expectation of publication also claimed that between 70 and 80 per cent of the villagers smoked.<sup>7</sup> There are also many comments implying that opium smoking was almost universal in the area at this time.<sup>8</sup> As we shall see, these estimates almost certainly included the kind of person who smoked only if a pipe was offered at a wedding or some other social occasion. Presumably a smaller proportion of people smoked more frequently and might have developed the physical symptoms of dependency. Precisely how many was not a question to which contemporary writers addressed themselves. In the 1910s and 1920s opium smoking declined and was replaced by the use of refined drugs: it was said that in 1920 every village had someone who took morphine, with many large villages having 100 users.<sup>9</sup> Figures are lower, but still large, for the heroin-based drugs which appeared in the late 1920s: our diarist's estimate for the number of drug users in his village dropped to 30 to 40 per cent of the population in 1929 when *liaoliao* 料料, a heroin-based compound, was the drug of choice.<sup>10</sup> Other estimates for individual villages in this period range from the 6 per cent of presumably chronic problem-users registered in an official survey at a point when most drug use was illegal and heavily penalised, to 60 per cent reported in a horror story about the amount of money being spent on drugs in the province.<sup>11</sup> During the period of Japanese occupation from 1937 to 1945 consumption rates rose again. At that time it was said that 322 households in three villages in Qixian 祁縣 county had 148 users.<sup>12</sup> None of these figures is reliable and they are extremely hard to compare, but they do suggest that although the transition from opium to morphine and heroin was accompanied by a decline in the number of users, drug use continued to be widespread.

### *Debates About Drug Use*

Historical studies of opium in China begin with the Opium Wars, international relations and court politics, and often place these in the context of the decline of the Qing dynasty.<sup>13</sup> Later scholarship has shown how opium finance and control then played a major role in early twentieth-century state-building efforts.<sup>14</sup> Studies of opium consumption are a more recent phenomenon, and most tend towards the revisionist view that opium was neither as harmful nor as unpopular as has usually been assumed. The point is made most powerfully by Newman, who argues that nineteenth century opium use was a pleasurable and largely harmless aspect of popular sociability and that relatively few users were addicted.<sup>15</sup> Dikötter, Laaman and Zhou see the twentieth-century use of refined narcotics in a

similar light.<sup>16</sup> This position is based on the general literature on drug use, much of which argues that drugs, including so-called “hard drugs” such as heroin, are not inherently particularly bad for the user but that the problems associated with them are due to a lack of adequate social controls. The result has been a series of studies that emphasize the pleasures of consumption and downplay the socio-economic effects of drug use.<sup>17</sup> However, the economic damage caused by drug use, as also by gambling (to which it was often compared at the time), increased exponentially at the bottom of the social scale. The people I am discussing in this paper were mainly farmers and rural artisans. As a result of national disintegration, local economic decline, world recession and extortionate taxation, by the 1930s many households in this area were, in R.H. Tawney’s famous comparison, like “a man standing permanently up to the neck in water so that even a ripple is sufficient to drown him”.<sup>18</sup> In such circumstances the effect of drug taking on family finances was often devastating.

It is also important to consider the transition from opium to refined narcotics as a problem in its own right. I have found the literature on gin, vodka and cocaine particularly illuminating in understanding this process, since with each of these substances we see a transition to a more potent form of a commonly used and socially accepted drug.<sup>19</sup> This literature poses three possible explanations: diffusion, government policy, and social transformation. The model of diffusion suggests that some people will experiment with whatever psychoactive substances are available. Thereafter proximity will lead to imitation, usually of superiors by inferiors. Thus the number of users mapped over time will take the form of a steeply rising curve (as each user is imitated by several more), which then gradually levels off and may well decline.<sup>20</sup> This model is helpful in understanding the rapid spread of opium smoking into the lower social classes between the 1850s and 1900, which led to the development of a market for a faster way of administering the drug. Morphine, which could be smoked more easily than opium or simply swallowed, fulfilled this need. The commercial availability of refined narcotics, which were initially imported from Europe or Japan, is clearly also relevant.

A second line of explanation, looking at the market for drugs, suggests that the transition to refined drugs is likely to be driven by government policy: banning a particular drug encourages users to experiment with more refined forms that are easier to smuggle, and moreover forces addicts to operate outside the law to obtain the drugs they need.<sup>21</sup> Many contemporary observers who noticed the role played by the 1917 ban on opium in the adoption of morphine pills in Shanxi would have agreed that provincial government policy was partly to blame for the change. However, addiction can be broken: many opium smokers, especially those in the middle and upper classes, quit when smoking became illegal and socially unacceptable. Moreover, other people who had never smoked opium took

/Late Imperial China: A Reconsideration,” *Modern Asian Studies* 29.4 (1995): 765–94. See also Joyce Madancy, “Unearthing Popular Attitudes Towards the Opium Trade and Opium Suppression in Late Qing and Early Republican China,” *Modern China* 27.4 (2001): 436–83; Zheng Yangwen, *The Social Life of Opium in China*.

<sup>16</sup> Frank Dikötter, Lars Laaman and Zhou Xun, “Narcotic Culture: A Social History of Drug Consumption in China,” *British Journal of Criminology* 42 (2002): 317–36.

<sup>17</sup> Zheng Yangwen, *The Social Life of Opium in China*; Dikötter et al. *Narcotic Culture*; McMahon, *The Fall of the God of Money*.

<sup>18</sup> R.H. Tawney, *Land and Labour in China* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1932), p.77.

<sup>19</sup> Jonathan White, “The ‘Slow but Sure Poyson’: The Representation of Gin and its Drinkers, 1736–1751,” *Journal of British Studies* 42 (2003): 35–64; B. Ann Tlusty, “Water of Life, Water of Death: The Controversy over Brandy and Gin in Early Modern Augsburg,” *Central European History* 31.1–2 (1998): 1–30; David Christian, “Living Water”: *Vodka and Russian Society on the Eve of Emancipation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990); Madeline Barbara Leons and Harry Sanabria, eds, *Coca, Cocaine, and the Bolivian Reality* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997).

<sup>20</sup> For a summary of the literature, see Roberta Ferrence, “Diffusion Theory and Drug Use,” *Addiction* 96 (2001): 165–73.

<sup>21</sup> David T. Courtwright, *Dark Paradise: Opiate Addiction in America Before 1940* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).

morphine pills. I will argue that the changes that resulted from government anti-opium policies not only pushed some users into switching to morphine pills for the sake of convenience, but also transformed the social context of use in a way that encouraged morphine rather than opium.

Another possibility, this time focussing on the causes of demand, is to see the use of refined drugs as a symptom of social transformation and alienation. The transition from beer to gin or the problem use of vodka is seen as resulting from the transition from a traditional rural culture to a modern industrial society and wage labour. Similarly, Chinese nationalist historiography suggests that opium use was both a symbol and an effect of the demoralisation of the Chinese people as a result of Western imperialism and semi-colonialism. Unfortunately none of this makes much sense for central Shanxi, which faced neither modern industrialisation nor urbanisation in the period under consideration. The late nineteenth century was a period of prosperity based on traditional institutions, while the early twentieth century saw rapid economic decline; indeed unemployment forced many people who had previously worked in the towns or in other parts of the country back to small landholdings in rural areas. Thus the adoption of refined narcotics in the 1920s and 1930s can scarcely be seen as the result of a newfound prosperity or industrialisation. Social change is surely a key to understanding the adoption of morphine and heroin, but in this case the key point is the rise of a new élite whose members used their opposition to opium as a symbol and thus made drug use increasingly a characteristic of the lower classes.

### *Opium Use in Shanxi*

<sup>22</sup> Qu and Pang, *Shanxi waimao zhi*, pp.158–59; Liang Cai, “Yandu huo Taigu he Yan Xishan zhengquan de jinyan” [The Narcotic Disaster in Taigu and the Yan Xishan Government’s Ban on Opium], *Taigu shizhi ziliao xuan* [Selected Materials From the Taigu Historical Gazetteer] 5 (1986), pp.67–76; Liu Wenbing, *Xugou xianzhi*, p.290.

