

International Marriage, Migration, and Demographic Reality in Mainland China

Shenghan Cai

A thesis submitted for the fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Business and Economics
Macquarie University
2018 (October)

Declaration

I declare that the PhD thesis by Publication entitled ‘International Marriage, Migration, and Demographic Reality in Mainland China’ contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma to any other university or institution other than Macquarie University and Renmin University of China in accordance with the Cotutelle agreement.

I declare that the thesis is an original piece of research that was written by me. Any help and assistance that I have received in my research work and the preparation of thesis itself have been appropriately acknowledged. All information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

The research presented in this thesis was approved by Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee, reference number 5201700098 on 25/5/2017.

Signature:

Full name: Shenghan Cai Student ID: 44713959

Date:

Statement of Authorship

This thesis is the work of the candidate under the supervision of the Principal Supervisor Professor Fei Guo and Adjunct Supervisor Professor Shuang Liu. Professor Guo and Liu provided overall guidance and framework of the research and the candidate carried out the conceptualisation, literature review, data collection, data analysis, and writing of each chapter in the thesis. The candidate's contribution to the writing of this thesis is approximately 85 percent, the Principal Supervisor's contribution is 10 percent and the Adjunct Supervisor's contribution is 5 percent.

Acknowledgement

The completion of this Ph.D. thesis is a challenging and rewarding journey. It would not have been possible for me to finish the thesis without the guidance and support of many people.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Professor Fei Guo, for her continuous support of my Ph.D. research, also for her generosity, patience, and immense knowledge. With her support I came to Australia and continued my doctoral research in Macquarie University. Her guidance helped me in each step of my study, without her instructions I would not be able to complete this thesis. I appreciated her invaluable time and suggestions on my research and thesis writing, as well as teaching and other research experiences. Her dedication, motivation, and insights towards life, research, and teaching inspired me to become a confident, independent, and devoted researcher. I am fortunate to have her as my supervisor. With her encouragement, I presented research papers at international conferences and gained valuable teaching experience which built up my skills towards becoming an independent researcher and prepared me to pursue an academic career in the future.

Special gratitude goes to my adjunct supervisor Professor Shuang Liu, for her full support to my doctoral research and my cotutelle program. She encouraged me to join the postgraduate program in demography, to integrate my sociological and anthropological background and statistical skills into demographic research. She is a wonderful advisor, her advice and support on data analysis, guidance on the initial framework, and suggestions on my thesis is invaluable. She provided me with opportunities to engage in social policy research, urban studies, and family research, which enhanced my experience and understanding of both academic research and social reality.

My sincere thanks also go to all key informants for providing me with the data and all respondents for sharing their life stories with me. I am grateful to Professor Zheng Wu at the University of Victoria in Canada, who not only provided suggestions on the framework of this thesis, but also enlightened me on one of the main chapters. A very special gratitude goes out to Mr. Germán Rodríguez at Princeton University, who's selflessly work helps me to gain a better understanding on the key statistic techniques that were applied in this research. I am also grateful to all staff at Higher Degree Research Office, Department of Management at Macquarie University, and Population Development Studies Centre at Renmin University of China, for their great help in all aspects of my study. I am indebted to Macquarie University and Renmin University of China for providing funding, including a very generous cotutelle scholarship, to support my doctoral study, data collection, and international conferences.

I would also like to thank Associate Professor Chris Baumann, Ms. Elizabeth Bignucolo, Associate Professor Zhiming Cheng, Professor Lorne Cummings, Ms. Liping Fan, Ms. Chanyuan Ge, Ms. Melissa Hubbard, Dr. Ku He, Mr. Yanlin Li, Ms. Lucy Liang, Ms. Lin Bai, Dr. Salut Muhidin, Ms. Irene Ng, Professor Chris Patel, Dr. Quzhen Shenglong, Dr. Sisi Yang, Dr Sammy Ying, Mr. Danny Wang, Dr. Huawei Wang, Dr. Ping Wang, Dr. Stella Wu, Professor Zhenwu Zhai, Ms. Huanjun Zhang, Dr. Xianling Zhang, and Dr. Tianpu Zhu, who supported me in different ways during my doctoral study. I cherish and

appreciate very much their support and kindness. Thanks to Dr. Christina Houen of Perfect Words Editing for copy editing my thesis chapters. My special thanks go to all my students in Macquarie University, for helping me to become a better teacher.

Thanks are due to Scott, Lynn, and Dr. Beckett who give me the strength to challenge myself, always boldly go one step further to reach the unreachable star, *oh captain, my captain*. I am grateful to my life coach Professor Siyi Han at Lanzhou University and Professor Jianbo Huang at East China Normal University, *I caught this morning morning's minion, kingdom of daylight's dauphin*. To Professor Haining Xing at Lanzhou University, I will always miss your inspiration and guidance, and your steps around the Amne Machin. I am also grateful to Shamim Tashakor and her family. Shamim is the first friendly face I met on this continent, she and her family are always there to lend a helping hand. Without their help, my thesis couldn't survive the computer system crash, and without Shamim, I would have much troubles to cope with all the difficulties in my life here down under.

To my grandpa, who I never had the chance to say goodbye, who I lost on the first day of my doctoral candidature. I miss our interesting chats, heated debates, and that miserable winter night in my fourth grade when we were locked out and called police for help. To my father, who had let go his own ambitions to look after me since I was a child, who helped both my mother and me with our doctoral studies, who went through major surgery two months before my submission and refused to let me know. Sorry I rejected your suggestion to become a general surgeon. To my mother, who has supported me in my pursuit of an academic career and love me without reservation, who was, is and will always be my best friend and my sources of inspiration. To my dearest Yifan, who is and always will be my person, and who taught me that one plus one equals one. To my people and our land, *muse manjusai daci banitai ginggun unenggi. gūnin hing seme ofi*. You are my lifelong source of strength and happiness.

Last but by no means the least, my sincere thanks to all the quokkas on Rottenest Island and in the forests of Western Australia, especially to Davey. If I have to pay the quokkas for their contribution to the milestones I have achieved, I would be broke.

I am eternally thankful for the wonderful experience along this journey down under.

Table of Contents

Declaration	I
Statement of Authorship	II
Acknowledgement	III
Table of Contents	V
Abstract	VIII
List of Tables	IX
List of Figures	X
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Background and Research Aim	1
1.2 International and Historical Contexts	4
1.3 Literature Review	9
1.3.1 Marriage and International Marriage	9
1.3.2 Gendered Migration and Global Intimacy	16
1.3.3 Social Structure and Mobility through Marriage	21
1.3.4 Cultural Perceptions of International Marriage	24
1.4 Research Questions	28
1.5 Definition of Chinese-foreign Marriage	29
1.6 Research Framework	31
1.7 Research Significance and Contribution	33
1.8 Data Sources and Methods	35
1.9 Thesis Structure	38
Notes	40
References	41
Chapter 2: One Decade of International Marriage in China: Migration, Intimacy, and Cultural Perspectives, 2000–2010	49
2.1 Introduction	50
2.2 Transforming Pattern of Marriage in China	52
2.3 International Marriages in China	55
2.4 Data and Measurement	56

2.5 Methods	59
2.6 Empirical Results.....	61
2.6.1 The Trends of International Marriages	61
2.6.2 Spatial Patterns of International Marriages	64
2.6.3 Determinants of International Marriage Ratio.....	68
2.7 Discussion and Conclusion.....	73
Notes.....	76
References	77
Chapter 3: Gendered Patterns and Solidarity of the Unions: Differences between International Marriages and Domestic Marriages in China.....	81
3.1 Introduction	82
3.2 Partner Selection and Marital Dissolution in China	85
3.3 Spousal Matching and Solidarity of International Marriage	88
3.4 Data.....	91
3.5 Empirical Results.....	93
3.5.1 Demographic Characteristics of International and Domestic Marriage	93
3.5.2 Statistical Methods	104
3.5.3 Marriage Choices and Solidarity of Union	108
3.6 Discussion and Conclusion.....	117
Notes.....	120
Reference.....	121
Chapter 4: Social Mobility through International Marriage and the Premium of Relative Advantages in the Marriage Market.....	130
4.1 Introduction	131
4.2 Exchange, Intimacy, and Partner Selection	134
4.3 Spousal Selection and International Marriage in Mainland China	137
4.4 Data.....	141
4.5 Methodology.....	144
4.6 Empirical Results.....	147
4.7 Discussion and Conclusion.....	153
Notes.....	156

References	156
Chapter 5: Motivations and Choices of International Marriages, Reflections from Case Studies..	162
5.1 Introduction	163
5.2 Marriage Evolution in Mainland China.....	165
5.3 International Marriage in Mainland China.....	171
5.4 Data and Methodology	179
5.5 Chances, Choices, and Conflicts	180
5.5.1 Love, Intimacy, and Better Life	180
5.5.2 Marriage, Divorce, and More	189
5.5.3 Strange Land: Beyond Marginalization and Assimilation	197
5.5.4 Marriage Broker: Relationship for Service	205
5.6 Discussion and Conclusion	212
Notes	217
Reference.....	219
Chapter 6: Conclusion	225
6.1 Overview of Study	225
6.2 Research Implications	229
6.3 Limitations and Future Research.....	232
References	234
Appendix 1: Ethic Approval.....	235
Appendix 2: Participant Information and Consent Form.....	238
Appendix 3: Interview Guidelines	241

Abstract

With the implementation of economic reforms, opening-up, and family planning policies, China has experienced profound socioeconomic and cultural changes since the 1970s. One of the significant changes is the increase in the number of people migrating within China and to other countries to pursue better opportunities for employment, education, life style, or marriage. With China's economic success in recent decades, its internal and international migration has continued to increase while the number of international marriages experienced considerable fluctuation, and sometimes decline, over time. Although international marriage as a social phenomenon in China has attracted much attention, due to the lack of available data, knowledge of international marriage has been fragmented in the existing literature. Using a set of consolidated data of international and domestic marriage registration, supplemented by face-to-face interview data, this thesis investigates the nature of international marriage in mainland China by focusing on demographic reality and life experiences of couples in international marriage. The thesis first analyses the macro mechanisms and diverse geospatial patterns of international marriage in China and charts the connections between internal and international marriage and migration. The thesis then examines the demographic similarities and differentials between two types of marriage choices, and their effects on the formation and solidarity of the union for couples in both domestic and international marriages. The thesis also examines the premium of relative advantage between spouses and gendered differences of marriage choices. In addition, the analysis is supplemented by ethnographical data that provide insights into couples' personal interpretation of their marriage and divorce, as well as their connections to social and institutional environment. The results suggest that marriage, including international marriage, has been affected by a number of institutional, structural, and individual factors, such as socioeconomic conditions, rural-urban disparities, gender norms, marriage behaviour, socioeconomic status, and personal experiences. Different from conventional understanding, the results from this study suggest that transnational couples experienced lower probability of divorce than couples who share more cultural similarities while younger birth cohorts might have weaker solidarity in both types of marriage. The differences in educational attainment between spouses show no significant effect on the solidarity of international marriage, but age gap does make a difference, marrying a younger husband will increase the risk of divorce. While providing a channel for upward mobility for underprivileged individuals, international marriage also polarises the marriage market by further strengthening hypergamous matches of spouses. The results also show that the nature of international marriage in mainland China nowadays is much more diverse and complex than simple status exchange or pursuit for romantic love.

List of Tables

Table 2-1 Global Moran's I Index for Intensity of Chinese–foreign Marriages	66
Table 2-2a Ordinary Least Squares Estimators for Chinese–foreign Marriages.....	67
Table 2-2b Global Moran's I from OLS Regression.....	67
Table 2-3 Maximum Likelihood Estimation Coefficients for Determinates of Chinese–foreign Marriage Ratio	70
Table 2-4 Maximum Likelihood Estimation Coefficients for Determinates of Chinese–foreign Marriage Ratio, by Gender	71
Table 2-5 Variable definitions and descriptions.....	75
Table 3-1 Percentage of First Marriage and Remarriage by Gender and Marriage Type, 2009 to 2014	97
Table 3-2 Average Age at First Marriage by Residency, 2010 to 2014.....	98
Table 3-3 Age-gap between Husband and Wife by Type of Marriage	100
Table 3-4 Descriptive Means and Proportions for Variables in the Analysis	105
Table 3-5 Maximum Likelihood Estimation Coefficients for Predictors of Marriage Choice of Mainland Chinese Citizens.....	109
Table 3-6 Cox's Estimation of Solidarity of International and Domestic Marriages.....	115
Table 4-1 Classification of Marriages by the Relative Advantage between Spouses	146
Table 4-2 Classification of Marriages by the Relative Advantage between Spouses in International Marriage	148
Table 4-3 Log-linear Estimation Test for Spousal Status Exchange.....	152

List of Figures

Figure 1-1 Theoretical Framework of Thesis	33
Figure 2-1 Percentage Chinese Population Never Married, 4th, 5th and 6th Population Census	53
Figure 2-2 Average Ages at First Childbearing of Chinese Female, 1995 to 2012.....	54
Figure 2-3 Percentage Population Never Married in Overall Population by Five-year Age Groups, China and Hong Kong SAR 2010, Japan 2011	54
Figure 2-4 Chinese–foreign International Marriages, 1979 to 2015.....	62
Figure 2-5 Birth Rate, Death Rate and Population Growth Rate of China, 1949 to 2015.....	62
Figure 2-6 Divorce–Marriage Ratios by Residency of Foreign Spouses, 2005 to 2015	63
Figure 2-7 Spatial Distribution of Chinese–foreign International Marriages, Top-Ten Provinces	65
Figure 2-8 Distributions of International Marriage Ratio, by Gender and Year	66
Figure 3-1 Crude Marriage Rate and Crude Divorce Rate in Mainland China, 1978 to 2015	83
Figure 3-2 Annual Number of Divorces of Domestic Couples in Mainland China by Type of Registration, 1978 to 2015	87
Figure 3-3 Annual Number of Marriage and Divorces of Chinese-foreign Couples in Mainland China, 1979 to 2015	90
Figure 3-4 Proportions of International Marriage and Divorce for Province X, 2005 to 2016	94
Figure 3-5 Proportions of Mainland Chinese Citizens in International Marriages for Province X by Gender, 2005 to 2016	95
Figure 3-6 Percent of First Marriage in International Marriages for Province X by Gender and Residency, 2005 to 2016.....	96
Figure 3-7 Distributions of Educational Attainment in International Marriage for Province X by Gender and Residency, 2005 to 2016.....	103
Figure 3-8 Distributions of Educational Attainment in Domestic Marriage for Province X by Gender, 2010 to 2014	104
Figure 3-9 Kaplan-Meier Survival Estimate of Chinese-foreign and Chinese-Chinese Divorce	112
Figure 4-1 Spouse’s Relative Advantage, Observed Matching and Expected Matching	152
Figure 5-1 Chinese-foreign Marriage by Residency, 1979 to 2014	173

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background and Research Aim

Marriage across national borders or across racial and ethnic boundaries have become more common in an increasingly globalised world. Marriage across borders in China is evidently not a new phenomenon. Broadly speaking, in China, this type of marriage can be traced back to the early imperial age when the first Emperor of the Han Dynasty tried to make peace by marrying the princess off to Xiongnu in 198 BC¹. The historic event, known as *heqin* or *hefan*, became a common practice through the following eras of empire. The main aim of political marriage between princesses or female members of noble families and foreign sovereigns was to maintain peace and establish trade or partnership with foreign lords or empires beyond the nation's borders (Twitchett and Loewe 1986). Unlike imperial families, such a practice was rare among commoners, until *huren* (Sogdian, Persian, and other central or west Asian ethnic groups) followed the Silk Roads, entering and settling down in China during the Tang Dynasty. In the following centuries, marriages between Chinese commoners and *huren* eventually formed a new Chinese minority group, known as *huizu* (ethnic minority *Hui*) (Lipman 1997; Gladney 2004). Then from the tenth to the eighteenth century, Chinese sailors, merchants, farmers, fishermen, and refugees, followed the seafaring routes, travelling throughout the South-East Asia, and settled down. They either intermarried with local people or went back to China to marry with Chinese and then take the family back to South-East Asia (Poston and Wong 2016). In Macao, cross-racial marriage between Portuguese and Chinese communities has created the Sino-Latin ethnic group known as *tusheng puren* (Macanese people) dating back to the sixteenth century (Pina-Cabral 2006). It was only in the late eighteenth century, also known as the beginning of the colonial era, that large-scale emigration and diaspora began. In a trend common to the rest of the world, Chinese migration and cross-border marriages became more widespread across continents. Emigrants and their descendants who settled down overseas eventually formed the group known as overseas Chinese (*haiwai huaren*) (Pan 1990).

