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A Historical Survey of the Excavations at Samaria

Hideo Ogawa

The site of Samaria in Palestine has a long history of archaeological investigations, which is represented by the two great reports: Harvard Excavations at Samaria 1908-1910 in two volumes, 1924 (by C. A. Reisner et al.) and Samaria-Sebaste in three volumes, 1942-1957 (by J. W. Crowfoot et al.).

These works are worthy of close study and of careful comparison. They are both not only the essential contributions to the history of ancient Samaria, but also the text-books of the most advanced methodological ideas of Palestine archaeology in the first half of this century.

It is very rewarding, or, so to speak, the only way of understanding what Palestine archaeology is, to analyse these ideas in each report and to describe their origin and development. Reisner brought the idea of systematizing field-works and recording, while Miss Kenyon combined it with her own discovery of the historical meaning of stratified loci. It seems that they introduced these novelties to Palestine from outside. Their methods are, however, not independent, nor supplementary each other, nor in opposition, but the methodological refinement acquired by Miss Kenyon at last is the fulfilment of the so-called Reisner-Fisher method, which, it is observed, was aiming without success at the same destination as hers to be reached.

Walled Villages in the New Territories of Hong Kong

Hiroaki Kani

A visitor to the New Territories of Hong Kong would find such outward appearance of old rural China as a community

with four walls all around it forming a square. Each of these walled villages, found mainly in the north sector, claims long historical associations with the past when the area was still part of the San On district, Kwangtung. They are locally called *wai* (圍), having this word as part of village-names. One can calculate, from an official *A Gazetteer of Place Names in Hong Kong, Kowloon and the New Territories*, some 110 traditional Chinese place names including the character for *wai*. However, not all *wai* indicate that they are walled villages. *Wai* implies the existence of the bank enclosing the village as well as a fish pond surrounded by the bank. Some of nucleated villages very often earn the description of *wai*, too. In the course of a tour of folkways' research, I could list only some twenty walled villages in all. Building brick-walls were due mainly to the need in the past for protection, and probably for showing their social prestige. So far as I know, New Territories' walled villages may be divided into four main types. (1) The general pattern of the walled village of this type is that of walled and moated one, such as Kat Hing Wai at Kam Tin, with a tower at each corner. (2) Those without moat. But, it is usual to find a village pond immediately below the village. (3) Brick-walls are humbler and rougher. It is very unusual to find the village of this group with its tower and moat. (4) The *Feng Shui* (風水) grove just above the village marks the peculiar design as distinguished from the others. There are no pond neither.

2 Generally speaking, these walls are strong and thick, being made with bricks which are black and harder than red ones. Deep moat was dug around the walls. Now moat is not deep because many kind of deposits make it shallow. From the outside, a careful observer may notice some holes in the brick wall—the gunholes. Although the holes are small and inconspicuous from the outside, they are much larger as seen from

behind the wall. In the old days from behind, rifles might be mounted, and there would be plenty of space for manoeuvre. Such then was the system of self-defence for the villagers within the walled community against any aggression on the part of the bandits eager to plunder or loot or seize the community.

At each corner of the square, there is a tower looming high above the adjacent walls. From the watch tower far-away enemy manoeuvres could easily be seen or detected and canons could be mounted to bombard the enemy below. As such military contingencies hardly arise these days, many of the towers nowadays are visibly old and the canons are just left lying around and rusting.

The architectural design within the walled community is clearcut and symmetrical. According to the orthodox pattern there is only one entrance to the whole area—an iron grill gate. The path at the entrance leads directly to the ancestral hall right opposite, the tallest and most dignified building in the whole domain. On either side of this path, there are rows of one-storied buildings each consisting of several apartments and large enough to accommodate several families. While the buildings appear to be one-storied from the outside, some of them are known to have large attics inside.

There are other variations, however. Sometimes, from the entrance there is no direct path leading to the ancestral hall right opposite. In the middle of the whole domain, one finds horizontal rows of buildings and two another rows cutting across vertically, thus forming an intricate yet still symmetrical pattern. The ancestral hall is located at the other end.

Within the walls the houses are sometimes tightly packed very much like the skyscraper in Hong Kong today.

Each row of building within the walled community comprises several apartments. The arrangement within each apartment is again uniform according to the traditional pattern.

As soon as one enters the front door, one finds a large room with the kitchen on one side and a storage room on the other. The room in the middle is often used for washing clothes as well as preparing food and there is invariably a lot of activity going on. There is a roof-window to let in a little sunshine and open air. Behind this room, there is a large living room with a bedroom on either side. (Sometimes, instead of having two bedrooms, there is one bedroom only. On the other side, one finds a ladder leading to the attic.) At any rate there are no ceiling and few windows. The inside of a house is generally dark and ventilation poor.

As there are no more bandits or enemy troop nowadays with secret designs to capture the walled community, the walls have become really quite obsolete and useless. In the course of time houses have appeared behind the walls and the gunholes of some decades ago have been converted into windows for the houses behind.

Many of the walled community in the New Territories will disappear in near future. As the walls remind us of a pattern of life in the past—a collective mode of life of the people who share the same ancestor. I do hope something shall be done about it to preserve the walls as something of historical importance and perhaps of a sentimental value to the people right there.