



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

Thai migrant women in the Netherlands : cross-cultural marriages and families

Suksomboon, P.

Citation

Suksomboon, P. (2009, June 11). *Thai migrant women in the Netherlands : cross-cultural marriages and families*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/13833>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/13833>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures

Introduction	1
Thai migrants in the Netherlands	5
Immigration flows to the Netherlands	7
Theoretical approaches	8
Gendered approach to migration and life-course perspective	9
Social network theory	10
International migration and transnationalism	11
Research questions	12
Outline of the dissertation	13
Contributions and limitations of the research	16
Research methodology and data collection	18
The position of the researcher in the field: insider or outsider?	20
Socio-economic background of the women and their spouses	22
Chapter 1 Cross-Cultural Marriage: A Case of ‘Love’ or of Economic Gain?	25
What shapes marriage migration of Thai women to the Netherlands	27
The popularity of tourism to Thailand	29
Improvement of computer technology and transport	32
Physical attraction and fantasies about gender, affluence and modernity	34
A shift in opinion toward marrying a <i>farang</i> man	36
Cross-cultural marriage and the role of the family	37
Studies on kinship and marriage	38
An overview of family and marriage in Thai society	40
Marrying a Dutch man: marriage choice and the involvement of the family	43
An overview of family and marriage in Dutch society	47
Marrying a Thai woman: marriage choice and the involvement of the family	49
Is ‘love’ the only primary basis for marriage?	53
Why do the Thai women marry a Dutch husband?	53
Why do the Dutch men marry a Thai wife?	57
<i>Sinsot</i> : returning a debt or the purchase of a woman?	60

Conclusion	67
Chapter 2 Cross-Border Negotiation of Marriage and Family	69
Research perspectives in family studies	71
Sending remittances: a confrontation of different family values	74
The inter-generational relations of ' <i>bun-khun</i> ' versus the ideal of altruistic parental love	75
<i>Khrop khrua</i> versus <i>gezin</i>	77
Relations and responsibilities between siblings	79
The differences in welfare provision	80
Creating a cross-cultural family	81
Responsibility of the women for their natal family	85
Relationship with Dutch in-laws	89
Different cultural scripts of relations with in-laws	89
Contradictory experiences with the in-laws	90
Violating the unwritten rules	92
Financial arrangements within the household	95
Economic dependency in the initial period	96
Without a monthly allowance	98
Separating the income	100
Sharing the income together	100
Conclusion	103
Chapter 3 The Dynamics of Kinship and Friendship Networks	107
The impact of social networks on marriage migration	108
Fluidity of kinship networks among Thai migrant women	112
Friendship of Thai migrant women in the Netherlands	119
'We are similar, but we are different'	120
The process of becoming friends	123
'Eating friends' and 'friends to death': different shades of Thai friendship	127
Friendship in Thai and Dutch societies	129
Weak ties	133
<i>Kan len chae</i> (playing shares)	133
<i>Huai</i> (lottery)	135

<i>Ngoen khu</i> (loans)	136
Acquaintances from other countries	137
Conclusion	140
Chapter 4 Reshaping the Life-Course and Family Care	143
Initial settlement	144
‘He is rich in Thailand, but he lives a simple life in the Netherlands’	146
Feelings of loneliness	148
The impact of immigration regulations on a marriage migration	150
Career trajectory	152
Searching for employment in the Netherlands	152
Wages and working conditions	155
The women’s perception of social mobility	157
Arrangements for child care	160
Separation of mother and child	160
Reunion of mother and child	164
Having children with the Dutch spouse	167
Giving care of the elderly from a distance	169
The women’s prospects of receiving care	174
Conclusion	177
Chapter 5 Living in Transnational Communities	181
The women’s perception of community and home	182
Remittances: deployment, impact and meanings	188
Perspectives and research on remittances	188
Deployment and consequences of remittances	190
Defining and negotiating remittances	193
Impact of ‘social remittances’ on the local community	198
‘Reversal of social remittances’: a preference for marrying a Thai woman	202
Flow of retired Dutch husbands to Thailand	204
Conclusion	207
Conclusion	211
Marriage migration and its context	211

Everyday ‘sociality’ with family, in-laws and friends	216
Social networks of kin and friendship	219
Consequences of marriage migration and transnationalism	221
References	231
Glossary of Thai terms	247
Appendix A	249
Summary (English)	255
Samenvatting (Dutch summary)	259
Acknowledgements	263
Curriculum vitae	265