From 1949, formation of the socialist government of the People's Republic of China virtually cut the mainland China off from the rest of the world. This led to a thirty-year restriction of international marriage. International marriage barely existed, and people who were involved in international marriages without official approval could be condemned for serious treason. In order to have lawful and valid status, such marriages had to be approved by the party leaders², even for those party members who contributed to the

revolution and formation of the socialism regime. By 1979, the Ministry of Civil Affairs (PRC) began to partially recognise Chinese-foreign marriage, provide a registration service, and admit the legitimacy of international marriage. The total number of registered Chinese-foreign marriages was 8,460 couples that year. But only in 1983 did the Ministry promulgate the “Rules on Marriage Registration between Chinese Citizens and Foreigners” (*zhongguo gongmin tong waiguoren banli jiehun dengji de jixiang guiding*), and the “Rules on Marriage Registration between Chinese Citizens and Overseas Chinese, Hong Kong and Macao Compatriots” (*huaqiao tong guonei gongmin, Gang Ao tongbao tong neidi gongmin zhijian banli jiehun dengji de jixiang guiding*). However, even after the implementation of these rules,³ obstacles still exist. Although the state loosened its control over Chinese-foreign marriage nearly a decade ago, in practice exogenous marriage is largely limited to mainland Chinese females and residents from Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan. By the end of the 1980s, international marriage with foreign nationals started to increase, but international or interracial marriage was still an unusual phenomenon in mainland China. The segregation of socialist China from the rest of the world restricted international communication and exchange from both sides; most mainland Chinese citizens could not obtain a passport for travelling abroad, and it was not easy for foreigners to enter and stay in mainland China. With the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s and early 1990s and the implementation of economic reforms and opening-up policies, international political and economic relationships between the PRC regime and the world were gradually normalised; international exchange and marriage in mainland China has increased as a result. From 1979, international marriage grew rapidly to its peak in 2001 (78,672 couples) and 2003 (78,285 couples), and the annual number increased nearly tenfold in only three decades, then dropped (49,730 couples in 2007) to a stable trend, with some ongoing fluctuations. Over time, the concept of international marriage in China has developed complexity. Currently, it comprises two main categories: one is marriage with “foreigners of foreign nationals” (*waiguoren*); the other is marriage with residents from Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan, or “Chinese citizens who reside abroad” (*waiji huaren*) (China Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbook 1979-2017).

It is commonly accepted that the 1980s was also an era of family change in China, mainly under the influence of dramatic social change and transformation, such as the family planning policy, new marital laws and regulations, loosening control of the *hukou* system⁴ (hence the restriction over migration) (Chan and Zhang 1999; Chan 2010; Cai 2011), the opening-up policy, and economic reforms. Mainly due to China’s rigorous family planning policy, its family size has decreased to 2.5 persons per household.

Consequently, nuclear and stem family became the main familial structure, and at the same time, the types of family became more diverse — international family, single-parent family, DINK family, empty-nest family, one-person household, and stepfamily became part of Chinese family structure in the reform era (Deng and Xu 2000; Zhao 2001). The 1980 marriage law and the 2003 marriage regulation have gradually improved the individual's choices over their marriage and divorce, especially for women. These marriage- and family-related changes are a direct reflection of the effects of macro-level socioeconomic, cultural, and demographic changes over individual behaviour. International marriage is also related to the reduction of “closeness” in the post-Maoist era, and the promotion of internationalisation, globalisation, and modernisation in China. Marriage itself became a reflection of the multi-dimensional historical context, and it was complicated by the various phases of development since then. However, this phenomenon has not attracted much attention from scholars of marriage studies or migration studies in China or elsewhere. There has been a vacuum in the study of international marriages since the middle of the twentieth century, while the country's population structure, socioeconomic conditions, and marriage-family related values, norms and practice have gone through profound changes.

With its decline and moderate fluctuations over the last decade, international marriage has not been a focal topic of research. Although some scholars (Ding, Yang, Zhou, Zhou, Lin, and Zhang 2004) predicted that there will be more international marriages in developed areas because of China's internationalisation, others hold more conservative views. However, the latest development of international marriage in China is rather unexpected, owing to the recent occurrence of marriage squeeze in rural communities (Jiang, Feldman, and Li 2014; Liu, Jin, Brown, and Feldman 2014), first alongside the southwest ethnic minority border area, then spreading to inland rural areas. In some villages of Yunnan province, cross-border marriages comprise up to twenty percent of overall marriages per year, in which nearly eighty percent of international marriages are between Chinese male and foreign female (Zhang and Bao 2013). In Guangdong province, marriages between Chinese citizens and foreigners from sub-Saharan African countries have also caused concerns; African communities have been called “chocolate city” by the local Chinese citizens (Lan 2017). International marriage in China has become increasingly diverse during the last decade, while scholars have just begun to realise the changes and their significance.

The main aim of this thesis is to investigate the nature of international marriage in mainland China by focusing on demographic reality and life experiences of couples in international marriage. First, the thesis will analyse the macro mechanisms and diverse geospatial patterns of international marriage in China and draws the connections between internal and international marriage and migration. Second, it will then examine the demographic similarities and differentials between two types of marriage choices, and their effects on the formation and solidarity of the union for couples in both domestic and international marriages. Third, the thesis will examine the premium of relative advantage between spouses and gendered differences of marriage choices. Finally, the thesis aims to provide insight into couples' personal interpretation of their marriage and divorce, as well as their connections to social and institutional environment.

Different from the existing literature, this research, based on an analysis of comprehensive empirical data, not only pays attentions to the relationships between immigration, marriage and demographic reality, but also follows up individual life experience, their relationships with their families, friends and communities, as well as their values, norms and choices. This study is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of China's international marriage, which contributes new knowledge to the literature. It is also expected to provide explanations to China's profound social-cultural changes and family dynamics that are currently under way.

1.2 International and Historical Contexts

International marriage as social phenomenon has experienced considerable changes in recent times in response to increasing globalisation. Once it was considered as only a subsidiary form of international migration; recently, however, its complexity has unfolded. It is "generally assumed to be a female dominated migration flow" while "there is evidence that brides frequently outnumber grooms" (Williams 2010: 61). Transnational interpersonal relationships are not a new phenomenon, as they usually resulted from international economic activities, political negotiations, acts of war, migration, slavery, and colonisation. During the early stages of human history, this kind of male-female union was a special case of marriage practice that rarely occurred. But more substantial changes occurred during the Western colonial era, when the movement of people across geographical divides started to increase. The capacity to move further beyond regional limits and reach new continents, not only has promoted the rise of cross-continent migration, but also has largely enriched the phenomenon of international marriage (Landry 1992).

In the broad sense, some early colonists who settled in new continents and married with women who came from the homeland can be regarded as early cases of the modern type of international marriage. Some famous international marriages were known as colonial mail order bride, or Jamestown bride (Tobacco Bride), King's daughters (*filles du roi*), and casket girls (*filles à la cassette*) (Zug 2012). For example, from 1663 to 1673, under colonial governments' request and Louis XIV's financial support of the dowry, the French government sponsored *les filles du roi* program actively recruiting about 770 to 850 (Landry 1992) young commoner females traveling to New France colony for the sole purpose of settling, to marrying, and giving birth, with the aims of population growth and maintaining the French government's claim over the colony. Those females came from several regions and areas, some outside of France. According to Landry (1992), 737 out of all females were married in New France. In contrast to the *les filles du roi* program, the Jamestown brides from England received different treatment; all 90 of them were auctioned off for 150 pounds of tobacco each to cover the cost of their travel. Still, the public had reservations about this type of international marriage, as rumour had it that the women were prostitutes, although they were rarely charged with such an offence.

With the emergence of nation-states, this political and commercial style of marriage of convenience transformed into modern international or transnational marriages, which cross the boundaries and step over the borders of modern nation-states. This migration/colonisation-oriented international marriage, which is largely caused by an imbalanced sex ratio among colonists, spawned new threads in the following centuries (Sung 2001). During the nineteenth century, westward expansion in America increased the nation's territorial acquisitions and genocide. Its citizens were driven by the promise of prosperity and boundless acreage, migrating from the eastern to the western part of the continent, and settling down on the frontiers. History repeated itself, and the lack of women at those frontiers became the driving force for matchmaking. Males and females who intended to seek a spouse would put a personal advertisement in newspapers, magazines, or catalogues; sometimes even the church would become a matchmaker. They were straightforward about what they wanted and expected from a potential spouse; they also provided detailed information about themselves, even with photographs. Communication between prospective brides and grooms who had never met with each other was largely conducted by letter (Enns 2005). The colonial mail-order bride was considered as "independent, powerful, and respected; they are never described as 'mail order brides'" for "the term 'mail order bride' is most often reserved for women perceived as victims" (Zug

2012: 85). But in fact, although colonial mail-order brides were respected for actively selecting their spouses and controlling their future life, as well as ensuring population reproduction and the survival and endurance of colonies, “the label ‘mail order bride’ is just as appropriate” then as it is now (Zug 2012: 85).

It was an era of racial discrimination against Chinese labourers in America at that time. They had to suffer exploitation and racial discrimination at every level of society. Although the Burlingame-Seward Treaty of 1868 demanded equal treatment of Chinese immigrants in America, immigrants were treated as cheap labour and as a degraded race, so much so that the US Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which prohibited new Chinese labourer immigrants for the next decade. It was renewed in 1892 with the Geary Act, made permanent in 1902, and not repealed until the Magnuson Act of 1943 (Peffer 1999; Chang 2004). The act itself not only rejected newcomers, but also prevented family reunions for immigrants whose wives were back in China, and anti-miscegenation laws in some states forbade marriage between Chinese males and white females. The Page Act of 1875 treated Chinese as cheap labourers and immoral women (Peffer 1986), and Chinese females were labelled as prostitutes and strictly prohibited from immigrating to America, so that a tremendous imbalance in the sex ratio occurred in Chinese immigrants: females were 78 to every 1000 males in 1870 (Abrams 2005). The imbalance was commonly considered to be because “the (Chinese) men were sojourners and did not intend to stay, and ... [the] Chinese women adhered more to cultural tradition because they had to remain in China to care for their in-laws” (Sung 2001: 210). However, although male emigrants always outnumbered females in China, the sex ratio was not as uneven as that in the United States (Peffer 1986). By actively barring Chinese females’ immigration, these acts were efficient in controlling Chinese communities’ settlement in America. They were the main cause of the imbalance in the sex ratio of males and females before World War II. It was not until the 1960s that Chinese families shifted from bachelordom or single Chinese male households and became the majority in American Chinatown communities (Gregory and Sanjek 1994).

Those acts cause at least two kinds of outcome: the human trafficking and exploitation of Chinese women, and miscegenation. According to Ahmad (2007: 3), from 1850 to 1875, over six thousand women were imported to America to serve as sexual workers; “most of these women came from south-eastern China and were either kidnapped, purchased from poor families, or lured to ports like San Francisco with the promise of marriage.” Research carried out in 1900 by Liang showed that of the 120,000 men in more than 20

Chinese communities in the United States, one out of every twenty Cantonese men was married to a low-class white woman (quoted in Tong 2004). At the start of the twentieth century, fifty-five percent of Chinese men in New York engaged in interracial marriage; this percentage was maintained in the 1920s, but during the 1930s it fell to twenty percent (Gregory and Sanjek 1994). The 1960s census showed that 3500 Chinese men were married to white women and 2900 Chinese women were married to white men (Gregory and Sanjek 1994).

Sharing the same fate around that time, Japanese and Korean Laborers were also facing racial discriminations. As the “legal restrictions based on race affected both marriage and migration (Sinke 1999: 18)” had profound effects on immigrant families and communities. Once again, the pattern of immigration dominated by male labour during this period led to an imbalanced sex ratio of immigrants. Then racial discrimination policies, such as the Gentlemen’s Agreement of 1907, were enacted to forbid immigration of new labourers to America. But current immigrants were allowed to bring in their families, hence starting a wave of female immigration. 86.7 percent of Japanese admitted to the US prior to the Gentlemen’s Agreement were men; after the agreement, only 41.6 percent of the Japanese admitted were men (Lee 2003). The “picture bride” practices became a new form of matchmaking. Male immigrant workers sought brides from their home countries with the help of a matchmaker (the *nakodo* or *joong’mae jaeng’i*). They provided their photographs and allowed those matchmakers, who were mostly their family members, to seek a proxy wedding or arranged marriage. The arrival of picture brides led to strong protests against this kind of marriage practice; some people believed it was immoral because the marriage wasn’t about love but about migration, or even prostitution. The negative voices against this practice finally called for further restrictions, and the Immigration Act of 1924 “permanently banned all Asian migration” (Sinke 1999: 18).

Compared to immigrants from Europe, Asian immigrants and their practice of marriage in nineteenth-century America not only demonstrated the early marriage-migration mechanisms of international marriage, but also demonstrated the power of legislation and government control over such marriages in modern nation-states. In other words, as Sinke (1999: 17) summarised, “the key variables determining the relationship between marriage and migration were demographics, interweaved with legal policies, cultural perceptions, and information and technology.” Since the beginning of the twentieth century, with the worldwide establishment of nation-states, the astonishing level of international immigrant has involved

many countries and cultures. In contrast to the previous stage, according to UNFPA (2006), “feminization” has become a noteworthy feature of this period of international migration. It is believed that this is due to the increase in international marriage, combined with a change in gender preference in the global labour market. By the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century in Asia, the total number of female migrants has already surpassed male migrants (UNFPA 2006). While the uprise of female participation has changed the population structure of migration, it has also altered the migratory patterns for female: women are migrating, not only as spousal or family migrants (Kofman 2004), but also as independent and active participants in labour markets, such as household workers, service industry workers, skilled workers, as well as brides who seek for suitable husbands. The historical phenomenon of female migrants as spouses or brides for male workers, who comprising the majority previously, nowadays has transformed to more self-determining individual practices in the broad form of international marriages.

At the same time, the dynamics of international marriage has also changed, shifting its centre, and varying its method of practice. According to Kojima (2001), during the 1970s, in addition of North America, western Europe and Australia became the major destinations for brides in South-East Asia; then, during the 1980s and 1990s, females in Latin America, China, and the Philippines, started to engage in international marriages. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, 10,000 to 15,000 women from those countries (once they were granted membership of the Union) migrated to Europe as “mail-order” or internet-matchmaking brides per year (UNFPA 2006). With the economic development of Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and the Middle Eastern countries, these countries also became the destination for such marriages during the 1970s (Kang, Chai, and McLean 2015).

With increasing numbers of countries experiencing international marriage, especially the countries that have history of colonialism, the phenomenon has become more complex. In the past, scholars in marriage migration studies were mainly from the perspective of “migrant-receiving” countries (often developed countries), while the understanding from “migrant-sending” countries has not been fully explored. It is therefore important to explore the nexus between “migrant-sending” and “migrant-receiving” countries to fully understand the key mechanisms, driving forces and consequences of international marriage and its relationships with international migration and wider social and economic conditions.

Research into mainland China's international marriage has not received adequate attention in the past, primarily because of the unavailability of data. It has only become possible in recent years as more data on international marriage have become available to researchers. The existing literature has not provided adequate understanding of the history, current development, and general trend of international marriage in China. The understanding of international marriage choices has been largely absent in the literature other than the portrait of such marriage in popular media, that was informed by fragmented information. What is also unclear is how international marriage it interacts with other factors, such as social, economic and demographic factors of the regions and communities in which couples are situated. China is a large shareholder in international marriage markets, and the contexts and practice related to this type of marriage in China could affected other countries and areas where spouses are originated or moved into, in some extreme cases, they could even reconstruct the composition of populations of the affected areas. It is therefore crucially important to fill a major gap in literature with empirical analysis that provides a comprehensive understanding and insights into the complexity of international marriage in China.

1.3 Literature Review

1.3.1 Marriage and International Marriage

An individual's life experiences develop within certain social, cultural and structural contexts, and their life course is "a sequence of socially defined events and roles that the individual enacts over time" (Giele and Elder 1998: 22). The marital relationship, and its potential stage in family life, is a crucial one in society. The definition of marriage varies according to different cultures and different times, but it is one of the most important social institutions and the basic unit of human beings' reproduction in many societies. The formation of a marriage relationship is often considered as an indicator of a couple's maturity and independence, the transition of their social or cultural status, and the vehicle for new rights and social relationships. It is also a traditional precondition of recognised legitimate childbearing. Sometimes it is only through this socially and culturally recognised union that couples can be accepted as full members of their society. According to Morgan (1871), it is a natural heritage for people to build genealogical ties and construct social relationships around these ties. This earlier psychological evaluation of family relationships is still a basic assumption for family and kinship studies.

