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STELLINGEN

Gender, Marriage and Migration: Contemporary Marriages between Mainland China and Taiwan **Melody Chia-Wen LU**

1. People marry for all sorts of reasons in East and West. Between marrying for love and marrying for money there exists a wide spectrum of motivations.
2. Existing migration theories often operate on two assumptions: 1) the place of origin of immigrants is where they feel cultural affinity; 2) if one moves one must do so due to political upheavals or economic necessity. These assumptions certainly do not fit in with marriage migration, especially in patrilocal and exogamous societies, where women's moving to another village and family is considered a part of their natural life course. In these cases, marriage itself is migration.
3. The categorisation of labour, marriage, asylum, trafficking and irregular migration reflects the interests of the host societies in managing and containing migration. Migration is driven by a combination of factors and the motivations change over time in the life course. It is more useful to conceptualise these types of migration as a continuum.
4. Shared culture, language and ethnicity do not always constitute the criteria of inclusion for immigrants. At times it is those who look and speak exactly like "us" who pose the biggest threat, as "they" are not easily distinguishable.
5. Nationalism manifests itself in a gendered way. While Communist China is considered the "enemy other" by some Taiwanese, mainland Chinese women are increasingly portrayed as prostitutes and greedy women. Their threat to the nation is of a different kind – through being bad mothers and wives who endanger Taiwanese families.
6. Marriage brokerage is not a faceless and heartless institution. Commercially arranged marriages do not necessarily make women commodities.
7. Doing a multi-disciplinary research is fashionable in academia. However, writing a multi-disciplinary thesis is rather challenging and risky. It involves providing sufficient information and clear explanations for readers of various disciplines and with different regional expertise on the one hand, and reaching theoretical depth on the other.
8. Ethnographic research and thesis writing is a time consuming endeavour. The most visible sign of the passing of time is that the children of cross-border families born during my fieldwork have reached school age by the time I complete the thesis.
9. Being a Taiwanese does not automatically make me an "insider" in Taiwan. It is the mainland and foreign brides, viewed essentially as "others", who helped me communicate with their Taiwanese families and led me into the field. Without the help of my European partner who doesn't speak Chinese, I would not even have been invited to join in men's talk.