The use of morphine and heroin in Shanxi grew on the basis of widespread use of opium by all social classes. The earliest mentions of opium in central Shanxi are from the early nineteenth century: in 1817 the magistrate of Taigu county town made the town’s merchants swear not to sell the drug any more. Taigu was a major centre for Shanxi merchants trading tea from the southeastern coastal provinces, and the custom of smoking opium would appear to have been brought to the town by merchants returning from there. Until the 1840s the drug remained a luxury good, with wealthy merchants smoking expensive Indian opium.<sup>22</sup> This situation was transformed when local farmers began to grow opium poppies in the 1850s. The area under cultivation expanded rapidly, despite a government ban in the aftermath of the drought and famine of the 1870s, and by the end of the century some areas specialised in poppies, with large quantities of land being registered for tax purposes as producing

opium. In one of these areas a proverb advised farmers to leave just two acres out of every ten for grain (with the rest of the land given over to poppies). A missionary passing near Taigu in the summer of 1891 and seeing the white blossoms spread across the fields concluded that opium was the principal crop. But opium was also grown in other areas. An astute local scholar recorded that even in Xugou county, which was not known for its opium production, two to three per cent of all irrigated land was used for poppies.<sup>23</sup> The profits benefited not only the farmer but the whole community. The poor found employment during the harvest, which provided work for much of the summer and drew in labourers from across the plain. The work was well paid, with one writer complaining that the wages were ten times those for the rice harvest, and another that the labourers earned double the amount that could be earned in a wheat field.<sup>24</sup> Opium also brought profits to the government, which soon switched from taxing imports to taxing growers. Wealthy merchants bought up land in opium-growing areas with profits from their national trading enterprises, and opium growing became part of central Shanxi's late nineteenth-century economic boom.<sup>25</sup> By 1881 the British consul noted that Shanxi, which had previously been a major consumer of Bengal opium, had hardly imported any that year because a good harvest was expected in the province.<sup>26</sup>

As opium switched from being a luxury good imported from India to being a crop produced by local farmers, prices must have dropped. Certainly shops specialising in selling opium began to open in many country villages. As this happened, the use of opium spread down the social spectrum. One local writer comments that at the end of the century almost everyone took an opium pipe whenever they went out. Magistrates smoked in their offices, villagers smoked at weddings and fairs, and beggars swallowed the ashes.<sup>27</sup> Perhaps the best illustration of all of how benign opium seemed to be was the frequency with which parents gave it to their children. A British missionary who visited the province in 1878 met a seventeen-year-old girl begging in the capital, who told him that her parents had introduced her to opium at the age of six. Other sources report children smoking from the ages of six and twelve, and even a three year old whose mother was accustomed to blow the fumes of her pipe in his face to keep him quiet.<sup>28</sup>

Opium use was widely accepted for both medical and recreational reasons, with considerable overlap between the two. As a medicine, opium was used for diarrhoea and pain. Since one or the other of these was a likely symptom of the vast majority of medical conditions experienced by the local population and the drug had a powerful and immediate effect, it is not surprising that it was widely used. Missionaries complained

<sup>23</sup> Zhang Zhirui, "Jiao Wen can'an' ziliao size" [Four Documents on the Jiaocheng and Wenshui Massacres], *Shanxi wenshi ziliao quanbian* [Complete Collection of Shanxi Historical Documents] (2001), Vol.7, p.423; *Taigu xianzhi* [Taigu County Gazetteer] (1931), Vol.3, "fushui hukou", p.3; Ma Mozhen, *Zhongguo jindushi ziliao* [Documents on the History of Opium Prohibition in China] (Tianjin: Tianjin renmin chubanshe, 1998), p.213; *Nongxuebao* [Agricultural Report] 48 (1898), September, Section 2, p.3; Zhang Yusheng, *Kaizha chunqiu* [Annals of Kaizha] (Zhonggong Kaizha dang yuezhi, Kaizha cunmin weiyuanhui, Wenshui xian Kaizha zhongxue, [1993]), p.24; ABCFM. Shansi Mission. Letter from James Goldsbury to Judson Smith (Li Man Chuang, 30 June 1891); Liu Wenbing, *Xugou xianzhi*, p.290.

<sup>24</sup> Eva Jane Price, *China Journal 1889-1900*, p.49; Zhang, *Kaizha chunqiu*, p.24; Liu Dapeng, *Tuixiangzhai riji*, p.21. See also *North China Herald*, 25 August 1893, p.301.

<sup>25</sup> *Shanxi quansheng caizheng shuoming-shu* [Shanxi Province Statement of Financial Affairs] (c. 1910), "Fanku neiwai xiaoshou-kuan," p.26; Zhang Zhirui, "Jiao Wen can'an' ziliao size," pp.422-23.

<sup>26</sup> Public Record Office, London. FO 228/663. Report on the Opium Trade at Tientsin for the year 1880 to date.

<sup>27</sup> Liu Dapeng, *Tuixiangzhai riji*, p.11; Liu Wenbing, *Xugou xianzhi*, p.290; *Shanxi ziyiju diyijie changnian huiyi jue'an* [Record of the Decisions of the Standing Committee of the First Shanxi Consultative Assembly], (c. 1910), "Yijue," p.13.

<sup>28</sup> Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (London), Archive, Special Series, Biographical, Box 632a (3) China, Papers of D. Hill 1876-78, Notes by D.H. Hill on the Opium Trade; ABCFM. Shansi Mission, Letter from Ireneus J. Attwood to Judson Smith (Fen Cho Fu, 27 March 1891); Liu Dapeng, *Tuixiangzhai riji*, p.137; ABCFM. Alice M. Williams Miscellaneous Papers file 3, Minutes of Taikuhsien Station Meeting, 11 December 1912.

<sup>29</sup> ABCFM. Shansi Mission, Minutes of the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Shanse mission of the American Board, 1888; Letter from I.J. Attwood to I.J. Clark (Tai Yuen Fu, 5 August 1883); Liu Dapeng, "Tuixiangzhai rijì," MS Shanxi Provincial Library, 1st and 17th of the 6th month, 1908.

<sup>30</sup> ABCFM. Shansi Mission, Letter from Ireneus J. Attwood to Judson Smith (Fen Cho Fu, 27 March 1891).

<sup>31</sup> Guo Jilong, "Jiushehui xidu suoji" [Brief Notes on Smoking Drugs in the Old Society], *Yangcheng wenshi ziliao* [Yangcheng Historical Materials] 7 (1994).

<sup>32</sup> Liu Dapeng, *Tuixiangzhai rijì*, p.103.

that Chinese doctors gave it indiscriminately for pain relief. Being cheap, widely available and effective, it was also used by ordinary people to treat themselves, especially for stomach problems. When used as a medicine it was usually sold in medical-style compounds to be dissolved and swallowed, but opium might also be smoked in a pipe for medical reasons.<sup>29</sup> A boy who entered the missionary-run Fenzhou 汾州 opium refuge at the age of fourteen in 1891 had been taught to smoke at the age of seven by his mother because he suffered from persistent colic.<sup>30</sup>

But smoking opium was not just a form of pain relief; it was also a pleasure. It was a slow, relaxing pastime that commonly took several hours and took place in a social environment. In a recent memoir an old man writes about how, as a boy, he used to hang around the village opium den to listen to the smokers' stories. He describes how the village landlord and his friend lay facing each other on a warm brick bed, with their smoking equipment set out between them: a covered lamp, matches, a long pipe with a china bowl, a long pin, a cup of water and the raw opium. The smoker picked up a little opium paste on the tip of the pin and heated it over the lamp until it was soft then held it, still over the heat, near to a small

hole in the bowl of the opium pipe. As he drew in through the pipe the softened opium was drawn into the bowl of the pipe. He then inhaled, washing the smoke down with a cup of water. Then the old man would get the children to massage his feet while he told them stories.<sup>31</sup> As a complex and time-consuming social ritual it is not surprising that opium quickly became a staple of business entertaining. In the 1890s, all the great merchants of Taigu county town provided opium for their guests, and all the town's business leaders smoked.<sup>32</sup> By this time opium smoking was also a regular part of most

## Figure 2

*Opium-smoking equipment in Shanxi. Photograph taken in Pingyao by author*



major social occasions in ordinary people's lives. One observer noticed that after a wedding banquet he attended, many of the guests and helpers lit lamps and began to smoke opium. He wrote:

Normally people who are addicted have to smoke after meals, but even people who were not addicted lay down on the couches and took a few puffs. They all thought it was the right moment for it. Even those who were not addicted felt their spirits rise when they took it.<sup>33</sup>

Another writer noted that opium smoking also usually accompanied village fairs and operas, with people lying down to smoke in the temples.<sup>34</sup> On these kinds of festive occasions opium, like strong liquor and gambling, was an accepted part of the entertainment. Opium smoking was part of socialising. It took place, for the most part, in public spaces and in the company of friends and relatives. Like alcohol and gambling it was known that opium could cause problems, but the vast majority of those who smoked saw themselves as taking part in a quite ordinary form of recreation.

These positive attitudes to opium use are well illustrated by a local drama called *Enjoying Opium* (Ai chi yan 愛吃煙), which probably dates from around the turn of the twentieth century. Local dramas like this one were short skits with singing and musical accompaniment that were put on by amateur groups of villagers and townsfolk over the New Year holiday. The performers would create their own scripts, usually based on standard characters and plots. Thus the dramas reflect the attitudes both of the village men who put them on and the audiences who watched them and laughed. In this case the scene is set by a grumbling wife who complains that her husband is wasting his time smoking opium rather than applying himself to his studies. However, most of the skit is given over to the husband and his praise of opium. He begins by listing 29 different kinds of opium from all over China (long lists of exotic products are a feature of these plays). Eventually he decides that it is impossible to list all the good types of opium, so he turns instead to listing different kinds of smokers and the pleasure opium brings them:

When the emperor takes opium the wind and rain are seasonable, the country is prosperous and the people are peaceful.