In his book *The History of Human Marriage*, Westermarck (1921) points out that there are two types of marriage—endogamy and exogamy. There are two kinds of social or cultural agreements that regulate marriage behaviour; one forbids cross-group or exogamous marriage, while one forbids within-group or endogamous marriage. Westermarck believes the explanation for such worldly regulation is one common, basic, biological and psychological characteristic of human—the need to breed. Rather than putting it down to evolutionary adaptation, he emphasises that, segregated or not, recognition of race and ethnic groups, identification of alien races, and differences between races, all contribute to these two types of marriage behaviour. Durkheim and Mauss (1963) hold that social groups are in some way based on sentiment; similarly, Westermarck ascribes the classification of marriageable groups to different emotions towards these groups. The history of human marriage, no matter which type of regulation it follows, is commonly accepted as restraining women's choice of partner and their marriage. In those groups which engage in endogamy, females must remain inside the clan, while in exogamous groups, the woman is expected to move out to another group, which in most cases holds a higher status than the original one.

Historically, marriage can be treated as a linkage to connect different groups. Functionalist scholars (Morgan 1871; Radcliffe-Brown 1922, 1930, 1952; Malinowski 1922; Evans-Pritchard 1951) believe that the network formulated by kinship among individuals is the foundation of a stable process to build up social interaction and systems. This interpretation is largely based on circular reasoning: the system is ensured and satisfied by consensus. From a functional perspective, marriage is a rational process, which follows rules and regulations that organising an intimate network between different social and cultural groups. Certain affiliate behaviour patterns must be followed in marital practice. This kind of intimate interpersonal relationship is the continuum of kinship groups, which are the stable central institution of any given society. The problem is that this “marriage is linkage” theorem basically means that individuals are treated as puppets of their kinship group.

In contrast to the functionalist theory, a structural framework considers marriage to be a type of social exchange. Exchange theory has a long history of being applied to explain the process of exchange between different parties, from gift giving and marketing to inter-marrying relationships. Early theorists believed that as individuals are actors as well as reactors during the exchange progress, they make decisions and initiate actions rather than having them predetermined by their culture/milieu. The general principle held

in this framework is that people avoid costly exchanges and seek rewarding statuses, relationships, interactions, and feeling states, so that their profits are maximised, or their losses minimised (Nye 1979). Although both theories consider broad concepts such as costs, rewards, and reciprocity, there are distinctions between the basic assumptions. The general functionalist approach focuses at the micro-economics level, which limits exchange to direct interactions (dyadic and triadic); the structuralist perspective, on the other hand, is interested in the macro-social level, which considers exchange to be between groups and under the restrictions of society. To some scholars (Thibaut and Kelley 1959; Homans 1961; Blau 1964), emotional behaviour, such as marriage, follows a rational interaction path, but involves a less efficient evaluation of costs/rewards and outcomes.

There is some dissent in the argument around emotional behaviour, especially regarding the relationship between personal interaction and social structure. The degree of freedom of agency is vague: on what level can individuals make exchanges as self-interested and rational beings? According to the structuralist theory (Lévi-Strauss 1969), a marital relationship should follow a certain social structure (in this case, the codes, traditions, and laws of marriage) as it is a relationship that is primarily forged between groups, and necessarily leads to alliance. Individual affinity is achieved by following the regulatory systems of the social institutions that are acknowledged by those interdependency groups. Lévi-Strauss's (1983) study in Indonesia shows that a certain structure exists in marriage selections, as there are always some regional groups that keep inter-marriage relationships within them. With structuralised partner selection, he argues that the choice of marriageable partner is decided by the intermarriage structure (with the crux being incest taboo) while individual selections always keep up the barriers and restrictions without affecting the overall frame. To push things further, he agrees with his contemporary functionalist peers that the marriage code is the stable, basic institution of social systems. He summarises two patterns of marriage system: the elementary structures of kinship, "in which marriage is prescribed with a certain category or kind of relative and explicitly forbidden with other relatives" and the complex structures of kinship, "in which the choice of marriage partner is left to other mechanisms or criteria in that there are prohibitions on certain kinds of marriage but no 'positive' marriage rule" (King and Wilder 2003: 120). For Lévi-Strauss, marriage consists of the exchange of women for women; "in human society it is the men who exchange the women, and not vice versa" (1969: 115), which was proved to be a misconception even for primitive societies (Godelier 1999). His other conclusion, "marriage in a circle," presupposes that the marriage alliance running through

generations of unilineal descent does not really exist in these societies. It seems that the stability of kinship may not as solid and essential as functionalism or structuralism believes.

This classic collection of structural/functional theories is still directing current studies of marriage and kinship, particularly outside the anthropology field. Under the influence of the exchange theory, some scholars still consider marriage as an exchange or choice performed by unemotional and rational actors and actresses. Inconsistently, they also believe that intimacy is the goal for those personal alliances. This idea is developed in sociological family research to explain changing family or household patterns (Breger and Hill 1998). It leads to the common perception that “family change is that as societies modernize, parents lose control over their children’s choice of mates, and romantic love triumphs as the basis of partner selection” (Schwartz, Zeng, and Xie 2016: 1003). Many studies focus on mate selection preferences and spousal comparison.

The theories discussed above also premise consanguineal relatedness, which is not unexpected, given the androcentric axis. Several scholars have raised the question of whether kinship is only a genealogical connection (Barnes 1962; Langness 1964; Skinner 1964; Schneider 2004). Genealogy may not be the only criterion for kinship, which can be nurtured by social bonding (Watson 1983; Holland 2012). Ethnographic evidence shows that among some societies, life instinct or residence can and does determine kinship, marriage may not create bonds between two groups, and social and cultural considerations also form kinship (as a symbolic blood relation). Central to marriage, for example, the alliance may not be totally based on regulation of a unilineal generation line, but rather, may be an outcome of geographical proximity, or even market-centred (Skinner 1964).

Despite scholars’ efforts to generalise a universal theory about marriage, family, and kinship, this aspect of humanity is too diversified to be summarised. To quote Leach (1961: 104), “cultural variation in what constitutes marriage is such that the category defies attempts to create a universal definition”, and “all universal definitions of marriage are in vain”. The dynamic of marriage, like the emotion, relations, rights, and duties related to it, itself becomes a source of confusion, especially in a transnational field. The first and foremost issue in transnational marriage is the difficulty of defining this kind of marriage. The terminology used to describe it has little consensus (Charsley 2011). Different terms are used to refer to this marriage: transnational marriage, international marriage, cross-border marriage, cross-cultural

marriage, or mixed marriage. As Charsley (2011) points out, these terms are sometimes used interchangeably without conceptual clarity. The terminology debates surrounding this basic concept have not yet provided a satisfactory conclusion (Constable 2003; Mix and Piper 2003; Charsley 2011). Nevertheless, it has depicted different types of research interest and reflected the delicate status of international marriage.

Further, it is commonly accepted that any marriage in a transnational field should at least satisfy the condition of being “transnational/international.” In order to be so, a marriage should be between two people from different countries. It may be an oversimplification, but as discussed above, the central agent of such a marriage, besides the couple, is indeed the nation-state, while at the heart of the union is the valid, legally and socially recognised marriages.

The irony is that, for some scholars, ethnic communities should be the important factor in international marriages, whereas cross-border union is inevitably a bureaucratic procedure. Outwardly, transnational marriage refers to “marriages taking place within pre-existing active transnational networks” (Charsley 2011: 19). These marriages are between groups of people who reside in different countries. The premise is that there is a cohesive, self-contained, homogenised, ethnic culture that requires these people to maintain their identity, to preserve their “purity” as an ethnic community even in another country. In short, in this framework, this kind of marriage is culturally endogamous and ethnically accepted; for example, Indian/Pakistani-English husbands and their Indian/Pakistani wives (Charsley 2005), or international marriage among Islamic groups (Breger and Hill 1998). Apart from the imagined consolidated cultural practice, this kind of perspective is similar to that of the Manchester school of anthropology, which describes patterns of actual network relations in communities, and fluid situations in urban or migratory contexts (White and Johansen 2005). Despite international marriage’s transnational context, the core of such analysis is structural-functionalism’s kinship (or culture, tradition, religion etc.) as one of the central stable institutions. In this framework, the impetus for international marriage is international migration. This, of course is only half of the truth in this enquiry.

This kind of macroscale research into international marriage is facing the same issue as research into traditional/domestic marriage; that is, the actual people involved in this sort of relationship are neglected. Since the aim of macroscale research is to seek a general pattern or interpretation, it follows that personal

lived experience is missing from their explanatory net. From another perspective, feminist studies show how the structuring role of gender affects experiences of marriage and family life, and the choice and recognition of individual romance. Gender is certainly a crucial factor in understanding international marriage. The challenge is to depict the interaction between social institutions (and processes) and the vivid lives of individuals, to find the balance between structure and agency. To solve this problem, feminists try to gain better understandings through studying personal lived experiences, especially of women. International marriage is also seen as a process of choice, for women to empower themselves rather than submit to male supremacy.

Feminist or not, scholars often use exchange theory to explain motivations for international marriage. From a study of white women (who married a foreigner) in Europe during 1992-1993, Khatib-Chahidi, Hill and Paton (1998) suggest that some of them chose their international and cross-cultural marriage to “escape from a highly restrictive home life,” while for others “from liberal families,” it was “a logical extension of life” bringing openness and new experiences (Berger and Hill 1998: 12). According to Lin and Shen (2006), international marriage between Chinese women and South Korean men is a typical case of exchange. For women who have limited resources, international marriage is a self-decision process. The motivation is to have economic stability and to change one’s socio-economic status. Lin and Shen have found that women use their youthfulness as a reward in exchange for men’s residential advantage in rich countries. By interviewing individuals and researching divorce cases (from courthouse and sub-district offices), the researchers found that most of the Korean-Chinese women were less educated, with limited social-economic status and resources, and could not go abroad and live through their own efforts. Quan (2007, 2012) focuses on Korean-Chinese females in mainland China who married males from South Korea. She states that international marriage is a typical case to show how people love to chase a fancy and wealthy life style. She also uses a “theory of unity by marriage” to explain these international marriages, since they are a reciprocal exchange. Korean-Chinese females are younger and fluent in Korean, while South Korean males are living in a richer country. Thus, marriages between these two groups are an exchange between these “special rewards.” Quan concludes this kind of “reciprocal exchange” is not “true love” because “in a true love relationship, the exchange of special rewards is merely the means to obtain ultimate reward, which is inner attraction, but by treating relationships purely as means for an end, the exchange of special rewards is the purpose of such communication itself.” Ding et al. (2004) used marriage registration data

(from 1996 to 2002) from Shanghai Bureau of Civil Affairs to show there are larger age gaps between spouses in international couples than with local spouses. The authors argued that mainland Chinese women “trade their youthfulness for international marriage.” Concluding that the motivation of such marriage is purely self-interest and benefit-chasing, they predict that, as economic development continues in more areas of China, and international connections are strengthened, international marriages between Chinese and foreigners will increase.

Some scholars even believe that international marriage is nothing but a shameful fraud, because of its calculating nature of “exchange”; some believes that in certain area, international marriage cross-border is no other than human trafficking (Jiang 1999; Ding et al. 2004; Li 2009; Kim 2013; Baker 2017; Kawaguchi and Lee 2017). Jiang (1999) connected the fluctuating numbers of registration for international marriage with the Asian financial crisis. He stated that international marriage between mainland Chinese females and South Korean males was nothing but a sham, as the females hold misconceptions about what is marriage and faked marriage in exchange for a chance to work abroad. What they really want, he asserted, is higher income and rights of residency, not real love or family life. As a result, these international marriages are doomed to be fail because of the large age-gap between the spouse. Jiang argued that since these couples in international marriage are stranger to each other without affections, their individual differences and cultural conflictions would also lead to divorce. Li (2009) argued that marriage between mainland Chinese males and North Korean females is “human trafficking and illegal” as most of these men cannot find a wife in China, and they pay traffickers for a foreign one. Both males and females in such marriages are from the lower class of their society, with limited resources. Recent studies (Zhang and Bao, 2013) which focus on the southwest border area in China also point out that with the increase in international marriage inside minority groups, the problem of human trafficking and marriage fraud has increased.

Technological and economic development has made the twenty-first century an era of rapid changes, which has influenced international marriage by increasing its diversity. During this period of study, ‘calculations between benefit and cost provides motivation for international marriage’ is argued to be the foundation of international marriage, while international marriage is treated as the by-product of migration (Piper and Lee 2016). The research topic in international marriage during this time have also become more diverse.

Subjects such as marriage broker, gender disparities, population structural changes, and marriage behaviours changes have emerged as new area of international marriage research.

1.3.2 Gendered Migration and Global Intimacy

The commonly held view of early stages of human migration are that it was the forced outcome of climate cycles, and closely connected with the origins of modern humans. With the development of civilisation, war, trading, colonisation, and industrialisation, gradually the structural differentials across nations and regions have become leading causes of such movements. In combination with human activities, natural changes like epidemic diseases, anthropogenic changes, global warming, and extreme weather, also led to the migration of populations. It was only during the colonial era that large-scale migration of populations to new continents outside the major geographical areas occurred. Then, following the world-wide foundation of nation-states, which established borders and residency, combined with disparity of wealth and resources between countries and continents, migration not only became an issue for human rights, but also provoked government concern (Notestein 1945; Wolf 1982; Weeks 2014).

The existing literature on international marriage tends to consider international marriage and migration under the same framework, with marriage as a special type of migration. Some of the research portrays international marriage from the perspective of globalisation, global economic integration, and disparities between countries (Lan 2011). Other research tends to argue that international marriage is the conventional social network that supported and maintained relationships between cross-border ethnic communities (Charsley 2011). As indicated above, the history of international marriage in the modern era is entangled with colonisation, global labour migration, gender discrimination, and racial segregation. It is clear that colonisation and labour migration, obviously male dominated, created an imbalanced sex ratio in different areas and countries. The existence of social expectations of gender roles, stereotype of foreigners, and racial segregation laws, as latent factors have led to different attitudes and policies towards international migrants. The population structures and institutional segregations have become the pull factor of cross-border marriages.

Discourses around international marriage can be roughly divided into two related patterns. Firstly, the migrant path, which constructed understanding of international marriage based on the traditions of male-dominated global labour migration. It has emphasized that cultural habitus and social segregation have

pushed immigrant works to find their brides back in their home countries. This kind of transnational marital relationships are built between home countries and migrant groups, it could create an active network and a mechanism for international marriage-migration. When feminization changes the demographic structure of migration, the existing network turned into a convenient channel for migrant women to overcome strict immigration policies. The second pattern, global intimate economy, believes that international intimacy and economic exchanges are the suitable explanation of such marriage (Thai 2008). This construction roughly falls into two differing explanations: exploitation or empowerment for women in international marriage. From the exploitation perspective, international marriage is women's last resort to achieve upward social mobility. The changes in the sexual structure of labour market have created the need of female workers in economic developed countries and regions. The global economic hierarchy, especially the disparities between levels of income, is the driving force for these labour flows. However, the states' political and legal obstructions against low-quality migrants have limited individual ability of international movement. Together, these forces have turned international marriage into a cost advantaged way to reach the goal of migration for women, but it also has led to the commercialisation and exploitation of women. From the empowerment perspective, international marriage is migrant women's passage to hope. International marriage has provided female's from less-developed regions a channel to find ideal husbands and lifestyles against poverty and paternalistic traditions (Constable 2003).

The migrant path emphasizes the importance of networks between migrants and their cultures and communities. International marriage has become a coping mechanism to counter-balance the lack of social resource and mobility in the receiving countries and migrant's homeland. This type of marriage has not only supported migrants to cope with social segregation in the receiving countries, but also maintained their cultural identity. The intimate economy emphasizes that the socioeconomic benefits in international marriage is the real motivation, even for those co-ethnic communities. In engaging in this type of international intimacy, the women have built a network that enables migration and work opportunities in socioeconomically advanced countries and regions. Current studies in this area tend to see close links between marriage and labour migration (Williams 2010).

The migrant path adopted systematic explanations on the mechanism of international marriage, while the intimate economy provides dispositional and transactional explanations on the motivation. However, one

latent problem for both approaches is the tendency to apply a functional interpretation on international marriage. The problem with functional patterns is that it assumed the migrants and their communities are highly unified, while the migrants and public society in the receiving countries are highly divided. It has overlooked the differences within migrants, their communities, and their homeland, while the differences between genders, cultures, historical conditions, personal values, and life experiences have been neglected. The migrant path pattern places international marriage in the chain of international migration and explore its causality, whereas the intimate economy pattern focuses on the decision-making process in international marriage with cost-effect analysis. The migrant path only considers international marriage as a response to the demand of male-centred international migration and cross-border cultural coherence. The global intimacy economy appears to emphasise women's discretionary power (or to put it in an offensive way, as some scholars believe, crafty abuse of love) over their lives (Quan 2012), but in fact this interpretation narrows marriage down to a unique form of migration. Marriage itself is dissolved and vanishes in this construction of international/transnational marriage.