When the empress takes opium the imperial concubines and the ladies in waiting stand on either side of her.

When a civil official takes opium he feels brave and keeps warm during his audience with the emperor.

When a general takes opium he rides a great horse and terrifies the four corners of the world.

When a scholar takes opium his mind is calm and he writes tens of thousands of essays.

When a farmer takes opium he relaxes and rests peacefully.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p.24.

<sup>34</sup> Liu Wenbing, *Xugou xianzhi*, p.290.

<sup>35</sup> *Ai chi yan* [Enjoying Opium]. Central Shanxi *yangge*, MS. Collection of Xue Guifen.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Liu Dapeng, *Tuixiangzhai riji*, pp.11–13.

When a craftsman takes opium he lets his mind wander and creates something new and fresh.

When a businessman smokes opium he is fair in his dealings and grows wealthy ... <sup>35</sup>

And so it continues through a total of twenty different types of smokers. The opium smoker then compares himself to the legendary drunkard poet Li Bai 李白. He asks that when he dies he should be wrapped up like a ball of opium, and that opium be placed on the altar in front of his spirit tablet rather than food. He ends by concluding that not even the king of hell will be able to make him change his ways. The moral of the skit, expressed in the last line, is: “An opium smoker can’t be changed”.<sup>36</sup> In the context of the drama this is not a condemnation of addiction, but rather an affirmation of the pleasures of smoking opium.

The positive attitudes expressed in *Enjoying Opium* can be set against an essay written in the 1890s which emphasises the problems of opium use.<sup>37</sup> The author, Liu Dapeng 劉大鵬, was a scholar of humble background, rigid Confucian beliefs and high moral standards who worked as a tutor in a wealthy Taigu family. He criticises opium mainly as an extravagant luxury. His essay begins by explaining that in the past the main social problems were gambling and alcohol, but now opium has become a problem. Like the dramatist he then goes through a list of the different types of smokers and the drug’s effect on them, only in this case the effects are entirely negative. Officials neglect their duties; scholars waste their time and write frivolous essays; farmers are late sowing their seeds; craftsmen cannot support a family; merchants become extravagant so they lose their jobs when they fail to make a profit for their investors; women have no legitimate source of money with which to buy opium so they lead their menfolk into smoking in order to ensure a supply of the drug; and finally, wealthy families neglect their affairs and go into decline. The main issue here is the amount of time wasted smoking, and secondly the money spent on the drug.

Liu Dapeng’s opposition to opium grew out of his observations of its effects: for the poor, opium was an additional expense that might easily tip the balance from poverty to destitution. One day Liu heard a man unloading the clay that was used to prepare coal dust for burning as fuel and came out of his schoolhouse to have a look. He writes,

I saw a father and son pushing a small cart. The father was probably in his forties, but his face was dark, his appearance gaunt, and the hair on the front of his head was several inches long while the queue rolled up on the back of his head was matted like felt; his clothes were tattered and his expression hopeless. His son was twelve or thirteen years old and although his clothes were ragged he had a lively look about him. I said to the man, “Brother, you’re a big, strong man but you look completely worn out, is it because you smoke opium?” He replied, “That’s it. I



wouldn't have got into this state if I didn't smoke opium, and it's not only me; my wife smokes it too. It's only because the two of us smoke opium that our clothes are ragged, we don't have enough to eat and our children suffer from our poverty too. I'm sure you won't laugh at me, Sir, but it's already nearly noon and we haven't had anything to eat. We won't eat till we've sold this clay. The craving for opium really knocks you out."

I said, "If it makes you so poor, wouldn't it be much better not to smoke?"

He replied, "I know. I want to stop smoking, but when I don't smoke I can't move my limbs—and I need to earn money, so it's no use wishing I hadn't started."<sup>38</sup>

Liu's attitude to the problem was sympathetic, and this seems to have been generally shared. He reports an incident when a neighbour caught a thief who had broken into his house through a window. The thief got down on his knees and begged to be forgiven, explaining that he had been driven to steal by his craving for opium. The crowd of onlookers who had gathered pitied him and persuaded the irate householder to let him go.<sup>39</sup>

People were also aware that opium posed a serious risk of death either through an accidental overdose or from suicide. As a means of suicide, eating opium was convenient, effective and relatively painless. Liu's father had become so concerned at the frequency of opium suicides within the village that he bought some kind of Western medicine, in a blue glass bottle, that induced vomiting. The diary is punctuated by distressingly frequent incidents in which men come rushing into the house to ask for this medicine to use on their daughters-in-law who have attempted suicide, and in later years Liu's own daughter-in-law tragically committed suicide in the same way, leaving a two-year-old child. Missionary doctors, who also provided powerful emetics, confirm the frequency of the use of opium in such cases. Harold Schofield, who worked in Taiyuan city in the 1880s, reported that 27 out of the 30 suicides he was called to had taken opium.<sup>40</sup> It is impossible to know whether opium actually made suicide more common, but access to the drug was certainly blamed.

People were aware of the problems associated with opium use. The members of a popular local religious group, the Zailijiao 理教, did not smoke opium or tobacco or drink alcohol. At the opposite end of the social spectrum members of the Chang 常 family, one of the richest in the area, set up an inscription in their home urging family members not to smoke opium because it would destroy the family's reputation, harm the health if used in excess, and waste money. The inscription also pointed out that smoking was easily passed on to one's children and that it had been repeatedly forbidden by the court.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, large numbers of people continued to use opium despite the risks. When Liu Dapeng handed out a prescription for quitting the drug to the smokers in his village, they all politely said it was useful but most went on smoking. For many people it

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p.14.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., pp.14–15.

<sup>40</sup> Liu Dapeng, *Tuixiangzhai riji*, p.72; "Tuixiangzhai riji," MS (1st of 8th month, 1926); interview, Liu Zuoqing (Liu Dapeng's grandson), 7 August 2002; Harold Schofield, *Second Annual Report of the Medical Mission to T'ai-yuen-fu, Shansi, North China, In Connection with the China Inland Mission* (Shanghai: American Presbyterian Mission Press, 1883), p.26.

<sup>41</sup> Liu Dapeng, *Tuixiangzhai riji*, p.151; Zhang Jinping, ed., *Jinzhong beike xuancui* [Selected Inscriptions from Central Shanxi] (Taiyuan: Shanxi guji chubanshe, 2001), pp.472–74. The Zailijiao was a sectarian group that had existed since the Ming. It had a devotional life centered on the worship of Guanyin, but its most notable feature was its members' commitment to leading an upright life, especially by giving up alcohol and drugs. See Thomas David Dubois, *The Sacred Village: Social Change and Religious Life in Rural North China* (Honolulu: Hawai'i University Press, 2005), pp.107–21.

<sup>42</sup> Liu Dapeng, *Tuixiangzhai riji*, pp.11, 15, 54; “Tuixiangzhai riji,” MS (1st and 17th of 6th month, 1908; 9th of 7th month, 1914; 1st of 6th month, 1925).

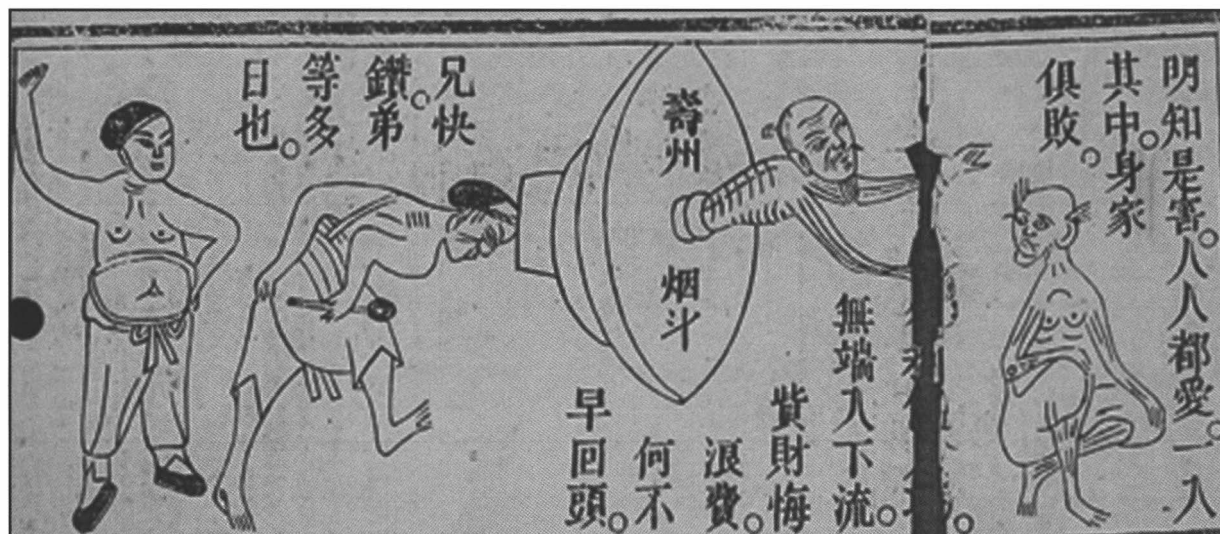
seems that the problems were outweighed by the undoubted pleasure or utility provided by the drug. They smoked because they enjoyed it and to drive away their worries. Indeed Liu Dapeng himself often took opium-based drugs, and sometimes opium itself, as a remedy for diarrhoea.<sup>42</sup>

### *The Rise of a New Political Élite for Whom Opium was a Nationalist Issue*

Thus in Shanxi villages at the turn of the twentieth century, opium smoking was a popular leisure activity, criticised (if at all) as an extravagance for the poor; but to many people elsewhere in the country opium was a terrible symbol of foreign oppression. Most histories of opium in China date the shift in perceptions of opium from leisure drug to national threat to the mid- to late-nineteenth century. However, in rural Shanxi in the 1890s and even the 1900s the emphasis was still on opium as a wasteful luxury rather than as a foreign product. Where the foreign origins of opium were mentioned they were quickly passed over, and the emphasis was on the need for frugality. Thus an anti-opium poster produced around 1895 has illustrations showing a fat, healthy young man who squeezes into an opium pipe and comes out bald, hunched and with all his ribs showing. The text begins by saying that opium “was invented in India and the poison flowed into China”, but the main emphasis is nevertheless on the

**Figure 3**

*Anti-opium poster, c. 1895. “Quan shi jieshi dayan wen” [Essay Urging the World to Give Up Opium] (American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions Archive, Shansi Mission)*



way in which opium will impoverish the smoker and ruin his family.<sup>43</sup> Even in 1908 a group of farmers who specialised in growing opium poppies responded to a lecture on how opium was harming the country by saying that that was the dynasty's problem and they were worried about their livelihood. As one of the lecturers reported afterwards, "they thought it was madmen's talk".<sup>44</sup>

It was not until the 1900s that Shanxi saw the rise of a new political élite who were actively opposed to opium and linked this to issues of nationalism and modernity. The result was that the national ban on the growing of opium poppies, which came into action in Shanxi in 1908, was the first that many people had heard of opposition to the drug. Not surprisingly, the ban was strenuously resisted by the farmers, and many other people sympathised with them. The scene of the most serious trouble was the small town of Kaizha 开柵, which had specialised in poppy growing since the 1850s and was also the site of a major market with much speculative dealing. The trouble began with a man who got drunk and went round with a gong declaring he would kill anyone who did *not* grow poppies. Then several elderly women turned up in the county offices requesting permission to ignore the ban. At some point 72 villages in the area formed an alliance to protest the ban. As the villagers poured into the town the situation became threatening, and the magistrate panicked. Troops were sent in and opened fire on the crowd, killing some 40 people. In the aftermath of the massacre the protestors won considerable support despite the fact that the provincial government was rigidly opposed to them. A member of the provincial assembly, which had in fact originally wanted to postpone the ban, was arrested and sentenced to two years in prison for speaking out against the government on the matter, and the main provincial newspaper was closed down for its reports supporting the protestors.<sup>45</sup>

The new Republican government that came to power in 1911 continued the ban on growing poppies and added to this a series of policies aimed at eradicating the consumption of the drug. Indeed Shanxi came to be famous for the strictness of its anti-drug policies. In 1917, Yan Xishan banned the wearing of queues, the binding of women's feet, and opium smoking. Foot-binding and queues were seen as symbols of the old regime and China's failure to conform to the modern world. Putting opium in this company contrasts strongly with earlier rhetoric, which usually associated the drug with alcohol and gambling. Opium was no longer being criticised primarily as a luxury, but rather as a symbol of what must be changed about the old society. With this new attitude went a new rhetoric typified in the opening passage of a speech made during an anti-opium campaign in 1924: "Although there are many reasons why China has reached the point of economic and moral bankruptcy, the disastrous effect of the poison of narcotics is certainly one of the greatest".<sup>46</sup> An illustration taken from the periodical

<sup>43</sup> ABCFM. Shansi Mission, "Quan shi jieshi dayan wen" [Essay Urging the World to Give Up Opium] (c. 1895).

<sup>44</sup> Zhang Zhirui, "Jiao Wen can'an' ziliaosize," p.424; Shanxi dulian gongsuo, ed., *Shanxi Wenshui xian juzhong zishi moji* [Notes of How a Crowd Gathered to Cause Trouble in Wenshui County, Shanxi] (1910), p.16.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., pp.1, 15; Wen Shouquan and Huang Guoliang, "Xinhai Shanxi qiyi shimo" [An Account of the Shanxi Uprising in 1911], in *Shanxi wenshi jingxuan: Jinsheng Xinhai geming qinli ji* [Selected Shanxi Historical Materials: Eye-Witness Accounts of the 1911 Revolution in Shanxi], ed. Shanxi wenshi ziliao bianjibu (Shanxi gaoxiao lianhe chubanshe, 1998), p.8; *North China Herald*, 8 April 1910; Zhang Yusheng, *Kaizha chungju*, p.8; Shang De, "Shanxi Jiao Wen can'an shimo shu" [Account of the Jiaocheng and Wenshui Massacre in Shanxi], *Shanxi wenshi ziliao* 3; *Shanxi ziyiju diyijie changnian huiyi jue'an*.

<sup>46</sup> *Shanxi juduhui baogaoshu*, July–September 1924, p.8.

**Figure 4**

*The Republic of China attacks the tiger of drug use (Shanghai poster reprinted in a Shanxi juduhui baogaoshu [Shanxi Anti-Opium Association Report], 1923–29)*



of the main provincial association charged with combating drugs gives the same message. It shows a figure labelled "Republic of China" attacking a tiger labelled "opium" with a spear bearing the tags "education", "law", "healing" and "the weapon of the anti-drug campaign". With the founding of the Republic many members of the élite, especially the young who had been educated in the new schools, came to appreciate such national appeals. Another illustration from the same periodical suggests activities in which students could take part to support the anti-drug campaign. Four boys in school clothing are shown handing leaflets out to representatives of the four traditional social groups: a scholar (in a modern-style uniform), a farmer (with a hoe), a craftsman (in work

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p.21.

<sup>48</sup> *North China Herald*, 12 August 1922, p.452.

clothes) and a merchant (in traditional longgown and cap). The patriotic message is made clear in the question printed in large characters across the top of the picture: "Compatriots of all classes of society, do you really love your country and people?" (see Figure 5).

Taigu county town with its great merchant wealth had been a centre of the opium trade, but its wealth also made it a centre for modern education and new ideas. Now it became known for its anti-drug campaigns. A manifesto written for one of these in 1924 begins:

Do you know what our country's worst enemies are? Do you know what the disaster is that is destroying our land and ruining our families? Do you understand what the terrible demon is that is poisoning our land? Our worst enemies are opium and morphine pills. The disaster that is destroying our land and ruining our families is the spread of narcotics. The terrible demon that is poisoning our land is the planting of opium seedlings.<sup>47</sup>

Such rhetoric clearly had an appeal: an anti-opium association founded in the town had 1,500 members.<sup>48</sup> Yan Xishan claimed that Taigu students

shared the motto of their neighbours in Yuci 榆次 county, who shouted out, "If Yuci has students, then they won't let Yuci have narcotics; if Yuci has narcotics, that means it doesn't have any students".<sup>49</sup> The implication is that students, who were after all the rising élite, are defined by their opposition to opium. These forces of modernity and nationalism backed the county's ambitious young magistrate in his tough enforcement of the new anti-drug policies. This included a systematic search of all homes for opium-smoking equipment, with opium users being listed and required to enter new workhouse-like institutions to be cured of their addiction.<sup>50</sup>

However, the Shanxi government's vigorous enforcement of anti-opium policies was extremely unpopular. Yan Xishan found himself having to remind his subordinates that enforcing the anti-opium policy was about rescuing people, not harming them.<sup>51</sup> The popular antipathy was even shared by Liu Dapeng, who strongly disapproved of the drugs concerned. He recorded with approval a propaganda drama he saw at his local temple that described the harm done by morphine pills in order to try to stop people smoking. But when he visited a timber shop that he owned in Taigu county, he was horrified by the fact that the government was confiscating property and imprisoning people for something

**Figure 5**

Picture encouraging students to take part in anti-drug campaigns (Shanxi juduhui disanci da yundong). (Shanghai poster reprinted in a Shanxi juduhui baogaoshu [Shanxi Anti-Opium Association Report], 1923–29)



<sup>49</sup> Yan Bochuan, *Zhi Jin zhengwu quanshu*, p.255.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., pp.198–99; *North China Herald*, 14 July 1923, p.89.