According to Stark (1987), migration, labour market, and marriage market are the three interacting features that constructed a macro-structure of gender-based marriage and migration market. The motivation of migration for male is the expectation for higher income while for female is to find more "suitable men" for marriage. Under the influence from labour market's sexual-selected labour migration, it will create the needs of marriage migration, thus conduct predictable effects and results in marriage market. Sinke (1999) believes that although international labour-migration market was treated as the cause of international marriages, the population's sex and age structure, especially the migrant workers' imbalanced sex ratio and relatively young age, in this market is the real cause that created international marriage market. Furthermore, the increasing demands of labour forces in the service industry in developed countries call for supplementary labour supply. It has offered the opportunity of employment for female workers, but the states control and women's precarious socioeconomic conditions limited their migration. Thus, international marriages market has been changed to meet the need of the labour market in service industry.

During the last two decades of the twentieth century, the causal relationship between international marriage and migration has been replaced by the correlation between marriage and labour market, but international marriage was still treated as a maneuverer to achieve the goal of migration (Sinke 1999). The recent changes

of world-wide increase in female migrants have led to new research approaches in the existing studies, most of the studies in international marriage have enriched their focus from wives of migrants to women migrating through marriages, while men were treated as the first mover in international marriage market. It is believed that migration was the foremost important pulling factor of international marriage, and international marriage operated according to the demand of international labour and marriage market (Piper and Lee 2016). Although the subject of research in international marriage have been the marriage, in practice, scholars focused so much on migration that in their opinion, marriage was nothing but a specified form of it.

A study in Hong Kong (Ma, Lin, and Zhang 2010) used registration data (1998 to 2005) to explain marriage between Hong Kong males and mainland Chinese females. The pulling force of this type of marriage is believed to be the marriage squeeze in Hong Kong's marriage market, accompanied by economic superiority and close cultural links between two regions. The core pulling factors are assortative matching, that is, the tendency for men to marry younger women with lower educational attainment and occupational status. The researchers found that from the 1960s to the 1980s, the marriage squeeze was caused by the lack of marriageable women in local marriage market, leading to the marriages between Hong Kong males and mainland females. During 1990s, although the sex-ratio of marriageable population returned to normal, the motivations and possibilities for females to get married were reduced due to women's increasing level of education and employment-participation rate. As a result, underprivileged males could not easily find local females who below themselves in educational, occupational, and socioeconomic status, hence marriage with mainland females was considered as a suitable choice for Hong Kong males. The number of this type of marriage in 2005 was a third of total registrations. 90 percent of males in local marriage (both spouses are Hong Kong citizens) were first-married, while only 67 percent of males (Hong Kong citizens) were first married among couples in Hong Kong-mainland marriages. The age-gap between spouses in Hong Kong-mainland marriages could be as high as 11 years and increasing annually. The levels of educational attainment between spouses showed similar patterns between couples in local and Hong Kong-mainland marriages, but Hong Kong males in Hong Kong-mainland marriage not only had much lower educational attainment than males in local marriages, but also had lower than their mainland female spouses (Ma, Lin, and Zhang 2010).

Some scholars have considered that the growth of international marriage in Asia is caused by the imbalance of sex ratio at birth (SRB) and the marriage squeeze (Liaw, Ochiai, and Ishikawa 2010). However, they have argued that Japan is a special case, since an imbalance of SRB does not exist in this country and the cause of the marriage squeeze is female immigration from rural to urban areas. They used the 2000 Japanese Census data to show how economic crises, low fertility rates, and lack of labourers for low-level industries (like “Chinese manufacturing assembly workers” or “Filipino sex workers”) led to the feminisation of immigrants. From 1995 to 2000, a large number of female immigrants from Philippine and China moved to Japan. Over 40 percent of them came to Japan through international marriage, and half of them obtained employment in low-level industries. In contrast to marriage-migration females, *Nikkeijin* (Japanese descendant in Brazil) migrated to Japan and were permitted rights to freely build careers and change their workplaces, as a result they rarely established intimate relationships with Japanese males. Thus, they concluded that Asian females married Japanese males in exchange for immigration, residency and employment in Japan.

Some scholars also pointed out that certain states operated behind the chain of international match making. Japanese rural local governments actively participated in this industry. This population governance policy aimed to cope with the *dansei kekkon nan jidai* era (era of men’s marriage difficulty) in the late 1980s, when Japanese women’s rural-urban migration left a vacuum in the rural marriage market (Nakamatasu 2005). As in the colonisation era, it was not a new phenomenon for governmental power to intervene in and profit from cross-border marriage, but such behaviour is condemned as officially licensed human trafficking in our present society.

Feminist scholars argue that international marriage is both exploitation and self-empowerment (Yamanaka and Piper 2005). They follow previous framework of the labour-marriage. Since the 1960s, movements for equal rights in wealthy countries have empowered women to move beyond family expectations of traditional female roles and pursue their professional development, transforming from being housewives to becoming professional women who contribute to society. However, socially and culturally, domestic caring and housework are still considered to be women’s duties; since gender disparity has not been eliminated, housework and career jobs have become a double pressure. This double pressure still forces women to straddle family and career, stretching their finite energy and time. So much so that employing domestic

workers has become a suitable option and solution, opening a gate of opportunity for women from third world countries. Hochschild (2000) describes this as a global chain of housekeepers and market. Lan's (2006) research into Philippine servants in Taiwan explains that the needs of housekeeper market, which offer a chance of improvement to women's income, are thwarted by the strict laws of migration. So international marriage becomes the only choice for women to engage in the housework labour market. What's more, the disparity between genders has become a disparity within and between genders, as women in developed countries and areas enjoy their empowerment, while female servants or brides across the world became the new servant. Nevertheless, as Constable (2003) pointed out, the transactions also provide a chance for females in poverty or under patriarchy to control and change their life course. International marriage is not only a means to an end for migration or for citizenship, but a careful procedure where gain and price are weighed, and a compromise is reached. For females from Vietnam or Philippine, it has become a cultural given that international marriage is not simply a way to provide a family in need with money, but also a chance of secure access to wealth, stability, and social mobility (Suzuki 2005). Further, since in many societies marriage is typified as individualized, romantic, a pure relationship (Giddens 1992) based on the ideal of true love, some scholars suggest that international marriage can be classified as a reflection of global modernisation and individualisation in modern intimacy, which creates a global family (Beck 1995; 2014).

International marriage always includes inequality of status between husbands and wives, reflecting that gradients of marriage are common in human society. However, the practice also reflects disparities between countries, in the hierarchical trend for females to move from developing countries and poor areas to the developed ones. A vacuum in the marriage market in those countries is created when they become suppliers of marriageable women. Although marriage is a personal and intimate bond, it also embodies globalisation and modernity in this worldwide chain. This chain of movements reflects the disparities between genders, minority groups, nationalities and countries. Thus, personal marriage choices become a global phenomenon and a space for interaction between private and public worlds.

1.3.3 Social Structure and Mobility through Marriage

Marriage in many societies is an institutionalised union, rather than just a private domestic arrangement. One of the fundamental elements of marriage is the social or cultural recognition of the couple, with new

relationships, duties and rights built into this union. Within the modern structure of society, acceptance of these bonds must be performed by legal organ. Marriage, for love or not, is established and accepted according to boundaries or limitations which give this union legitimacy. Yet there is no universal definition of marriage itself, and partner selection is subject to cultural variations. But since cultural variations and evolution create and change the regulations, boundaries and limitations can fluctuate in the practice of marriage (Leach 1961).

The Western conception of modern romantic “love” has developed quite recently, as personal choice and attraction replaced family property and alliance, to become the more important motivations for marriage during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century (Shumway 2003; Cherlin 2004; Gillis 2004; Collins 2006). It is commonly accepted and deemed universal, that interpersonal relationships have evolved from institutional union, to compassionate intimacy to and individualised love. Some scholars believe that this shift from family alliance to personal romantic desire is due to the alienating effects of capitalist society (Beck 1990; Giddens 1992; Shumway 2003). Marriage in western society is considered as a natural outcome of romantic love between partners, and love and marriage are seen as pure intimate relationship. Even while global informationisation makes this discourse more widely accepted by global societies, the actual practice of marriage, Western or otherwise, is still closely connected with socioeconomic considerations. Nevertheless, the patriarchal tradition is key to understanding marriage as a mixture of personal choice and family union in China’s context. In recent decades, as family related culture and practice are changing dramatically, public opinion treats socioeconomic matchups as necessary insurance for an enduring union of love, and marital union between couples and their extended family is a necessary part of the social support network.

The endogamous and exogamous patterns of marriage can be treated as different outcomes of general practices for partner selection, which are related to certain social or cultural rules. There is always an element of compulsion in the actual practice of marriage. All marriages follow regulations and rules to decide which person can be a valid choice of partner; some of these can be broken, and some (especially governmental ones) cannot. In contrast to the pre-modern world, the fundamental changing aspect of marriage is not its enlarged scale and extent, or its defunctionalisation; it is rather the uniform establishment

of legalisation through governmentality, secular or not. It also is a political institution that participates in the constitution of public order.

International marriage has traditionally been viewed as the result of migration and social mobility. Merton (1941, 1976) analysed the restriction and obstacles pushing male migrant workers to seek their brides back in their home countries. Merton's analysis comes from earlier studies of marriage between different social, political, or religious boundaries (like racial groups or adversaries from wars, black and white couple). Merton (1941) and Davis (1941) argued that marriages between different racial groups are exchanges of individual status characteristics. For instance, blacks with high educational attainment can marry white spouses (with lower education achievement) in exchange for their higher social status. Merton (1941) and Davis (1941) held that interracial marriages would more likely to exist between black males and white females. Merton provided a theoretical framework for future study of interracial marriage, in which interracial marriage would be divided into three groups: educational homogamy, whites marrying up for blacks' higher educational attainment, and whites marrying down in terms of education.

This framework, although questionable, inspired scholars to build up the status exchange theory and methods for studying marriage mobility (Gullickson 2006). This theory posits that for highly educated whites, to marry less well educated black would be difficult, thus they would be less likely to enter interracial unions. Some other studies (Gordon 1964; Condran 1979) suggested that education would provide bridges for highly educated whites and blacks to form this type of union; others (Kalmijn 1993; Wilson 1978) held that educational empowerment would only benefit the upper strata of blacks while increasing the marginalisation of the lower classes.

These types of theory treat interracial marriage as two categories, "normal vs. abnormal": for cross-border spouses who shared same cultural background (like migrant workers and their migrant wives), such marriage is just a normal marriage combined with problems of how to conquer geographic distance; but for cross-boundary couples, this intimate union is relatively rare and comparatively "unnatural". Without the widely recognised legitimacy, the motivation of such "unnatural" behaviour is thus questionable. While emphasizing the importance of racial, social and cultural differences that lead to structural blocking and isolation, it was also hypothesizing the inevitability for people to follow cultural and social norms. This had also built the foundation of this area of studies and made the subsequent research limit to migration rather

than marriage itself. Moreover, the male-oriented explanation had neglected gendered differences in marriage and migration. Although most of the studies of international marriage have inferred marriage as certain measure of exchange and mobility, there is still lacking of careful examinations about the actual “exchange”.

International marriage is indeed one overlay area where marriage and migration interweave with culture, politics, social and economic disparity, but treating international marriage as only a by-product of or justified means of migration has largely overlooked its complexity. Based on its policy of Family Reunification, international marriage across European Union is still being treated as a category of migration. The Reunification aims for social-cultural stability and integration, rather than concern about the cultural and social-economic impacts. Sinke (1999) suggests that aside from influence produced by structural changing of labour market, the potential existence of a suitable spouse is always important for personal marriage choice. As cultural practices and expectation of marriage in many countries often encourage women to find “higher status” spouses, therefore marriage migration cannot be avoided since inequality exist across many regions in the world. By using 2001 to 2005 registration data from Ministry Interior to show overall situation of international marriage in Taiwan, Tseng (2010) concluded that under influence of “chain of hierarchical trend”, the vacuum of female generated by the gradient of marriage has made it difficult for farmers and low-levelled male to find a wife in Taiwanese society. It became a driving force for international marriage. Besides, women in poverty pursuing intimate relationships with foreigners might be seeking a chance for social mobility. Meanwhile for those male in developed countries, especially North America, since Civil Rights movements have empowered women and encouraged them to seek equal rights and equality, it has become more difficult for males to find the “traditional, family oriented and obedience” wives in their own countries. The imagination to consider other countries as reservations for traditional “virtuous” women has fuelled those “native” male citizens to participate in international marriage (D’Aoust 2013).

1.3.4 Cultural Perceptions of International Marriage

A significant change during the 21st century is the newly emerged aspects from “sending countries”, which provide a new viewpoint from the other side in international marriage market and it allows us to depict this cross-border intimacy more adequately. Nevertheless, like Williams (2010: 8) explained: “understandings

of marriage-migration depend largely on the history and manifestation of marriage-migration in any given context.” All aspects of international marriage, including its motivations and outcomes, policy and governmentation, data collection and research, are all processed within certain cultural and social structure and context. It would be impossible to gain an understanding of international marriage without its context.

There are significant problems in quantifying the numbers of global cross-border marriage migrants (Williams 2010). For one reason, this problem caused by lack of consensus about what “international marriage” or “cross-border marriage”. Because of this confusion, data collected by government or other agencies contain little comparable information as “data are framed by local concerns and preoccupations” which may even lead to incompatible results from data analysis. To quote Williams (2010: 61), “local context, in terms of culture, politics and history as well as family and marriage practice, informs how marriages seen as ‘aberrant’ or problematic are reported and measured”. Government officials collect background information of international marriage by and large is to enhance population governance rather than improve understanding of international marriage, such as patterns, population characteristic, their lives and families, their issues and adaption and so on. As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2014) mentioned in their book, this problem is not unique for some countries but rather it is a wide spread issue around the world. For EU countries, like Germany, there is no separate data specific collected for international marriage as it is considered as a part of migration. To countries in Asia, registration data aimed to this group of people is merely collecting general information while survey data are rarely designed to focus on this group (Ma, Lin, and Zhang 2010; Kim 2013; Jeffreys and Pan 2013). Scholars who conduct demographic analysis of international marriage using secondary data, such as census or registration data, normally have to compromise or rely on extrapolation or other statistical methods to derive parameters. To date, there has not been any readily available purposefully designed surveys on international marriage in the existing literature.

Compared to earlier research, scopes and quality of study of international marriage have improved in recent years. Other than “migration” or “rational choice”, the understanding of meanings behind this phenomenon was enhanced. To quote Williams (2010: 60) about the importance of cultural context, “countries with long traditions of in-migration”, such as UK, “marriage-migration may be understood very differently from countries where migration has historically been outbound and/or where migration is a relatively new

phenomenon”, such as Japan and China. As more perspectives and contexts are considered, research in this field become more diverse and complex. As the traditionally defined concept of developed and developing countries have been changed by the rising of newly industrialised countries and areas (such as South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan), “target countries” for international marriage are no longer confined to nations of immigration (like North America), but extended to monoethnic nation-states (Japan, South Korea, etc.). Jackson (2007) and Firstenberg (2011) pointed out that international marriage broker also utilized different marketing measures when facing different ‘customers’: a male privileged discourse with racial and sexual discrimination-obedient Asian brides or romantic, passionate “white” wives. Meanwhile, back in traditional receiving countries, motivations of such marriage becoming various, as Kojima (2001) and Beck (2014) found out in their research, urged by modernization to resist cultural regulation or pursue for “true love” can be driving force.

Another issue combining with international marriage is the wide spread anxiety of cultural and national intermingle or “potential possibility of population quality declining” in some receiving countries and areas, such as Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. This leads to some policy changes towards such marriage and concerns about offspring from these marriages. The stigma and segregations have made this problem so important that it became a question about ethnic identity and human rights in Taiwan (Ye 2010). Recently, the increase in public attention of Sino-African children in mainland China has also led to public debates on national identity and racial purity (*South China Morning Post*, 2014)

Most of intra-cultural studies in mainland China have focused on marriage between Korean-Chinese and Korean in Northeast China and ethnic minority groups in Yunnan and Guangxi with foreigners from Southeast Asia (who share the same ethnicity with those Chinese citizens). Some scholars (Lin and Shen 2006; Quan 2012) believes that with the sharing common cultural background, Korean-Chinese are more likely to intra-marry with South Korean. Their international marriages is simply following the endogamy way to avoid marrying non-Korean person. According to Quan (2012), other important factors are the facts that living conditions in South Korea is better, the wage disparities between two countries and “post relation effect” (by which Quan believes is a by-product from international marriage based on kinship and becomes a bridge for female relatives of those who obtained residency to also join in this marriage market). Li (2009) thinks international marriage between North Korean and Korean-Chinese is also based on cultural

identification and it also provided opportunities for older unmarried Korean-Chinese men to form their own families. Despite the considerable amount of marriage between mainland Chinese and Japanese, there are only a few early studies in this area, and most of them tended to focus on legal concerns of this type of marriage (Shi 2005; Li and Lv 2006). Some of the studies of foreign spouses in mainland China are concerned about the '*de facto* but illegal marriage' between individuals of border areas who shares the same cultural tradition and identities (Zhao 2011; Luo 2013; Zhong 2013). History, geographic location, and cultural identity are believed to be the driving forces for cross-border *de facto* marriages. In sum, the existing research suggest that similar cultural identity is the fundamental factor for international marriage to be possible; and the increase of international marriage in mainland China is related to its large amount of multiethnic minority population.

The quantitative research of international marriage in mainland China from a demographic perspective is the one conducted by Ding et al. (2004) about international marriage in Shanghai and another conducted by Gao, Zhang, and Zhu (2013) in Beijing. Ding et al. (2004) used marriage registration data (from 1996 to 2002) from Shanghai Bureaus of Civil Affairs and compared local couples to international couples. According to their study, among the registered international marriages, 88.9 percent are mainland Chinese female citizens marrying non-Mainland Chinese spouses (e.g. foreign nationals, overseas Chinese, or those from Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan). In addition, 80 percent of mainland Chinese citizens in international marriage finished their high school education, but overall their average education levels are still lower than foreigners in the relationships. Their study suggests that there is pattern of gradient spousal selection in marriage markets, that is, people from urban area are superior than people from rural area while foreigners are superior than mainland Chinese, and similarly, males are considered superior than females. Gao et. al (2013) also used marriage registration data (2004 to 2011). They argued that in the latest decade, there have been a large number of mainland females marrying foreigners, larger age-gaps between the couples, and more number of remarriages. There has been an increase in well-educated couples in international marriage.

Most of the Chinese scholars in the areas of international marriage have tended to focus on special groups of minorities or special areas, such as Korean-Chinese or residents from Southwest border regions. Moreover, such attention and concerns sometimes are also affected by scholars' own cultural identity and background. In spite of their observations about the links between marriage and migration, they merely

consider oversea Chinese migrant groups and their marriage with mainland Chinese citizens. They also tended to neglect the domestic labour market conditions and the effects on population distribution and composition of marriageable population. In addition, some research even applied stereotypes to people who married to foreigners as “gold hunting women” who “doom to suffer” and turn themselves into “victims of their own greedy” (Ding et al. 2004; Quan 2012). Some research considered international marriage as a way to solve marriage squeeze and treat foreign women from poorer countries as suitable “goods” for Chinese male who cannot find a Chinese wife (Lu 2014). Existing research in this area has been fragmented and inadequate due to unavailability of data in the past and also due to lack of recognition of its importance by the academic community in China and elsewhere. As an increasingly important and complex social phenomenon, international marriage deserve much more attention and a better understanding. Research about international marriage will contribute to the understanding of some of the important aspects of family changes and social transformation that are currently underway in China.

1.4 Research Questions

This research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the major trends, characteristics and current patterns of international marriages in mainland China?
 - a) What is international marriage included in China’s context?
 - b) What are the key dimensions of differentials (gender, age, regional, educational attainment etc.)?
 - c) What are the main contributing factors to the decline of the number of international marriage in recent decade?
 - d) In what way do the macro-level structural factors and internal migration affect international marriage?
2. Comparing to domestic marriage couples, which demographic characteristics play a greater role in affecting the choice of cross-border marriages and the solidarity of their marriages?
 - a) What are the gendered differentiations between international marriages and domestic marriages in Mainland China?

- b) How education, occupation, and ethnic identity effect individual choice over international and domestic marriage?
 - c) How do the age gaps between spouses affect individual's marital choice?
 - d) How education, occupation, and ethnic identity effect individual's divorce?
 - e) How do the age gaps between spouses affect divorce choices in international marriage?
3. How do social exchanges occurred between international partners and what benefits the social exchanges bring to both partners?
- a) What is the pattern of matches between husband and wife?
 - b) How social mobility is achieved through international marriage?
 - c) What is the premium of relative advantages in marriage market?
4. What are the main motivating factors for choosing international marriages *vis-à-vis* domestic ones?
- a) How do individuals' past experience affect their choices?
 - b) What are their values and attitude towards marriage and intimacy?
 - c) How do they interpret their own marriage and divorce experiences?
 - d) What role does the government and matchmaking brokers play in their marriage choices?

1.5 Definition of Chinese-foreign Marriage

The definition of international marriage in Mainland China is different from the conventional understanding, it is commonly known to the public, scholars, and the state as *guoji hunyin* (international marriage), *kuaguo hunyin* (cross-nation marriage) or *shewai huyin* (Chinese-foreign marriage). The common understanding of Chinese-foreign marriage in the research stresses on the foreign aspect of the marriage, as majority of the study focuses on couples of mainland Chinese and foreigner (without Chinese lineage) in international marriage. In this thesis, the term “international marriage” is applied throughout the analysis, but different from the conventional understanding described above, the definition of this phrase in the thesis follows the Ministry of Civil Affairs' 1999 definition of Chinese-foreign marriage.

According to the Ministry's definition, the classification of "*shewai huiyin*" has changed a number of times, but it is always based on the categories of the spouse's foreign residency. From 1979 to 1981, the marriage is divided into four subclasses: mainland Chinese citizen marry (a) Overseas Chinese sojourner; (b) Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan compatriot; (c) Foreigner of Chinese descent; (d) Foreigner. By the year 1982, the Ministry changed these categories to mainland Chinese citizen marry (a) Chinese sojourner; (b) Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan compatriot; (c) Chinese of foreign nationality; (d) Foreigner. During 1991 to 1998, the classification contains five subgroups, which includes mainland Chinese citizen marry (a) Hong Kong, Macao compatriot; (b) Taiwan compatriot; (c) Chinese sojourner; (d) Chinese of foreign nationality; (e) Foreigner. Since 1999, it is changed to mainland Chinese citizen marry (a) Hong Kong resident; (b) Macao resident; (c) Taiwan resident; (d) Chinese sojourner; (e) Foreigner. In addition, aside from above types of Chinese-foreign marriage, there is another type of "*shewai huiyin*" in mainland China, the "foreign-foreign marriage". According to the marriage regulations, marriages that do not involve mainland Chinese citizens, which is marriages between foreigners, SARs' residents, residents from Taiwan or Chinese sojourners, can also be registered by the Bureaus of Civil Affair and Overseas embassies or consulates, and shall be bound by the law of People's Republic of China. In this thesis, however, marriages between two foreigners or two foreign overseas Chinese are not included in the analysis.

The Chinese term *haiwai huaren* (Overseas Chinese) includes people who has Chinese ancestors and living outside mainland China, SARs and Taiwan, it is commonly used to refer to people of Chinese descendants residing abroad, such as *huaqiao* (Chinese sojourner) and *huayi* (Chinese descendant). In practice the state separated Overseas Chinese into Chinese sojourner and Chinese descendant. Currently, the "Chinese descendant" without Chinese citizenship is identified as "foreigner" rather than "sojourner" or "Overseas Chinese", while the "Chinese sojourner" is specified to Overseas Chinese citizens, hence since 1999 the marriage between mainland Chinese citizen and Chinese descendant without Chinese citizenship is categorized as "mainland Chinese citizen marry foreigner". In this thesis, the term "Chinese sojourner" is used in the analysis of international marriage in mainland China. It refers to Chinese citizens living abroad, and accumulated residence for two years is not less than 18 months⁶.

1.6 Research Framework

The theoretical frameworks that guide this research include push-pull theory (Lee 1966), demographic transition theory (Thompson 1929, Landry 1934, and Notestein 1945), social exchange theory, feminist theory, and power structure theory. Some of the background structural paradigms applied in the analysis also include theories of globalization and glocalization, the market transformation of China, individualization, theory of actor-network, and perspectives of dramaturgy.

In the research area of international marriage in both Western societies and Asian societies, the theories of international chain of labour-marriage migration are commonly applied to explain the macro-level structural factors of transnational marriage. It combines market theory and hypothesis of economic rationality with push-pull mechanisms, population structure, and social exchange theory. It is believed that the international male-dominated labour migration is the main pull factor of international marriage, as it broke the balance of sex ratio among marriageable population in local marriage market. Meanwhile, in the research at individual level the push-pull factors can also be applied to understand the exchange of social status. These approaches are widely applied in marriage studies to examine the mobility and exchange between spouses. As interpersonal relationship and marriage are deemed to be universal in many societies, the existing research tended to utilize this perception of marriage in the research of transnational marriage. In some circumstances, international marriage could also be understood as institutional and economic arrangement rather than individual and romantic companionship. In addition to the labour-marriage migration scheme, some research highlighted the importance of cultural exchange and feminism to understand marginalized groups in international marriage relationships, by which women could escape patriarchal system and empower themselves. In the existing literature, the connections or differentials between two communities of the spouses in different countries are also considered as the main structural driving forces in international marriage.

Guided by the frameworks above, this study also integrates the perspectives of international migration into international marriage; however, different from existing research, this study does not follow the same macro-level explanation. It emphasizes the connections between domestic marriage and migration and international marriage and migration, as some factors that affect domestic marriage and migration could

also have impacts on international marriage, such as sex ratio of marriageable age population in a region and social economic conditions of a region.

International marriage could be affected by many factors, such as knowledge between cultures, skill of languages, educational attainment, migration experiences, and political interests, which could provide capacities and opportunities for people to build up international connections. Discrimination, qualification system, restrictions on job and welfare could also affect marriage choices in a negative way. Individual behaviour and relationships with others, including marriage behaviour and choices, could be affected and regulated by macro-level structural factors, such as formal institutional influences from governments, or informal influences from family and communities that formulated gendered role in the family and society. The institutional forces within a nation could also distribute power and change the ranking social groups, create disparity and segregation of its people. Global power structure has major effects on international migration and marriage, while the national social, cultural, economic and demographic conditions and the existing gender and family norms also regulate international migration and marriage. Much of the research on international marriage of mainland China has not fully understood the institutional evolution on marriage and the connection between international marriage and the regional disparity between rural and urban China. Instead of treating international married individuals as passive reactors to social system, or ideal economic and perfect rational players, this research emphasizes the importance of individual's own narratives over international marriage as well as their connections with the wider environments in which they are situated. Furthermore, international marriage is not treated in isolation from domestic marriage; rather, this study will explore the interconnections between the two.

In sum, to examine the structural factors and motivation of international marriage, instead of treating marriage as a means of migration or a simple exchange of status and benefit, this study adopts the key elements in the labour-marriage migration framework and cultural exchange notion as reviewed above, and also follows the guidance of relational methodology (Bourdieu 1998). International marriage in this research is situated in the context of Chinese historical, cultural, social, political, economic, and demographic changes over time, as well as connected to individual's experience and their personal values towards marriage. In this study, the research framework contains both structural factors and individual factors that could potentially affect international marriages. As discussed before, in this framework,

economic disparities and migration policy related factors are the main pulling factors for international migration and marriage. The social and economic conditions and demographic structure in sending and receiving countries also have impacts on individual’s spousal choices either as pull or push factors. On cultural factors, as marriage is related to family and social networks, family and marriage related values and traditions would also have important effects on marriage choices. However, all these factors are external forces that need to be internalised by couples themselves in making marriage choices. Personal values, experience, identity and human capital related factors therefor are included in analysing determinants of marriage choices in this framework. The relationships are illustrated in Figure 1.1.

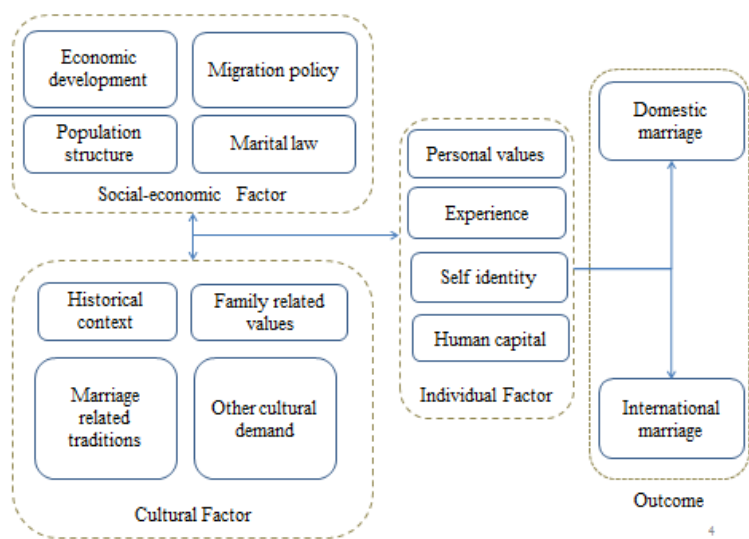


Figure 1-1 Theoretical Framework of Thesis

1.7 Research Significance and Contribution

Existing studies in the literature have not provided adequate understanding on the key aspects of international marriage in China. The lack of study on international marriage in mainland China has also contributed to the lack of overall understanding of international marriage in Asia as China is an important contributing country of international spouses. Although the increase of international marriage from the 2000s has led to increase in its research, majority of the studies focuses either on the basic patterns and characteristics, economic motivations, or the specific connections between ethnic groups. Systematic research on international marriage in China, in relation to other countries in the region and beyond, is urgently needed.

Some of the existing research in mainland China, Hong Kong SAR, and Taiwan region in recent years utilized series of survey, census, and vital registration data to depict Chinese-foreign marriages, but the

theoretical and methodological scheme are largely limited. Research in mainland China casts some lights on international marriage in Beijing and Shanghai, while the understanding of international marriage in other regions are yet to be available. Research in Hong Kong and Taiwan tended to be limited to the marriages between mainland Chinese and residents of both regions, which by and large do not represent the overall landscape of international marriage in mainland China.

By utilizing multiple sources of data, this study not only examines the long-existed hypothesis in international marriage (e.g. marriage as a means of international migration or as exchange of social status), explore new methods for research in this emerging area, but also provides new perspectives of research framework. With the help of geostatistics, this study demonstrates the connections between regional variations and intensity of international marriage, which also illustrates the connections between China's international marriage and internal migration. Based on the unique set of data from the Bureau of Civil Affairs of China, this study provides comprehensive statistical analysis on the relationships between international and domestic marriage, as well as the connections between individual socioeconomic status and the probability of international marriage choices. This study treats domestic and international marriage as a result of personal marital choices in responding to macro-level social, cultural and economic conditions in which they are situated. The study explores the connections between human capital related achieved conditions and marital choices. It also provides a comparison between two genders in marriage relationships, which reveals the similarities and differences between Chinese women's and men's spousal selection patterns. More importantly, this study provides a comprehensive analysis of solidarity of union and spousal matching in both domestic and international marriages, which enhances our understanding of one of the important aspects of social transformation in contemporary China, the changes in marriage behaviour in recent times. In addition, the ethnographic data through intensive interview provide insights into international marriage in mainland China, through understanding of couple's life experience, values, norms and the effects on their marriage choices. The intermediary roles that the state and marriage broker played in facilitating international marriage are also explored in this analysis. The methodology contribution of this study includes the use of mix methods approaches and consolidating a range of otherwise fragmented data sources.

1.8 Data Sources and Methods

The lack of comprehensive studies of international marriage in China in the existing literature are attributable to two main reasons. First, the lack of detailed registration record and data of international marriage in many jurisdictions, as well as the state control over official record and data usage. Second, China has started to experience profound social changes and transformation in recent decades, the emergence of international marriage has only been one of the aspects of these changes. Due to large population base of Chinese population, the international marriage ratio has been relatively low. Therefore, from administrative point of view, such marriage has not been seen as impactful to Chinese society, hence the lack of incentive of collecting data and incentivising research in this area. In addition, research in this area has also been affected by the nature of international marriages, that are embedded in the web of complexity of multiple dimensions in national, regional and cultural and social systems. Therefore, the definition, data collection, and research schemes over international marriage could be very challenging.

Due to unavailability of reliable and comprehensive data, descriptive statistics has been more commonly used in the existing literature on international marriage within Asia, including China. Only until recently since 2010, it has been possible to conduct demographic analysis in this area as scholars from South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan conducted some surveys and the governments in the region have also started to allow research using official registration datasets (Yang and Lu 2010). Although their research has provided fruitful understanding of international marriage in these countries, the lack of research on international marriage in mainland China has limited our overall understanding of international marriage in Asia as a whole. While the research of international marriage in Asia by and large has adopted the conventional interpretation of international chain of labour-marriage migration, the life experience of individuals and the sociocultural context between groups have largely been overlooked. In the existing literature, both quantitative and qualitative methods are applied in research of international marriage, the former tended to focus on demographic features of international married population, while the latter tended to provide interpretations over specific case studies, but it is very rare that a mix-method approach is adopted in analysing international marriage. Much of the existing study about this topic in mainland China are limited and unfocused, both methodologically and theoretically.