<sup>51</sup> Yan Bochuan, *Zhi Jin zhengwu quanshu*, p.256.

<sup>52</sup> Liu Dapeng, *Tuixiangzhairiji*, pp.290, 312; Liu Dapeng, "Tuixiangzhai riji," MS (1st, 10th and 14th of 2nd month, 1925).

which, for all his disapproving comments and essays, he evidently did not see as a crime. He complained that the magistrate was behaving like a robber and noted that many of those who were imprisoned died of illness while they were confined. He also recorded the fact that so many labourers had fled because of the crackdown that it was almost impossible to hire anyone to work in his shop. He described the government's anti-drug policies as "recklessly harassing the villagers" and "a political catastrophe".<sup>52</sup>

### *The New Social Profile of Drug Users*

<sup>53</sup> *North China Herald*, 16 December 1916, p.580. The Chinese term, *jindan*, is also translated as "golden pills" and "golden elixir". I have chosen to use the contemporary English translation. Contemporary English language sources also sometimes refer to the drug as morphia pills. Dikötter, Laaman and Zhou describe golden grains as including heroin as well as morphine ("Narcotic Culture: A Social History of Drug Consumption in China," p.329). None of the evidence from Shanxi suggests this, so I assume that as with other slang terms for drugs the contents might have been different in different parts of the country.

<sup>54</sup> Yan Bochuan, *Zhi Jin zhengwu quanshu*, p.10; Public Record Office, London, FO 228/3022 p.279.

<sup>55</sup> *Shanxi judubui baogaoshu* 6 (1921): 4, 11; (April 1923): 3, 19; (October 1926): 10–11; (13 December 1923): 25; *Shanxi ribao* [Shanxi Daily News], 12 August 1919, p.3; 27 November 1919, p.2.

<sup>56</sup> Lu Luoqing, "Wo suo zhidaode dupin qingkuang".

All this suggests that although students might support the new nationalist campaigns, much of the local population did not. The result was that Shanxi, which had some of the country's strictest campaigns against drugs, came to have particularly high levels of addiction to refined narcotics. This began in 1916, when many people began to turn to a new drug that had recently appeared on the market. A foreigner reported that there had recently been huge sales of a new product called golden grain pills (*jindan* 金丹). All kinds of traders were displaying signs advertising the pills, which were supposed to cure everything from chilblains to lunacy. He commented that golden grain pills were in fact a great and new drug habit.<sup>53</sup> He was right; the main ingredient of the golden grains was morphine.<sup>54</sup> Morphine had been isolated in Europe early in the nineteenth century and later commercially manufactured. By the turn of the twentieth century European-made morphine, along with other products of the chemical revolution such as aniline dyes and kerosene, was being exported to China. It was not long before all these products were finding a market in the towns and villages of Shanxi. At first the morphine was imported into Tianjin 天津, China's major northern port, much of it probably via Japan. There it was made up into pills, which also contained lactose and strychnine, and shipped along the railway into Shanxi. In later years golden grain pills were made in Henan 河南 and Hebei 河北 provinces, which bordered Shanxi and had little official drug control, and were simply smuggled across the border.<sup>55</sup> The pills were presented as a modern patent medicine and sold in the new Western-style pharmacies that had recently appeared in the provincial capital.<sup>56</sup>

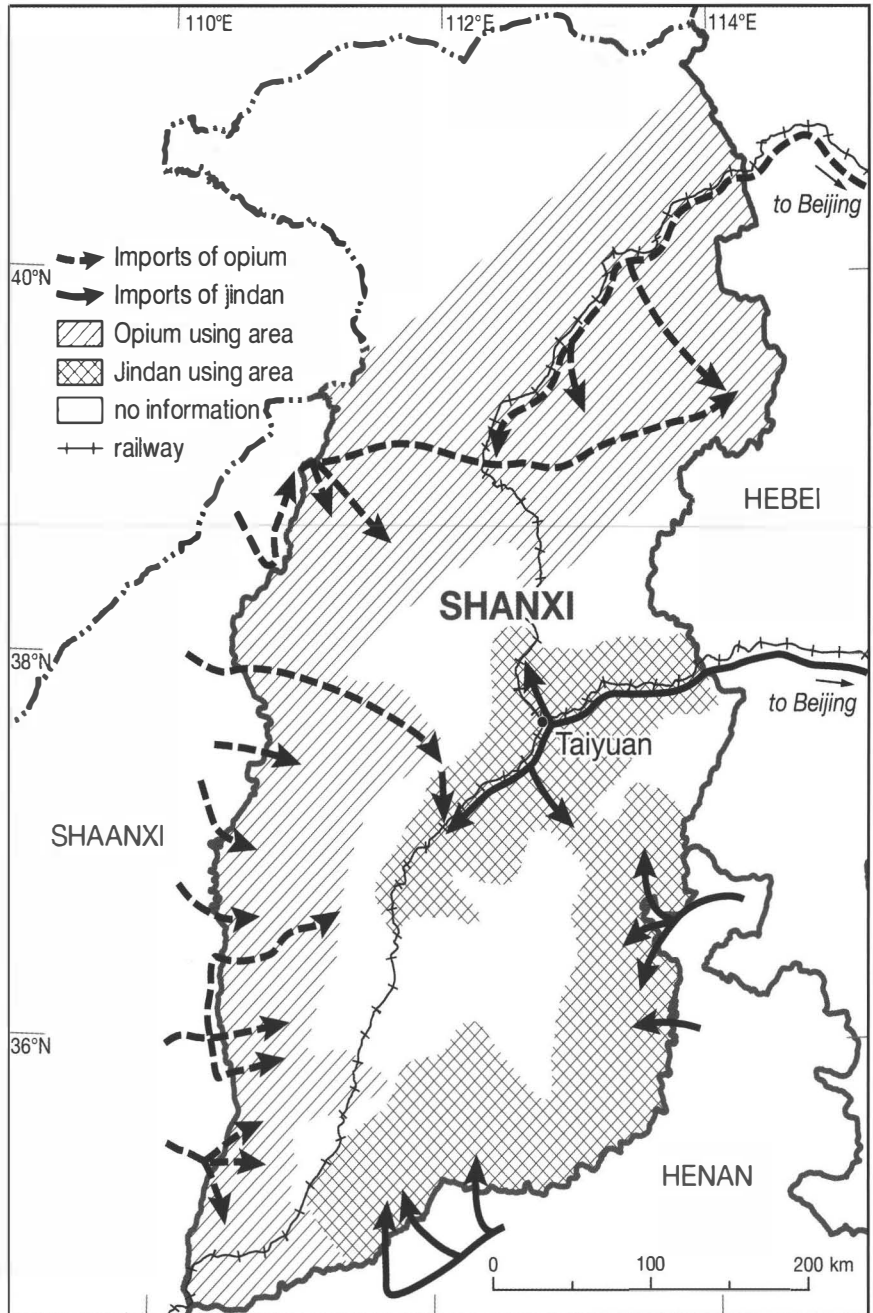
The pills were sold initially as an opium cure (among other things), and they would certainly have removed the need to smoke opium; but they also appealed to young people who had never used opium. They could be swallowed like a medicine or smoked in a pipe like opium, although with much less preparation. Despite their adulteration with lactose and strychnine and possibly other ingredients as well, the morphine content of golden grain pills was far higher than that of smoking opium. Opium typically has a morphine content of five to fifteen per cent, and not all

of that is absorbed in the smoking process (which was why beggars could support an addiction on the ashes of opium that had already been smoked several times).<sup>57</sup> Swallowing pills of morphine was a far more effective way of getting the drug into one's system than smoking opium, but that did not necessarily mean it was more pleasurable. Opium smoking was a complex social experience in a way that taking morphine pills was not. Indeed people in the western and northern parts of Shanxi continued to smoke opium even while the central and southern parts of the province rapidly turned to golden grains. So why was there a market for golden grain pills?

The first reason was undoubtedly the fact that opium had shifted from luxury status to being an ordinary part of everyday life. As the writers of a local

**Figure 6**

*Map showing opium and golden grain use in Shanxi in 1924. Map by ANU Cartography, based on information obtained by author in Shanxi juduhui baogaoshu [Shanxi Anti-Opium Association Report], 1924*



<sup>57</sup> Yan Bochuan, *Zhi jin zhengwu quanshu*, Vol.6, pp.152–54, 243; *Shanxi juduhui baogaoshu* 17 (October–December 1924): 45; *Taigu xianzhi* (1931), Vol.3, “Fushui hukou”, p.3; Lu Luoqing, “Wo suo zhidaode dupin qingkuang”; Slack, *Opium, State, and Society*, p.36.