There are policy restrictions on data usage related to information on international marriage in China. Sources of data in mainland China can be found in statistical yearbooks and registration records from the Ministry and Bureaus of Civil Affairs (MCA and BCA), records from the Ministry of Public Security (MPS), and divorce records from Peoples' Courts. However, data from MPS is highly unlikely to be obtained due to security reasons, while the divorce cases from courthouse were scattered across the country. The other source of the data could be from the 6th population census conducted in 2010, which include some information of foreigners in mainland China, but the data and questionnaire are not available to the researchers. Since China has only started to build its immigration bureau in recent year, most of immigration affairs are governed by the Exit-Entry Department (E-ED) of the Ministry of Public Security. The E-ED holds information about Chinese citizens' and foreigners' visas which might be used to identify international marriages. However, administrative jurisdiction of international marriage belongs to the Ministry and the Bureaus of Civil Affairs, hence the registration record of the Ministry and the Bureaus is more detailed and timely. Without any comprehensive and relevant surveys in mainland China, the yearbooks and registration record are the only available data source for studying international marriage. Nevertheless, international marriage registration from the Bureaus of Civil Affairs at provincial level and divorces cases from courthouses are two separate sets of relevant data, that is, records of divorces by agreement are registered with the Ministry of Civil Affairs while the litigated divorces are registered with the courthouses. It is clear that each of these two types of records covers partial divorce data, including domestic and international marriages, but international marriage divorces are more complicated. Although the MCA and BCA's data contains the most complete³ statistics about general information of international marriage couples who married or divorced in mainland China, in practice, some of the Chinese-foreign marriage are not included in the database while some of the included marriages are not "Chinese-foreign marriage". The de facto relationships, polygamy, or civil partnership that do not conform to China's regulation of marriage are not included in the dataset. To make situations more complicated, China's foreign embassies can also issue marriage and divorce registration services for Chinese citizens and Hong Kong residents who reside in foreign countries, and this information are not included in the MCA record. Some Chinese citizens will also register their marriage or divorce in other countries and regions, which is also not covered in the MCA⁵ record.

Marriage registration data from the Ministry and the Bureau of Civil Affairs are collected with a national-unified online system, both for international and domestic registrations. The yearbooks tabulated annual number of international marriage registration and foreign spouse in different provinces, and the data from the yearbooks have been used by most of the existing quantitative research in mainland China. The benefit of using this dataset is, it makes further comparisons between genders, areas, countries, and groups possible. However, there is also a clear disadvantage, as the unified data form reduces its depth and scope of information, such as income and familial context.

In this study, a great deal of effort has been devoted into consolidating data from a wide range of sources. The datasets in this study include: the marriage registration records from the Bureau, the national marriage registration record from China Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbooks (1979-2016), China's 5th (2000) and 6th (2010) Population Census data and system of national accounts (2000 and 2010) from National Bureau of Statistics of China's "National Data" base. It also uses data from other records and surveys, such as Marriage and Divorce Trends in Hong Kong (1991 to 2013), Marriage Registration in Taiwan (1998 to 2015), Population Census of Japan (2010), and Vital Statistics of Japan (2016). The provincial domestic marriage data dated from 2010 to 2014, as registration data before 2010 is not digitized, while international marriage and divorce data dated from 2005 to 2016; and the national data of statistical yearbooks dated back to 1979.

In particular, this study innovatively utilises couple-matched registration records, which includes a range of useful variables that make the comparisons between husband and wife possible; and it also enables analysis of gaps between spouses, such as age, educational attainment, occupation, ethnicity and nationality. Together with ethnographic data, the mixed method approach adopted in this study will provide a comprehensive analysis of the patterns, characteristics, and spatial differentials of international marriage, it also enables an analysis of gendered patterns of marriage choices and solidarity of the relationships, spousal matching patterns and relative advantage, as well as motivations of marriage choices through insights into individual life experiences. Details of data and methodology will be discussed in each key chapter.

1.9 Thesis Structure

This thesis contains six chapters, which follow the format of thesis by publication. The first chapter and final chapter are introduction and conclusion chapters, the other four chapters are four self-contained and inter-linked papers, which corresponding to the research questions. These four chapters provide empirical analysis of the patterns, trends, characteristics, motivating factors of international marriages in mainland China in recent decade. It also reflects on the lives of international marriage couples and their coping and adoptions strategies to their life.

As an introduction of the thesis, Chapter One will set the scene and provide an overall picture of the research background, objectives, theoretical framework, data and methods.

Chapter Two depicts international marriage in mainland China during the decade of 2000-2010. Utilizing a wide range of data sources, this chapter places international marriage in the socioeconomic context of mainland China to present the spatial distribution of international marriage, as well as correlations between intensity of international marriage and macro-level socioeconomic factors.

Chapter Three focuses on the formation and dissolution of both international marriages and domestic marriages. The chapter examines the effects of individual characteristics, such as educational attainment, occupation, age at marriage, and marriage history, on the choice between international and domestic marriage, also on the differences between solidarity of two types of marriage.

Chapter Four centres on the hypothesis of “international marriage as an exchange for privileged residency” (Ding et al. 2004; Quan 2012). Applying the marital exchange theory and method, this chapter discusses the patterns of spousal exchange in the transnational and domestic contexts. It also explores the relative advantage and premium in transnational marriage markets.

Chapter Five adopts the method of ethnography to interpret the motivation of international marriage and divorce choices, and also compare it to that of domestic marriage choices in relation to family patterns and the changes over time. It explores the interactions between macro structure and individual life experience, and its effect on personal marital choices.

Chapter Six concludes the thesis. It summarizes and synthesizes the main themes and key findings of this research, presents its theoretical and practical implications, and discusses the future directions of research on international marriage.

Notes

1 The Han dynasty bordered with Xiongnu Empire around 200 BC. Military conflicts between two states led to series of war, eventually both sides make peace and established a system of marriage treaty. Han send princesses to marry leaders of Xiongnu, as well as presents and gifts in hope of stop the border raids. This harmonious kinship exists for sixty years.

2 Two famous “first international couples” after 1949 are Maryn Varbanov and Song Huai-Gui (married in 1956), and Li Shuang and Emmanuel Bellefroid (aka Bai Tian-Xiang) (married in 1984); the former was approved by Premier Zhou En-Lai, and the latter by the eminent leader Deng Xiao-Ping. However, in Li and Bellefroid’s case, Li was arrested and sentenced to two years’ imprisonment which led to tensions between China and France. Even with the 1983 regulations on international marriage, it is still not easy for individual to marry a foreign spouse. For instance, in the case of Zhuang Ze-Dong and Sasaki Atsuko’s marriage, in 1987 Zhuang and Sasaki applied to marry, and intended to reside in mainland China; Deng approved the marriage provided that Sasaki relinquished her Japanese citizenship.

3 The regulations related to *shewai hunyin* (Chinese-foreign marriages) in mainland China are: Regulations of Marriage Registration between Chinese Citizens and Foreigners (*zhongguo gongmin tong waiguoren banli jiehun dengji de jixiang guiding*, August 1983); Regulations of Marriage Registration between Chinese Citizens and Overseas Chinese, Hong Kong and Macao Compatriots (*huaqiao tong guonei gongmin, Gang Ao tongbao tong neidi gongmin zhijian banli jiehun dengji de jixiang guiding*, November 1983); Regulations of Embassies and Consulates Processing with Overseas Chinese’s Marital Issues (*guanyu zhuwai shilling guan chuli huaqiao hunyin wenti de yuogan guiding*, November 1983); Official Reply of the Ministry of Civil Affair on Advice of Processing Foreign Affair Issues for Marriage Registration (*Minzheng bu guanyu banli hunyin dengji zhong jige shewai wenti chuli yijian de pifu*, December 1983); General Principles of the Civil Law of the People’s Republic of China (*zhonghua renmin gonghe guo minfa tongze*, January 1987); and Marriage Law of the People’s Republic of China (*zhonghua renmin gonghe guo hunyin fa*, January 1981, which also includes judicial interpretations and amendments).

4 *Hukou* system is the household registration system in mainland China. The system origins in ancient China, similar system exists in Taiwan region, Japan, and Vietnam. The *hukou* record officially identifies individual as a resident in a given area; the record includes information such as name, date of birth, spouse, parents, siblings, ethnicity, educational attainment, occupation, political affiliation, religious belief. Household registration book is also issued to every family, and includes information such as birth, death, marriage, divorce, and migrations, of all family members. *Hukou* regulation was signed into law in 1958, aimed to control population and maintain social order. It divided mainland Chinese citizens into nongye (agricultural) population and feinong (non-agricultural) population. Under the central government’s collectivism planning system, the social welfare system was tied with *hukou* status, and it heavily favoured on non-agricultural population. Since the 1980s, hukou system reformation has relaxed the state control over internal migration, but segregations on civil rights and social welfare still exists.

5 It is likely that the total number of Chinese-foreign marriages has been underestimated. Above all, the Ministry and regional Bureaus are not the only government organ to register this type of marriage. The marriage related registration service was provided by local government until the Ministry took it over in 1980. In mainland China, the registration of Chinese-foreign marriages can be only conduct by the Bureaus of Civil Affairs; while in other countries, China's embassies can also provide registration service. These two government organs process marriage registration separately. Also, Civil Law Article 147 states: The marriage of a citizen of the People's Republic of China to a foreigner shall be bound by the law of the place where they get married, while a divorce shall be bound by the law of the place where a court accepts the case. Article 150 states: The application of foreign laws or international practice in accordance with the provisions of this chapter shall not violate the public interest of the People's Republic of China. Based on the Law, Chinese-foreign marriages can also get registered by foreign government but shall only be officially accepted by China if the marriage is also bound by the law of People's Republic of China. Exempli gratia, Taiwan area's marriage registration record for mainland Chinese citizens and Taiwan residents shows that some couples are married before they aged 20, which is below mainland China's legal age for marriage and thus can be accepted only as de facto marital relationship by mainland China. The martial relationship between mainland Chinese citizen and foreigner who practicing polygamy will also denied by mainland China's legal or registration system. Nevertheless, martial or civil relationships between homosexual couples will also be rejected by the country as its legal and cultural system only accepts heterosexual marriage.

6 According to the "Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of the Returned Overseas Chinese and the Relatives of Overseas Chinese (2004)", the definition of Chinese sojourner refers to Chinese citizens living abroad. Chinese citizens have obtained longterm residency or permanent residency in the country and have been living for two consecutive years. The accumulated residence for these two years is not less than 18 months. If Chinese citizens living abroad no less than 30 months, they are regarded as overseas Chinese. Chinese citizens studying abroad (including public and self-funded studies) or go abroad for official business (including expatriate labour) are not considered Chinese sojourner.

References

- Abrams, Kerry. 2005. "Polygamy, prostitution, and the federalization of immigration law," *Columbia Law Review* 105(3): 641-716.
- Ahmad, Diana L. 2007. *The Opium Debate and Chinese Exclusion Laws in the Nineteenth Century American West*. Reno: University of Nevada Press.
- Baker, Nick. 2017. "The child bride trade is booming in Myanmar as the gender gap bites in China," Australia Broadcasting Corporation. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-10-08/inside-the-myanmar-china-bride-trade/9023906> (accessed 10 September 2018).
- Barnes, J. A.. 1961. "Physical and social kinship," *Philosophy of Science* 28(3): 296-299.
- Beck, Ulrich and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim. 1995. *The Normal Chaos of Love*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Beck, Ulrich and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim. 2014. *Distant Love: Personal Life in the Global Age*. Cambridge:

Polity Press.

- Blau, P. M.. 1964. *Exchange and Power in Social Life*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Breger, Rosemary and Rosanna Hill. 1998. *Cross-Cultural Marriage: Identity and Choice*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Bonjour, Saskia. 2013. "A proper wife, a proper marriage: Constructions of 'us' and 'them' in Dutch family migration policy," *European Journal of Women's Studies* 20(1): 67-76.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1998. *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Buttenheim, Alison M., and Jenna Nobles. 2009. "Ethnic diversity, traditional norms, and marriage behaviour in Indonesia," *Population Studies* 63(3): 277-294.
- Cai, Fang. 2011. "Hukou system reform and unification of rural-urban social welfare," *China and World Economy* 19(3) 33-48.
- Chan, Kam Wing. 2010. "The household registration system and migrant labour in China: Notes on a debate," *Population and Development Review* 36(2): 357-364.
- Chan, Kam Wing, and Li Zhang. 1999. "The hukou system and rural-urban migration in China: Processes and changes," *The China Quarterly* 160: 818-855.
- Chang, Iris. 2004. *The Chinese in America: A Narrative History*. London: Penguin Books.
- Charsley, Katharine. 2005. "Unhappy husbands: Masculinity and migration in transnational Pakistani marriages," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 11(1): 85-105.
- Charsley, Katherine. 2011. *Transnationalism, Migration and Marriage*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Cherlin, Andrew J. 2004. "The deinstitutionalization of American marriage," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 66(4): 848-861.
- Choo, Eugene, and Aloysius Siow. 2006. "Estimating a marriage matching model with spillover effects," *Demography* 43(3): 463-490.
- Chung, Erin Aeran and Daisy Kim. 2012. "Citizenship and Marriage in a Globalizing World: Multicultural Families and Monocultural Nationality Laws in Korea and Japan," *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies* 19(1): 195-219.
- Collins, Marcus. 2006. *Morden Love: Personal Relationships in Twentieth-Century Britain*. Newark: University of Delaware Press.
- Condran, J. G.. 1979. "Changes in White attitudes toward Blacks: 1963-1977," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 43:463-476.
- Constable, Nicole. 2003. "A transnational perspective on divorce and marriage: Filipina wives and workers," *Identities, Global Studies in Power and Culture* 10(2):163-180.
- Davis, Kingsley. 1941. "Intermarriage in caste society," *American Anthropologist* 43: 376-395.
- Deng, Weizhi and Xin Xu. 2000. "The trajectory of contemporary Chinese families," *Social Sciences* 10: 51-55.
- Ding, Jinhong, Hongyan Yang, Shaoyun Zhou, Jixiang Zhou, Kewu Lin, and Yuzhi Zhang. 2004. "Characteristics and trends of cross-nation marriage in modern Shanghai," *Chinese Journal of Population Science* 3: 66-70.
- Durkheim, Emile and Marcel Mauss. 1963. *Primitive Classification*. London: Cohen and West Limited.
- Enns, Chris. 2005. *Hearts West: The True Stories of Mail-Order Brides on the Frontier*. Connecticut: Globe Pequot Press.