<sup>58</sup> *Taigu xianzhi* (1931), Vol.3, "Fushui hukou," p.3.

<sup>59</sup> ABCFM. Shansi Mission, T'ai Ku Medical Work 1908–09; *Taigu xianzhi* (1931), Vol.3, "Fushui hukou," p.3.

<sup>60</sup> Liang Cai, "Yandu huo Taigu," pp.67–72.

<sup>61</sup> *Shanxi juduhui baogaoshu* 9 (October, 1922): 1 and passim.

<sup>62</sup> ABCFM. Shansi Mission, T'ai Ku Station Medical Work 1907–08. See also *North China Herald*, 24 February 1911, p.426; 17 May 1916, p.444.

history commented, by the 1900s even middle-class people and small households in the countryside thought of opium as something as necessary as cloth or vegetables.<sup>58</sup> The fact that opium was easily available meant that physical dependence, which requires several consecutive days of use, was more likely to develop. Finding the leisure time needed to smoke opium became a major problem, especially for those whose livelihood demanded that they work long hours. As a result, as early as the 1900s people had begun to eat opium rather than smoke it. It became fashionable to eat the drug mixed into a paste with brown sugar. Missionary doctors reported a spate of accidents with small children who had eaten the paste, attracted by its sweetness, and died of an overdose. Opium smoking was extremely time-consuming, appropriate for festivals and holidays but not easily compatible with busy working lives. The fact that opium had begun to be eaten suggests that there was already a market among some existing opium users for a more quickly taken form of the drug.<sup>59</sup> Thus the lower social status of users in itself encouraged the adoption of morphine tablets.

Secondly, government policy was an important factor. Anti-drug campaigns raised the price of the drug and meant that there was a market for less visible forms of consumption. As a more concentrated form of the drug, morphine pills were easier to smuggle and therefore cheaper. Moreover, they were easier and quicker to use. An opium smoker needed to lie down with a pipe and a considerable amount of other equipment. When he had finished, the room and the smoker both smelled strongly of opium. Golden grains, however, were usually swallowed; and even if they were smoked did not leave such a strong smell.<sup>60</sup> The areas around the provincial capital, which had some of the strictest anti-opium enforcement in the whole province, came to be a hub of the trade in morphine pills, whereas in the western parts of the province, which had easy access to Shaanxi 陕西 province where opium was legally grown, opium remained the drug of choice for the majority of users.<sup>61</sup> Thus morphine pills began to appeal not only to a younger generation influenced by their modern style, but also to former opium smokers who switched to morphine because it was cheaper and more convenient in the climate of drug control that the government had created.

Government campaigns did prompt some people to stop smoking opium. We know that in any case large numbers of people regularly gave up the drug when prices rose, as was bound to happen given the government ban. Missionary reports on opium refuges make it clear that there were more patients when prices were high and the refuges were often empty when prices were low. As one report states, "The opium refuges are looking up again this year . . . . The price of opium has doubled during the year so that many especially of the poor are forced to break off the habit."<sup>62</sup> If even those who acknowledged that they would need help



to break the habit could and did do so when prices rose, it is likely that many more casual social users would have done the same. However, the impression given by the sources is that in the 1920s a relatively high proportion of those who stopped smoking were from the middle or upper classes, whose members were more likely to have been directly influenced by the new nationalist ideology. Newspapers, which were largely aimed at the modernising élite and were also important in conveying the new nationalism, contained many advertisements for medicines to help those wanting to quit opium or other narcotics: sugar-coated pills will be easy to take, they maintained, and will keep you safe from vomiting, chills, fevers, madness and pain as you break the drug habit without feeling anything at all. There were also advertisements for small private hospitals, which claimed that, like the missionary refuges, they would help you quit.<sup>63</sup> All these resources are aimed at the relatively wealthy, newspaper-reading smoker. In addition to some people quitting, we can presume that some younger people who might well previously have taken up the habit never tried the drug at all. Again this was more likely among those who had been influenced by the modern school system. Another illustration from the magazine of the anti-drug association shows an élite family, dressed in what for Shanxi at the time were modern styles, rejecting morphine pills, the man with the words “Good citizens definitely do not smoke or sell morphine pills” while the woman warns the reader that morphine pills destroy the family and also the country. In sum, nationalist campaigns created a new generation of the élite whose group identity prohibited drug use.

**Figure 7**

*A modern family rejecting golden grain pills, Shanxi juduhui baogaoshu [Shanxi Anti-Opium Association Report], 18 (Jan 1925)*



<sup>63</sup> *Shanxi juduhui baogaoshu* 17 (November–December 1924): 45; *Shanxi ribao*, 3 September 1930, p.8; 5 September 1930, p.5.

<sup>64</sup> *Huan wan* [Exchanging a Bowl], Central Shanxi *yangge*, MS, collection of Xue Guifen.

<sup>65</sup> Yan Bochuan, *Zhi Jin zhengwu quanshu*, Vol.6, pp.162–64; *Shanxi juduhui baogao-shu* 6 (1921): 1, 3, 17 (October–December 1924), p.78; Zhang Yusheng, *Kaizha chunqiu*, pp.12–13; *North China Herald* 12 November 1921, p.434; *Shanxi ribao*, 27 November 1919, p.2.

<sup>66</sup> *Nü jie jindan* [A Woman Breaks the Golden Grains Habit], Central Shanxi *yangge*, MS, collection of Xue Guifen. See also Lu Luoqing, “Wo suo zhidao de dupin qingkuang,” pp.111–18.

But for many villagers opiates remained a normal, if extravagant, part of everyday life. In a popular local drama plot a peddler tries to seduce a young wife who demands a long list of luxuries in exchange for a bowl. Versions of this story have the young woman demanding opium-smoking equipment, several different types of opium, bags of golden grain, another kind of morphine pill known as machine guns, and some of the most up-to-date heroin-based drugs. These are mixed in with various different types of clocks, watches, sweets, tobacco, an oil lamp, an electric lamp, a battery-operated torch, sweet potatoes, seafood, jugs and tableware. At the end of the play the peddler presses the young woman to come to him that night; he will buy golden grains, and they will both get high and have a good time together.<sup>64</sup> The humour lies in the ever more impossible and expensive demands that the young woman makes; the narcotics are not distinguished from the other luxuries and there is no sense of condemnation.

At the same time morphine pills were reshaping the whole culture of drug use. Since opium was no longer grown in Shanxi there was no immediate economic benefit for farmers. Moreover, a trade that had previously been regular and taxed rapidly became violent. The top end of the trade was no longer in the hands of the province's wealthy merchants but came to be controlled by large gangs of smugglers, often armed with guns, clubs and knives. Sometimes groups of soldiers from neighbouring provinces would join in the smuggling. The gangs were strong enough to resist government interference and to enforce contracts, where necessary, with violence. The bottom end of the trade moved away from small shops and into the hands of vagrants and addicts, who had less to lose.<sup>65</sup> The pills they sold were illegal and were therefore more likely to be swallowed in private, with the result that there were fewer social constraints on their use than there had been on the use of opium. Golden grains were quick to consume, powerful and often taken in private. This meant that it was possible to consume much more of the drug in a day, and therefore that physical dependence was both more likely to develop and more serious when it did. A local drama depicts a woman who has just spent a week in one of the government's anti-opium workhouses. She describes how she was coughing, vomiting and suffering from diarrhoea, and as soon as she got home she went to find her pipe, had a quick puff of morphine, and instantly felt that she could breathe again.<sup>66</sup>

Almost any drug user could be accused of wasting money, but the impact of drug use on family finances was much more dramatic among the poor. The poorer the users were, the more likely addiction was to be a serious economic problem—and the more likely that problem was to become visible to onlookers. As a result, golden grain pills came to be associated by those who no longer used them with poverty, crime and the destruction of the family. Local dramas from this period often describe

the progressive deterioration of the addict's economic situation: once you start taking golden grains you will sell your land, then your house, and end up wrapped in rags so tattered you will be pulling them about to try and cover your private parts. Even wealthy men will sell their wives and children and end up turning to crime.<sup>67</sup> In 1921, which was a particularly bad year because there was also a drought, observers noticed that across the central Shanxi area smokers of morphine pills were selling their wives and children. In one case this is based on the interpretation of local government marriage statistics, but observers also knew of the problem more personally. One of Liu Dapeng's own brothers-in-law sold his wife because of poverty, partly caused by his addiction to golden grain, something of which his relatives are still ashamed today.<sup>68</sup> Wives and children were generally recognised as saleable assets of the head of the household, but eventually the assets would be exhausted and the addict might turn to crime. Actual examples of this are hard to come by, but there was certainly a popular feeling that this was a threat. Taigu school pupils were sent out into the countryside to lecture people on the need to keep away from opiates with a speech that included the claim that drugs would destroy your family and then lead you into robbery or prostitution. Moreover, stories of horrible crimes driven by morphine addiction circulated widely. One of these concerned a village woman who had sold all her possessions to pay for golden grains. With no money left, she caught sight of her neighbour's child playing in the road wearing a heavy silver necklace as a good luck charm. The woman snatched the necklace and threw the child into a well, murdering to hide her crime.<sup>69</sup> Stories like this contrast with the sympathetic attitude shown to opium addicts who committed crimes in the nineteenth century. They lay behind ever-increasing government efforts to prevent the use of narcotics during the 1920s.

<sup>67</sup> *Gailiang nai wawa* [Improved Version of "Feeding the Baby"], central Shanxi *yangge*, MS, collection of Xue Guifen.

<sup>68</sup> Liu Dapeng, *Tuixiangzhai riji*, pp.288, 290; Liu Wenbing, *Xugou xianzhi*, p.62; Interview, Beidasi village, July 2002.

<sup>69</sup> *Shanxi juduhui baogaoshu* 17 (October–December 1924): 66–67; 10 (January 1923): 14; *North China Herald*, 3 February 1923, p.304.

### *Heroin: Economic Collapse and the Rise of Popular Nationalism*

The weakening of the province's national trading and banking networks meant that Shanxi's rural economy, which had been under threat since the 1900s, went into catastrophic decline when Yan Xishan entered into the country's civil wars in the late 1920s. This was a costly undertaking and was paid for by a mixture of heavy taxation, direct requisitioning from farmers and businesses, and the devaluation of the provincial currency to the point where it collapsed. The problems this caused were exacerbated in the early 1930s, when the province was hit by the world economic depression. The Japanese invasion and occupation from 1937 to 1945, following on years of shortage, was the last straw; and extortionate requisitioning in 1942 reduced many villages to a condition of famine.

<sup>70</sup> Lu Luoqing, "Wo suo zhidaode dupin qingkuang"; Qu Shaomiao and Pang Yicai, *Shanxi waimao zhi*; Chen Han-seng, "The Good Earth of China's Model Province," *Pacific Affairs* 9.3 (1936); Liu Dapeng, *Tuixiangzhai riji*, pp.435, 463, 469.

<sup>71</sup> Wu Zhigang, "Yapian dui Shanxirenmin de duhai" [How Opium Poisoned the People of Shanxi], in *Jindai Zhongguo yandu xiezhen* [True Pictures of Modern China's Drug Use], ed. Wenshi jinghua bianjibu (Shijiazhuang: Hebei renmin chubanshe, 1997), p.175; Liu Dapeng, *Tuixiangzhai riji*, p.543; Zhang Yusheng, *Kaizha chungqiu*, p.23; Qu Shaomiao and Pang Yicai, *Shanxi waimao zhi*, p.296.

<sup>72</sup> Lu Luoqing, "Wo suo zhidaode dupin qingkuang"; *Shanxi ribao*, 10 March 1951, p.1; Liang Cai, "Yandu huo Taigu"; Interviews, Taiyuan, July 2003.

<sup>73</sup> Interviews, Beidasi village, July 2002.

Meanwhile, the price of opium dropped dramatically. This began in 1931 when Yan Xishan, driven by financial need but also anticipating changes in central government policy, switched from banning opium to enforcing a government monopoly on it in the name of selling "anti-opium medicine". Opium cakes were labelled as anti-opium medicine and distributed to county magistrates, who were then required to sell them on to shops, with the result that opium could now be bought everywhere. There was also a vigorous crackdown on all other drugs, partly because refined narcotics were considered to be a greater evil than opium and partly in order to maintain the monopoly. Local magistrates were given free rein to punish dealers, and the result was a series of executions that must have terrified many people.<sup>70</sup> Then in 1937 came the Japanese invasion and occupation of the area. The Japanese military government not only allowed widespread use of opiates but also encouraged villages to grow poppies in order to increase their tax contributions. In 1939 many villages grew poppies for the first time since 1908. This caused yet another drop in prices.<sup>71</sup>

It was under these circumstances that a new product known as *liaoliao* (a slang term meaning literally "the stuff"), appeared on the market in central Shanxi and was widely taken up. The key ingredient was heroin, made from opium and acetic acid (vinegar has long been a major local product). Various other drugs were then added to boost the effect (alcohol, caffeine, chloroform, strychnine, barbiturates, quinine sulphate) or to sweeten the taste (mannitol and lactose). The resulting compound was pressed into a block, like soap, and later cut into pieces for sale. The most powerful effect was produced by using a match to heat a few grains over a small piece of foil and sniffing or swallowing the resulting fumes. Alternatively a few grains could be wrapped in a twist of paper and smoked like a cigarette.<sup>72</sup>

*Liaoliao* fitted easily into the existing culture of opiate use while being cheap, convenient and attractively modern. Former users of golden grain pills found that *liaoliao* slaked their craving, and golden grain was quickly forgotten. This contrasts with opium, which continued to be popular whenever government attempts at restriction relaxed. Interviews give the impression that opium was more likely to be smoked by older women, who had the time for it, whereas the heroin-based drugs were the province of the young, and especially of young men.<sup>73</sup> The use of matches and twists of paper shaped like cigarettes as part of the process of smoking *liaoliao* suggests the new consumer culture of which the drug was a part, since both matches and cigarettes were recent innovations only widely adopted in this area in the 1920s. *Liaoliao* was not only consumed like tobacco in a cigarette; it was also marketed like cigarettes under a

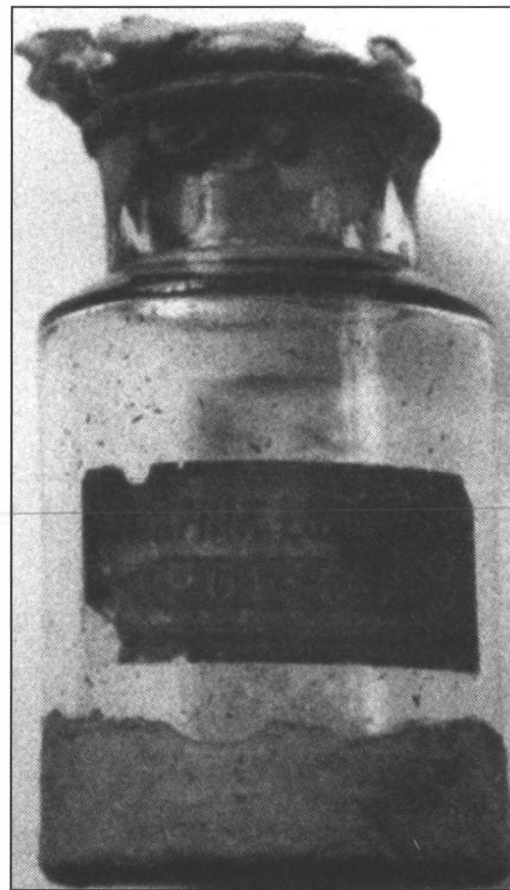
variety of well-known brand names: Cloud Dragon, Golden Ox, Phoenix, and Pine Bamboo Plum (which is mentioned in the quotation at the start of this essay). When one of the manufacturers was arrested in 1950, the police confiscated his press, mould, ingredients and a set of Beautiful Woman brand labels.<sup>74</sup>

For some of the young men who were attracted to it *liao-liao* was a work drug, enabling them to perform labour that was otherwise unbearably harsh. Rickshaw pullers in Taiyuan city would draw their vehicles up at the side of the road for a few seconds, light a match and take a sniff. Similarly papermakers who spent the harsh winter months standing up to their waists in the icy stream ten hours a day washing the lime out of the pulp found that a sniff before they went down into the water made their work more bearable. Almost all of them were said to take the drug.<sup>75</sup>

But for most people *liaoliao* was seen as a pleasure and a luxury. A critic, both of whose parents had taken drugs for years, explained the arguments people gave for smoking: when you are angry *liaoliao* calms you down; because it is more powerful than opium, it is even better for stomach complaints and diarrhoea; and it will make you live longer. But he also claimed, and interviews with elderly villagers in the area today confirm this, that people's main motive for smoking was pleasure.<sup>76</sup> These old people have astonishingly few inhibitions about discussing the narcotic culture of their childhood, even though since 1949 there has been a strong taboo on drug use. They remember that addicts in the village were despised and found it hard to find wives, but they all also remember that taking heroin was a pleasurable experience and ordinary people did not think it was wrong. For them it was something that young people did with their friends: when they smoked they felt better, and it made food taste good. Moreover, it was so cheap that there was little to prevent people having a go. Most interviewees were too young to have tried *liaoliao* themselves, but the one who had had been offered it by his grandmother at the age of five and recalled how good it felt.<sup>77</sup> Even local dramas which, like *Making the Break with Heroin* (quoted at the beginning of this essay), drew the moral that drugs were bad for you, depicted the actual experience of taking heroin as pleasurable. Drug use was recognised as causing addiction and addicts were despised as "dope fiends" (*yangui* 煙鬼), but some use of heroin continued to be perceived by many people as an understandable pleasure.