- European Parliament. 2016. "International marriage brokers and mail order brides – Analysing the need for regulation," [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/571377/IPOL_STU\(2016\)571377_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/571377/IPOL_STU(2016)571377_EN.pdf) (accessed 7 October 2018).
- Evans-Pritchard, E.E.. 1951. *Social Anthropology*. London: Cohen and West.
- Firstenberg, Noga. 2011. "Marriage and morality: Examining the International Marriage Broker Regulation Act," *Asian American Law Journal* <http://scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/aalj/vol18/iss1/5> (accessed 7 April 2017).
- Forgash, Rebecca. 2009. "Negotiating marriage: Cultural citizenship and the reproduction of American empire in Okinawa," *Ethnology* 48(3): 215-237.
- Gao, Ying, Xiulan Zhang, and Weilong Zhu. 2013. "A study on cross-nation marriage of Beijing in recent years," *Population and Economics* 1: 27-36.
- Giele, Janet Z. and Glen H. Elder Jr.. 1998. *Methods of Life Course Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Giddens, Anthony. 1992. *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love, and Eroticism in Modern Societies*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Gillis, John R.. 2004. "Marriages of the mind," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 66(4): 988-991.
- Gladney, Dru C.. 2004. *Dislocating China: Reflections on Muslims, Minorities, and Other Subaltern Subjects*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Godelier, Maurice. 1999. *The Enigma of the Gift*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Gordon, M. M. 1964. *Assimilation in American Life*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Greenhalgh, Susan, and Edwin A. Winckler. 2005. *Governing China's Population: From Leninist to Neoliberal Biopolitics*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Gregory, Steven and Roger Sanjek. 1994. *Race*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Gullickson, Aaron. 2006. "Education and Black-White marriage in the United States, 1960 and 1970," *Demography* 43(4): 673-689.
- Hochschild, Arlie R.. 2000. "The nanny chain," *American Prospect* 11(4): 32-36.
- Holland, Maximilian. 2012. *Social Bonding and Nurture Kinship: Compatibility between Cultural and Biological Approaches*. North Charleston: Createspace Press.
- Homans. G.C.. 1961. *Social Behaviour*. New York: Harcourt Brace.
- Huang, Liling. 2007. "Going global: Householding and the demographic transition in Taiwan," *Philippine Studies* 55(2): 183-210.
- Imamura, Anne E.. 1986. "Husband-wife role misunderstanding: The case of international marriage," *International Journal of Sociology of the Family* 16: 37-47.
- Jackson, Suzanne H. 2007. "Marriages of convenience: International marriage brokers, 'mail-order brides,' and domestic servitude," *GW Law Faculty Publications and Other Works*. https://scholarship.law.gwu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1697&context=faculty_publications (accessed 4 April 2017).
- Jeffreys, Elaine and Wang Pan. 2013. "The rise of Chinese-foreign marriage in mainland China, 1979–2010," *China Information* 27(3): 347-369.
- Jiang, Haishun. 1999. "Discussion on some issues of international marriages between China and South Korea," *Journal of Yanbian University (Social Science)* 32(3): 128-131.
- Jiang, Quanbao, Marcus W. Feldman, and Shuzhuo Li. 2014. "Marriage squeeze, never-married proportion, and

- mean age at first marriage in China,” *Population Research and Policy Review* 33(2): 189-204.
- Kang, Hyoun Ju, Dae Seok Chai, and Gary N. McLean. 2015. “An intersectionality and hope-based career development model for female international marriage immigrants in Korea,” *Human Resource Development International* 18(5): 538-555.
- Kalmijn, Matthijs. 1998. “Intermarriage and homogamy: Causes, patterns, trends,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 24:395-421.
- Kalmijn, Matthijs, Anneke Loeve, and Dorien Manting. 2007. “Income dynamics in couples and the dissolution of marriage and cohabitation,” *Demography* 44(1): 159-179.
- Khatib-Chahidi, J., Hill, R., and Paton, R.. 1998. “Chance, choice and circumstance: A study of women in cross-cultural marriages,” in Rosemary Breger and Rosanna Hill. 1998. *Cross-Cultural Marriage: Identity and Choice*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic. 49-56.
- Kim, Minjeong. 2013. “Citizenship projects for marriage migrants in South Korea: Intersecting motherhood with ethnicity and class,” *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society* 20(4): 455-481.
- King, Victor and William D. Wilder. 2003. *The Modern Anthropology of South-East Asia: An Introduction*. London: Routledge.
- Koffman, Eleonore. 2004. “Family-related migration: A critical review of European studies,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 30(2): 243-262.
- Kojima, Yu. 2001. “In the Business of cultural reproduction: Theoretical implications of the mail-order bride phenomenon,” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 24(2): 199-210.
- Kudo, Masako. 2014. “Constructing ‘home’ across national boundaries: A case of Pakistani-Japanese marriage,” in Jijiao Zhang and Howard Duncan (eds.), *Migration in China and Asia: Experience and Policy*. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.
- Lan, Pei-Chia. 2006. *Global Cinderellas: Migrant Domestic workers and Newly Rich Employers in Taiwan*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Lan, Shanshan. 2017. *Mapping the New African Diaspora in China: Race and the Cultural Politics of Belonging*. London: Routledge.
- Landry, Adolphe. 1934. *La révolution démographique – Études et essais sur les problèmes de la population*. Paris: INED-Presses Universitaires de France.
- Landry, Yves. 1992. *Orphelines en France, pionnières au Canada: les filles du roi au XVIIe siècle*. Montreal: Leméac Éditeur Inc.
- Langness, L. L.. 1964. “Some problems in the conceptualization of Highlands social structures,” *American Anthropologist* 66(4|2): 162-182.
- Leach, E. R.. 1961. *Rethinking Anthropology*. New York: The Humanities Press.
- Lee, Catherine. 2003. “Prostitutes and picture brides: Chinese and Japanese immigration, settlement, and American nation-building, 1870-1920,” *The Centre for Comparative Immigration Studies*, 70.
- Lee, Everett S.. 1966 “A theory of migration,” *Demography* 3(1): 47-57.
- Lee, Gary R. and Krista K. Payne. 2010. “Changing marriage patterns since 1970: What's going on, and why?,” *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 41(4): 537-555.
- Lee, Hye-Kyung. 2008. “International marriage and the state in South Korea: Focusing on governmental policy,” *Citizenship Studies* 1: 107-123.

- Lee, Jiyeon. 2010. "Amendment to the naturalization examination and its social impact on international marriage immigrants in South Korea," *TESOL Quarterly* 44(3): 575-585.
- Lee, Yean-Ju, Dong-Hoon Seol, and Sung-Nam Cho. 2006. "International marriages in South Korea: The significance of nationality and ethnicity," *Journal of Population Research* 23(2): 165-182.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1969. *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1983. *Mythologiques*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Li, Dongmei and Hui Lv. 2006. "Research on Chinese and Japanese transnational marriage law," *Journal of Jiangxi Youth Vocational College* 16(2):36-37.
- Li, Meng. 2009. "Yearning for life, A study about North Korean cross-border brides' social adaptation in China," *Legal System and Society* 2: 213.
- Liaw, Kao-Lee, Emiko Ochiai, and Yoshitaka Ishikawa. 2010. "Feminization of immigration in Japan: Marital and job opportunities," in Yang Wen-Shan and Lu Melody Chia-Wen (eds.), *Asian Cross-Border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press. 49-86.
- Lin, Mingxian and Shunfen Shen. 2006. "Resource and exchange in marriage, case study on Chinese-Korean females' international marriages in Yanbian city," *Population Research* 30(3) :50-55.
- Lipman, Jonathan Neaman. 1997. *Familiar Strangers: A History of Muslims in Northwest China*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Liu, Lige, Xiaoyi Jin, Melissa Brown, and Marcus Feldman. 2014. "Male marriage squeeze and inter-provincial marriage in central China: Evidence from Anhui," *Journal of Contemporary China* 23(86) 351-371.
- Lu, Changchun. 2014. "Transnational marriage: Under the pressure of imbalanced sex-ratio," *Chuan Cheng* 2: 124-125.
- Lu, Melody Chia-Wen. 2005. "Commercially arranged marriage migration: Case studies of cross-border marriages in Taiwan," *Indian Journal of Gender Studies* 12(2-3): 275-303.
- Luo, Wenqing. 2013. "Research on Sino-Vietnamese transnational marriage from the perspective of Asian marriage migration," *Journal of Yangtze Normal University* 29(3): 1-6.
- Ma, Zhongdong, Ge Lin, and Frank Zhang. 2010. "Examining cross-border marriage in Hong Kong: 1998-2005," in Yang Wen-Shan and Lu Melody Chia-Wen (eds.), *Asian Cross-Border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press. 87-102.
- Malinowski, Bronislaw. 1922. *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. London: G. Routledge and Sons.
- Merton, Robert K.. 1941. "Intermarriage and the social structure," *Psychiatry* 4: 361-374.
- Merton, Robert K.. 1976. *Sociological Ambivalence and Other Essays*. New York: Free Press.
- Ministry of Civil Affairs of People's Republic of China. 1979-2017. *China's Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbook*. Beijing: China Statistics Press.
- Mix, Prapairat R. and Nicola Piper. 2003. "Does marriage "liberate" women from sex work? – Thai women in Germany," in Nicola Piper and Nina Roces. 2003. *Wife or Worker? Asian Women and Migration*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers. 53-71.
- Morgan, Charlie V. and John P. Hoffman. 2007. "International marriages in Japan: A prefecture-level analysis," *International Journal of Sociology of the Family* 33(1): 157-182.
- Morgan, Lewis Henry. 1871. *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family*. Washington:

Smithsonian Institution.

- Nakamatsu, Tomoko. 2005. "Faces of 'Asian brides': Gender, race, and class in the representations of immigrant women in Japan," *Women's Studies International Forum* 28(5): 405-417.
- Notestein, Frank W. 1945. "Population — The long view," in Theodore W. Schultz (ed.), *Food for the World*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 36-57.
- Nye, F. I. 1979. "Choice, exchange, and the family," in W. R. Burr, R. Hill, F. I. Nye, and I. Reiss (eds.), *Contemporary Theories about the Family*. New York: Free Press. 2: 1-41.
- Orloff, Leslye E. and Hema Sarangapani. 2007. "Governmental and industry roles and responsibilities with regard to international marriage brokers: Equalizing the balance of power between foreign fiancés and spouses," *Violence against Women* 13(5): 469-485.
- Pan, Lynn. 1990. *Sons of the Yellow Emperor: A History of the Chinese Diaspora*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Patico, Jennifer. 2010. "Kinship and crisis: Embedded economic pressures and gender ideals in post socialist international matchmaking," *Slavic Review* 69(1): 16-40.
- Park, Robert E.. 1928. "Human migration and the marginal man," *American Journal of Sociology* 33(6): 881-893.
- Pellander, Saara. 2014. "'An acceptable marriage': Marriage migration and moral gatekeeping in Finland," *Journal of Family Issues* 36(11): 1472-1489.
- Peffer, George Anthony. 1986. "Forbidden families: Emigration experiences of Chinese women under the Page Law, 1875-1882," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 6(1): 28-46.
- Peffer, George Anthony. 1999. *If They Don't Bring Their Women Here: Chinese Female Immigration before Exclusion (Asian American Experience)*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Pina-Cabral, João de. 2006. *Between China and Europe: Person, Culture and Emotion in Macao*. New York: Continuum.
- Piper, Nicola and Sohoon Lee. 2016. "Marriage migration, migrant precarity, and social reproduction in Asia: An overview," *Critical Asian Studies* 48(4): 473-493.
- Poston, Dudley L. Jr and Juyin Helen Wong. 2016. "The Chinese diaspora: The current distribution of the overseas Chinese population," *Chinese Journal of Sociology* 2(3): 348-373.
- Quan, Xinzi. 2007. "Case study on the pattern of Chinese–Korean females' international marriages in South Korea," *Dongjiang Journal* 24(4): 99-105.
- Quan, Xinzi. 2012. *Analysis of Chinese–Korean females' International Marriage Migration between China and South Korea*. Beijing: Xueyuan Press.
- Radcliffe-Brown, A. R. 1922. *The Andaman Islanders*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Radcliffe-Brown, A. R. 1931. *The Social Organization of Australian Tribes*. Melbourne : Macmillan and co., limited.
- Radcliffe-Brown, A. R. 1952. *Structure and Function in Primitive Society: Essays and Addresses*. Glencoe: The Free Press.
- Raphael, Steven. 2013. "International migration, sex ratios, and the socioeconomic outcomes of nonmigrant Mexican women," *Demography* 50(3): 971-991.
- Sam, Monibo A. 2009. "Arranged marriage: Change or persistence? Illustrative cases of Nigerians in the USA," *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 40(5): 7397-7357.

- Schans, Djamila. 2012. "Against the grain: International marriages between African men and Japanese women," *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 21(3): 365-386.
- Schneider, David Murray. 2004. "What is kinship all about," in Robert Parkin and Linda Stone (eds.), *Kinship and Family: An Anthropological Reader*. Hoboken: Blackwell Publishing. 257-274.
- Shumway, David R.. 2003. *Modern Love: Romance, Intimacy, and the Marriage Crisis*. New York: New York University Press.
- Schwartz, Christine R., Zhen Zeng, and Yu Xie. 2016. "Marrying up by marrying down: Statues exchange between social origin and education in the United States," *Sociological Science* 3: 1003-1027.
- Shi, Yanrong. 2009 "Analysis of Sino-Japanese transnational marriage," *Theory and Modernization* 4: 88-92.
- Simmel, Georg, and Donald N. Levine. 1971. *Georg Simmel on Individuality and Social Forms*. London: University of Chicago Press.
- Sinke, Suzanne. 1999. "Migration for labour, migration for love: Marriage and family formation across borders," *OAH Magazine of History* 14(1): 17-21.
- Skinner, George William. 1964. *Marketing and Social Structure in Rural China*. Ann Arbor: Association for Asian Studies.
- South China Morning Post. July, 2014. "Afro-Chinese marriages boom in Guangzhou: but will it be 'til death do us part'?", <https://www.scmp.com/magazines/post-magazine/article/1521076/afro-chinese-marriages-boom-guangzhou-will-it-be-til-death> (accessed 7 August 2018)
- Stark, Oded. 1988. "On marriage and migration," *European Journal of Population* 4: 23-37.
- Stöckl, Heidi, Ligia Kiss, Jobst Koehler, Dung Thuy Dong, and Cathy Zimmerman. 2017. "Trafficking of Vietnamese women and girls for marriage in China," *Global Health Research and Policy* 2:28.
- Sung, Betty Lee. 2001. "Review of 'If They don't Bring Their Women Here: Chinese Female Immigration before Exclusion'," *The International Migration Review Special Issue: UNHCR at 50: Past, Present and Future of Refugee Assistance* 35(1): 334-336.
- Suzuki, Nobue. 2000. "Between two shores: Transnational projects and Filipina wives in/from Japan," *Women's Studies International Forum* 23(4): 431-444.
- Thai, Hung Cam. 2008. *For Better or For Worse: Vietnamese International Marriages in the New Global Economy*. Piscataway: Rutgers University Press.
- Thibaut, John and Harold Kelley. 1959. *The Social Psychology of Groups*. New York: Wiley.
- Thompson, Warren S.. 1929 "Population," *American Journal of Sociology* 34 (6): 959-975.
- Thornton, Arland, William G. Axinn, and Yu Xie. 2007. *Marriage and Cohabitation*. London: University of Chicago Press.
- Tong, Benson. 2004. *Asian American Children: A Historical Handbook and Guide*. Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Trudel, Marcel. 1997. *La Seigneurie de la Compagnie des Indes Occidentales, 1663-1674*. Saint-Laurent: Fides.
- Tseng, Ye-Fen. 2010 "Marriage migration to East Asia: Current issues and propositions in making comparisons," in Yang, Wenshan and Melody Chiawen Lu. 2010. *Asian Cross-Border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press.
- Twitchett, Denis and Michael Loewe. 1986. *The Cambridge History of China Volume 1, The Ch'in and Han Empires, 221 BC-AD 220*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- UNFPA. 2006. *State of World Population 2006: A Passage to Hope: Women and International Migration*.
<http://www.unfpa.org/publications/state-world-population-2006>. (accessed 26 March 2018).
- Watson, J.. 1983. *Tairora Culture: Contingency and Pragmatism*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Weeks, John R.. 2014. *Population: An Introduction to Concepts and Issues*. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing.
- Westermarck, Edvard. 1921. *The History of Human Marriage*. London : Macmillan and co., limited.
- White, Douglas and Ulla Johansen. 2005. *Network Analysis and Ethnographic Problems: Process Models of a Turkish Nomad Clan*. Lanham: Lexington Books.
- Williams, Lucy. 2010. *Global Marriage: Cross-Border Marriage Migration in Global Context*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Wilson, William Julius. 1978. *The Declining Significance of Race: Blacks and Changing American Institutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Wolf, Eric R.. 1982. *Europe and the People Without History*. London: University of California Press.
- Yamanaka, Keiko and Nicola Piper. 2005. "Feminized migration in east and southeast Asia: Policies, actions and empowerment," *United Nations Research Institute for Social Development*. Occasional Paper No.11.
<http://www.unrisd.org/publications/opgp11> (accessed 12 July 2018).
- Yang, Wen-Shan and Melody Chia-Wen Lu. 2010. *Asian Cross-border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press.
- Ye, Yuqing. 2010. *Sociology of the Family: The Promotion and Practice of Human Right for Marriage Migrants*. Taipei: Chuliu Publisher.
- Yee, Mark Gregory. 1997. "Opium in America and the Chinese," in Chinese Historical Society of America (eds.), *Chinese America: History and Perspectives, 1997*. San Francisco: Chinese Historical Society of America.
- Zhang, Jinpeng and Yueping Bao. 2013. "A study of cross-national marriage between the border residents in the institutional perspective: Taking Dehong, Yunnan for a case study," *Journal of Guizhou University (Social Sciences)* 31(6): 84-90.
- Zhao, Zhongwei. 2001. "Registered households and micro-social structure in China: Residential patterns in three settlements in Beijing area," *Journal of Family History* 26(1): 39-65.
- Zhong, Mingyou. 2013. "On the problems and its solutions to illegal transnational marriages between China and ASEAN countries: An analysis of the situation in Pingxiang," *Journal of Guangxi Normal University: Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition* 49(6): 14-17.
- Zug, Marcia. 2012. "Lonely colonist seeks wife: The forgotten history of America's first mail order brides," *Duke journal of Gender Law and Policy* 20: 85-125.