**Figure 8**

*Refined drugs sold as grains in a bottle. Photo from collection of Taigu County Government Offices, Shanxi province*



<sup>74</sup> Liang Cai, "Yandu huo Taigu"; Lu Luoqing, "Wo suo zhidaode dupin qingkuang"; *Shanxi ribao*, 18 October 1950, p.3.

<sup>75</sup> Interview, Liu Zuoqing, 7 August 2002.

<sup>76</sup> *Shanxi minzhong jiaoyu* [Shanxi Mass Education] 2.4 (15 August 1935): 19; Interviews, Beidasi village, July 2002.

<sup>77</sup> Interview, Liu Zuoqing, 7 August 2002; Interview, Taigu, July 2002.

<sup>78</sup> *Shanxi judubui baogaoshu* 20 (June 1929)

<sup>79</sup> *Judu tekan* [Anti-Opium Special Issue] October 1932 (bound with *Shanxi judubui baogaoshu*), frontispiece.

<sup>80</sup> Liu Dapeng, *Tuixiangzhai riji*, p.431. See also pp.400, 403.

<sup>81</sup> *Shanxi ribao*, 8 October 1929, p.6. For other cases, see *Shanxi minzhong jiaoyu* 2.4 (15 August 1935): 6; Hu Jingzhai, "Jiefangqian Taiyuan zhidu jianwen" [What I Saw and Heard of Drug Control in Taiyuan Before Liberation], in *Jindai Zhongguo yandu xiezhen*, ed. Wenshi jinghua bianjibu, pp.178-79.

For the critics, on the other hand, the focus on nationalism now completely dominated the regular anti-drug campaigns. The manifesto of one such campaign, held in 1929, begins:

Ever since the British imperialists used their opium policy to effect their ambitions of invasion, the glorious Republic of China has been sunk in a drunken stupor, and has gradually become bound and oppressed by them, so that without even realising it we have taken the path towards national extinction and the eradication of our race.<sup>78</sup>

The emphasis on nationalism was driven as much by the nation's current problems with Japan as by its historical problems with Britain. A special issue of a magazine on drugs published in 1932 begins with a photograph of five Japanese men who have been arrested in the provincial capital and expelled from the province for selling morphine and heroin. Unlike Chinese drug dealers, these men could not be executed since they were foreign nationals. The accompanying text explains that "the Japanese want to use narcotics to kill our four hundred million compatriots".<sup>79</sup>

It is in the 1930s that we finally see nationalist ideas penetrating Shanxi village perceptions of drug use. This was part of the general spread of nationalist feeling that resulted both from the gradual expansion of modern education and from the Japanese invasion. Local rumours claimed that "the poison *liaoliao* comes from Japan and is intended to harm our country".<sup>80</sup> Ironically, this was probably not true. Golden grain had indeed been made from morphine largely imported by the Japanese, but arrests and confiscations of equipment suggest that much *liaoliao* was locally produced. Indeed in the village where this rumour was recorded, the son and nephew of the village head were arrested for drug offences in 1929. When their house was searched it was found to contain opium, *liaoliao*, machine-gun pills, scales and a machine for making the pills.<sup>81</sup> True or not, the period of the occupation when the Japanese actually promoted drug use strengthened the element of nationalism in popular opposition to it.

The nationalist propaganda against drugs was also effective because the effects of an addiction to heroin during the economic collapse of the 1930s and the Japanese occupation were highly visible. Moreover, the people concerned were not members of some distant and stigmatised group, but the families of one's friends and neighbours. Narcotics came to be associated with the disintegration of society that was going on due to economic collapse followed by the Japanese occupation. These were harsh times, and families that had the additional expense of buying drugs could easily be tipped over the edge of poverty into destitution. In one village it was said that seventeen households had been destroyed by *liaoliao*, six of them to the point of selling their young women or children. When we asked one elderly villager, who had replied to our enquiries by saying that opium destroyed families and caused people to sell their wives and

children, whether he actually knew of any examples of this happening, he replied simply that his parents, who took *liaoliao*, were going to sell him—but in the end his mother could not bear to part with him. In 1942 there was a famine caused by Japanese extraction of grain. In some villages up to a third of the population died. Destitute drug addicts had little hope of survival.<sup>82</sup>

In the popular mind drug use became associated with tragic stories of the violent destruction of the family. Where golden grains had been blamed for the sale of family members and the murder of neighbours, *liaoliao* was blamed for even more shocking murders within families. In one county town, a nineteen-year-old student, the son of a policeman, killed his twelve-year-old brother because he was angry that the child was spending several dollars daily on buying *liaoliao*. In another case, a formerly wealthy man murdered his son who had been addicted from birth. The town head knew of this, but did nothing more than order the father to bury the boy.<sup>83</sup>

The intensification of the problems caused by narcotics during the agonising years of the Japanese occupation set the scene for the Chinese Communist Party's extraordinarily successful campaign against narcotics in the early 1950s. The Communists won control of central Shanxi in 1948. As a party, they were both highly nationalistic and committed to an ethic of diligence and frugality. For both these reasons they were determined to end opiate use. On the other hand, they also based their legitimacy in part on a claim to identify with popular culture, and popular culture in Shanxi was by no means uniformly opposed to drug use. However, the Japanese occupation had made nationalism a major popular issue and years of work by anti-drug campaigners had eventually succeeded in linking opposition to drug use and nationalism in the public mind. There was thus considerable support for eradication; but there was also widespread acceptance of the use of narcotics as normal, especially among the working classes, and it would therefore be impossible to demonise users. The *Shanxi Daily News*, in an editorial on eradicating drug use, called for officials and people to be taught that drugs are harmful because they harm production, cause loss of life and injure the nation. Little information about the anti-drug campaign reached the Shanxi provincial newspaper, which was restricted to reporting the trials and executions of a few manufacturers of *liaoliao*.<sup>84</sup> Interviewees remember simply that the supply of drugs ceased; and when no more opium was available, addicts had to withdraw. The cultivation of poppies stopped with land reform when village officials took control of what crops were planted where, and the state emphasised—and rewarded officials for—grain production. Imports ceased as similar processes took place in other provinces and the national government took control of China's overseas trade. The people interviewed did not talk of punishment

<sup>82</sup> Lu Luoqing, "Wo suo zhidaode dupin qingkuang"; Interview, Taigu, July 2002; Interview, Liu Zuoqing, 6 September 1999.

<sup>83</sup> *Shanxi ribao*, 26 September 1930, p.6; Zhang Yusheng, *Kaizha chunqiu*, p.15.

<sup>84</sup> *Shanxi ribao*, 18 October 1950, p.3; 10 March 1951, p.1. For the reasons behind the limited reporting, see Zhou Yongming, *Anti-Drug Crusades in Twentieth-Century China: Nationalism, History, and State Building* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999), p.101.

for addicts, though they all remembered the difficulties of withdrawal and the length of time the symptoms lasted. Several pointed out that the 1950s campaign was successful mainly because it was impossible to go back to smoking afterwards. By 1952 Shanxi's narcotic culture had ended. A few people buried a jar of opium in their courtyard to supply an elderly relative, and some old men occasionally got hold of pain-killing tablets from the local clinic to smoke, but there was general support for the government's action from a population who had come to see that despite the pleasure of taking narcotics they could also cause great harm. In recent years opiate use, poppies and even *liaoliao* have re-emerged in Shanxi, but only in what can easily be described as a deviant sub-culture. The normative opiate use of the past seems to have gone for good.

### *Conclusion*

The Communist Party's achievement in eradicating Shanxi's drug culture in the 1950s was an impressive one, but it was one that was built on changes in attitudes that had begun in the early years of the twentieth century. From the 1900s, Shanxi had seen the gradual strengthening of a modernising political élite for whom opium was a major national problem. Their personal rejection of drug use created a situation in which drugs began to be associated with members of lower social classes. In Shanxi this process coincided with the introduction and spread of refined narcotics. As the use of more powerful refined drugs spread and the élite largely withdrew from drug use, the new drugs came to be seen as characteristic of rural lower-class culture. But that culture itself was under threat as the economy collapsed in the 1930s, and as a result of the Japanese invasion. The widespread perception that the Japanese were encouraging drug use also made nationalism a powerful tool; it was all too easy to accuse dealers, and lower-class users, of collaboration. The physical costs of the refined drugs for the individual and the economic costs for the family exacerbated the problems, with the result that by the 1950s many people had come to associate refined drugs with poverty, destitution, crime and treachery. This was a radical change from the attitudes of the 1890s, when opium was in widespread use, and it was on this basis that the Communist Party could finally conduct an effective campaign against the drug.

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