Chapter 2: One Decade of International Marriage in China: Migration, Intimacy, and Cultural Perspectives, 2000–2010

Abstract

The beginning of the twenty-first century has been marked by increasing “feminization” of migration as women constituted almost half of all international migrants. Although the demand for female migrants in the global labour market has provided women with independence in migration, marriage is still an important motivation for women to migrate. In China, the volume of international migration has increased in recent years, but the numbers of international marriages have declined. The existing literature tend to interpret international marriages simply as exchanges of social capital and intimacy. Using a set of consolidated data of international marriage registration from the Ministry of Civil Affairs, Population Census and National Data, this research examines the reality, characteristics and perceptions of recent international marriages in China. The results suggest that in an increasingly modernized and globalized China, international marriages have been affected by a range of structural and individual factors such as the level of regional development and consumption, rural and urban disparities, and gender relations, rather than simple exchanges of social capital between two individuals as was previously understood.

Keywords: International marriage, International migration, Spatial analysis

2.1 Introduction

This century has witnessed the forces of economic globalization and integration effectively redefining the meaning of national boundaries and facilitating international travel and migration (Liang and Miao 2013). Structural driving force for international movement of population is largely modified by global economic conditions, labour market and the development of technology. International migration trend of the 1960s and 1970s was male-dominated labour movement. From the political economy perspective, push-pull theory (Ravenstein 1889, Lee 1966) demonstrated that the structural driving force of this international movement is largely modified by global economic status, labour market and the development of technology. At the same time, for individuals, their motivations of migration are largely related to potential economic benefits, and they are influenced by socio-political climate and structural opportunities (Weeks 2014). It is commonly agreed that the global population movement was mainly determined by the globalization of economic activity, more precisely, the demand and redundant of labour and gaps in work wage (Massey 1994).

In particular, the early decades of this century have seen rapid growth in female migration around the world. Women now constitute almost half of all international migrants (UNFPA 2006; UNDESA 2015). Compared to 2000, 2015 saw global migration of women more concentrated in high-income OECD countries, while the proportions of female migrants further declined in Asia and Africa. However, Asia still has 43 percent of global migrants, in which 60 percent of the migration occurred between countries within Asia. In 2015, 10 million people who born in China were living outside their country of birth, which add 4 million more Chinese “diaspora” population than 2000. More than 2 million of them settled in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR). From 2000 to 2015, China is ranked by World Bank as the fourth largest country of emigration.

Migration of women is complicated by different gender norms in different societies. It was once treated as “family migration” (Kofman 2004), a “natural” outcome of the global flow of male labour, because family reunification is an important motivating factor in migration, an inevitable movement results from the universal patrilocal system. However, in recent decades, the trans-globalization of economies (Sassen 2003) has created a highly feminized labour market in which women move autonomously to work in sectors such as domestic work, service industry, and care work. Such increasing feminization was treated as a reflection

of household collective decision to maximize its economic wellbeing, according to the neoliberal approach. The increase in female participation in global labour market has changed the structure of migrant population and altered female migratory patterns. In addition to family migrants, contemporary international female migrant can be an active participant in the labour market or a bride seeking a suitable partner.

A new era in emigration for mainland China emerged after the economic reform in the late 1970s. As migration networks of overseas Chinese developed, Chinese emigration boomed. Since the “Opening-up” and “Economic reform” policies put an end to China’s isolation, new opportunities for international economic migration have been created. Loosening of control of household registration (*hukou*) system in the 1980s, rapid and unbalanced regional development from the 1990s, and significant growth in the supply of labour during the 2000s (Mai and Peng 2012), has meant that China’s dramatic increase in internal migration has become entwined with that of the global market. Migration has become a key means of overcoming disadvantage for those caught in the disparities between rural and urban, and mainland China and developed countries.

China’s relatively lower cost of living, increasingly higher income, rapid economic growth and convenient lifestyle have attracted increasing numbers of immigrants from both developed and developing countries since the 2000s. China is now characterized as a country that sends, transits and receives international migrants, but awareness of, and approached to, issues relating to international migration are “market-oriented” and fragmented (Farrer 2014; Miao and Wang 2017). As a country facing downward economic pressure (continuous fall of economic growth) and with a rapidly ageing population (Peng 2009), China’s policies and initiatives on migration are still focused on “contract bonded, regular” or “forceful intervened, illegal” labour migration, but overlook the potential outcome of migration related institutional changes in the long-term (State Council, 2014), such as family reunification or humanity migration (Farrer 2014).

Migration research has considered marriage as a passage for social mobility and an indicator of assimilation in the host country (Adsera and Ferrer 2014). In China, marriage is traditionally regarded as an efficient means of upward mobility and status transformation, and an acceptable way in which to compensate for precarious status, especially for women (Croll 1981). While the extant literature examines marriage in relation to internal migrants, few studies investigate international migrant marriage, in particularly studies of international migration via family reunion are mostly overlooked except for a few studies in

predominately migrant-receiving countries (Breger and Hill 1998; Khoo 2008). International marriages in mainland China take a range of forms and are complex in nature; however, the existing literature takes a snapshot approach, in which nuance and complexity are not fully understood. Since changes in personal values and actions are microcosmic reflections of social, cultural and demographic changes, in the wake of China's modernization, research about international marriage will contribute to the understanding of the country's transition in terms of marriage, family and culture, providing insights into the developing role of women.

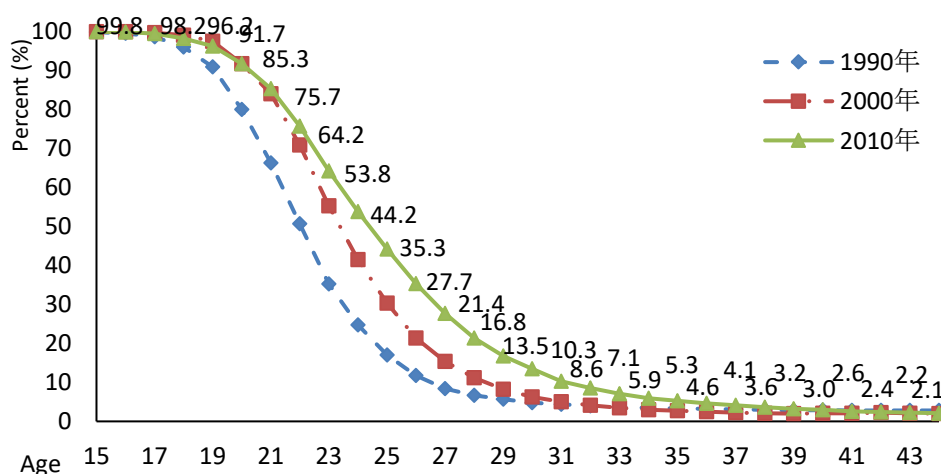
This chapter examines recent patterns and characteristics of international marriages in mainland China, using data from multiple sources, some of which were not previously available. It aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of China's current state of international marriages, in order to contribute new knowledge of the determinants of international relationships. It answers such questions as what role gender plays in international marriage in relation to spatial dimensions in China, in what way does internal migration relate to international migration, and to what extent does economic development affect the choice of international relationship.

2.2 Transforming Pattern of Marriage in China

In the past decades, economic reform, opening-up and family planning policies have contributed to China's profound economic growth and dramatic demographic transition. Echoing this transformation has been changes in marriage patterns in China, which, to a certain extent, reflect changes in patterns of migration; unsurprising as trends in relation to these are bound up with the country's population structure and socioeconomic development. China completes its demographic transition in the second half of 20th century (Wang 2011), which only took a few decades. Some scholars argue that population structural transition may lead to further demographic transition, that is, behavioural transition from traditional marital family to diversified civil relationships (van de Kaa 1987; Lesthaeghe 2010). This type of "marriage revolution" is marked by key features, such as rising age of first marriage, postponement of parenthood, increasing divorce rate, and decreasing marriage rate (Yu and Xie 2017).

A recent study based on China's population census data suggests that since the 1980s the country has experienced a steady postponement of marriage (Figure 2-1). The national average age at first marriage has increased from 23.78 (1980) to 24.85 (2010). In 2010, 49.4 percent of males' and 52.4 percent of females'

first marriage happened when they reached or exceeded the state suggested age of “later marriage” (23 for female and 25 for male) even though the legal age of marriage is 22 and 20 for males and females respectively. The percentage of the marriageable population who has never married is also increasing. In 2010, the proportion of “never married” youth aged 23 to 25 accounted for 64.2, 53.8, and 44.2 in each cohort, a doubling of the percentages in this group from 1990. Meanwhile, the average age at first childbearing for females has also been “rising slowly” (Guo 2003; Zhang and Hou 2016). According to Wang’s (2013) analysis of census data, the average age at first childbearing has increased to 26.55 in 2010 compared to 24.50 in 1990.



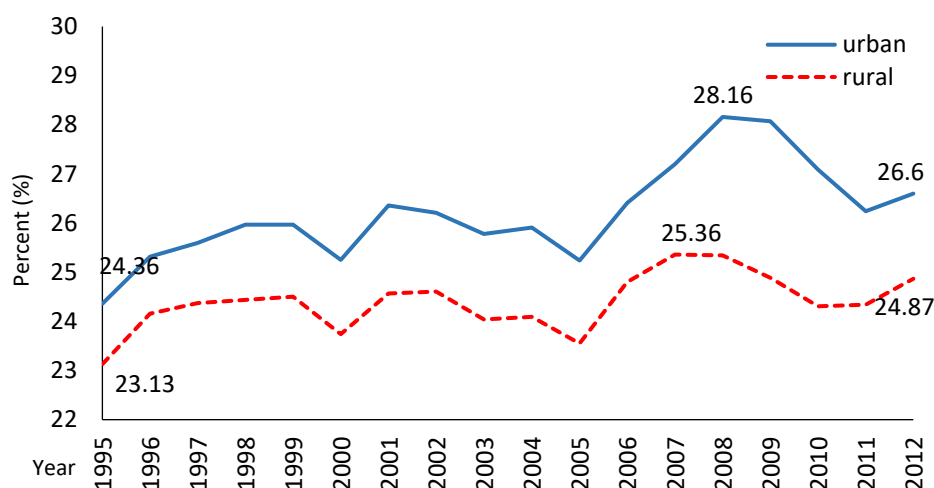
SOURCE: National Bureau of Statistics of China, Liu and Cai 2015

Figure 2-1 Percentage Chinese Population Never Married, 4th, 5th and 6th Population Census

Meanwhile, females’ average age at first childbearing (Figure 2-2) is “undulant rising slowly (Guo 2003)”. According to the research of Zhang and Hou (2016), Chinese women’s average age at first childbearing also rises with fluctuation since 1995, for rural female on average their first childbearing postponed for one year while for urban female the number is two. With the rising age at first marriage, Chinese women also experienced postponement of motherhood.

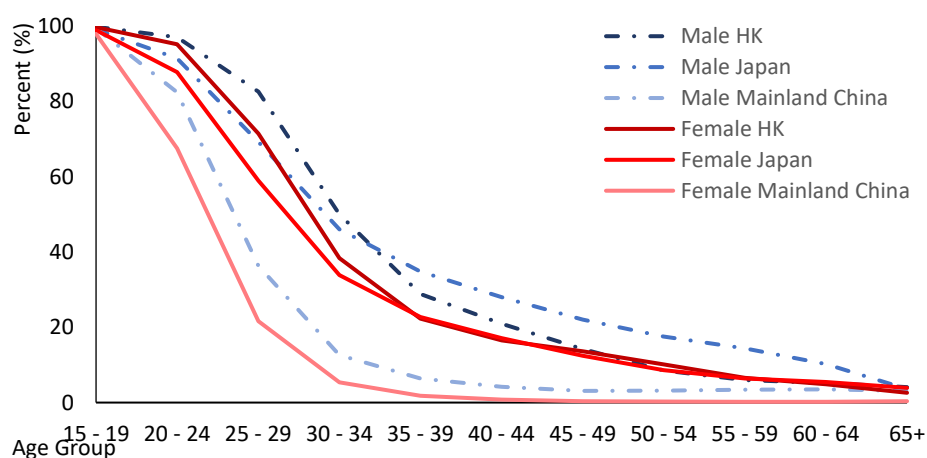
These changes in China may be due to increases in educational attainment and women’s labour force participation rate (Vermeer 2006). However, these changes have not fundamentally changed the overall pattern of marriage, which remains strong due to cultural and institutional acceptance of universal heterosexual marriage, especially in rural regions. The majority of China’s population is expected to marry before the age of 30 (Figure 2-3). Data from 2010 shows that more than 80 percent of males and 90 percent of females had married (first marriage) before they reached 30, while only approximately 4 percent of males and less than 1 percent of females remained unmarried for life (Liu and Cai 2015). While younger cohorts

are more likely to cohabitate prior to marriage, only 10 percent of the total population has engaged in premarital cohabitation (Yu and Xie 2017). At the same time, divorce in China has also increased, as the 2003 Regulation on Marriage Registration (State Council, No. 387) has allowed for simplified divorce proceedings. The risk of divorce in China is also varying, especially for younger cohorts (Xu, Qui and Li 2016). Regardless, 90 percent of first-married couples will never divorce.



SOURCE: National Bureau of Statistics of China, Zhang and Hou 2016

Figure 2-2 Average Ages at First Childbearing of Chinese Female, 1995 to 2012



SOURCE: National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2010; Census and Statistics Department of Hong Kong SAR, 2011; Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan, 2010

Figure 2-3 Percentage Population Never Married in Overall Population by Five-year Age Groups, China and Hong Kong SAR 2010, Japan 2011

Historically, migration in mainland China has been restricted by regressive socioeconomic policy and its closed political environment. Until the 1980s, female internal migration was mostly related to marriage and family reunification. During the early stage of China's market reform, women were the main participants in internal family related migration. However, since the 2000s, female rural–urban migration has mainly been the result of economic activity (Zheng 2013) while rural–rural migration continues to be dominated

by female marriage migration (Fan 2003). The volume of China's nationwide internal migration has increased from 6.1 million in 1982 (Shen 2013) to 24.7 million in 2015 (DSMMP 2016). With 18 percent of its population moving from inland, less developed rural areas to coastal, socioeconomically advanced urban regions, this level of population movement has changed the structure and spatial distribution of marriageable population (DSMMP 2016). Since conventional standards of spousal selection encourage women "marry up" to husband with higher social origin and status than wife, the internal migration also provides new opportunities for individual to seek a suitable spouse.

These changes have resulted from a combination of the effects of demographic, cultural, political and socioeconomic factors. Demographic transition, which has been accelerated due to government policies, has reduced fertility and mortality dramatically while intensifying an imbalance in sex-ratio among birth cohorts due to gender preference to sons in many regions (Zhao 2006; Poston 2011). With large scale population movement, disparities in regional development, and the high costs of bridewealth, as a result, marriage squeeze¹ become more severe in rural areas, especially in underdeveloped border areas. Meanwhile, conventionally, women's choice of marriage partners should follow an "upward" pattern, in which the potential husband has a higher status² than the wife. Thus, internal and international migration may provide more opportunities to meet suitable potential spouses.

2.3 International Marriages in China

Marriage is one of the most important social institutions and the basic unit of human reproduction in many societies. Inter-country marriages that include partners of different nationalities, have been referred to as "cross-cultural", "transnational", "international", "cross-border", "cross-nation", "interracial", "interethnic" or "mixed" marriages (Penny and Khoo 1996; Romano 1997; Breger and Hill 1998; Constable 2009; Williams 2010; Yang and Lu 2010; Gao, Zhang and Zhu 2013). In practice, these terms are interchangeably used without much clarification, making comparison difficult.

In China's context, the definition of international marriage also has its own complexity due to historical and cultural aspects. Administration and data collection of "*shewai hunyin*" (Chinese-foreign marriages) are based on residency of foreign spouses, which by practice is not only linked with nationality but also affected by political systems.³ Chinese researchers divide Chinese-foreign marriage into two parts, for which the boundaries are blurred: intracultural homogamous marriage and intercultural heterogamous

marriage. It is assumed that the former is built on spouses' similar linguistic and cultural backgrounds as they belong to the same ethnic group (Lin and Shen 2006; Quan 2007, 2012; Li 2009). While intracultural marriage is viewed positively in China, "intercultural marriage" between Chinese citizens and foreigners has a negative reputation, sometimes viewed as fake marriage for "gold hunting" people to chase for fancy life in Western societies (Jiang 1999; Ding, Yang, Zhou, Zhou, Lin and Zhang 2004; Quan 2012). Some studies even claim international marriages are the reluctant act of "low-level" unmarried male peasants seeking to form a family in China (Li 2009; Zhao 2011). Regardless of this negative image, Chinese–foreign marriage experienced a considerable increase in the 1980s immediately after the implementation of economic reform and opening-up policies. However, the number of international marriages has decreased in recent years, perhaps because the socioeconomic gaps between mainland China and Western developed societies are closing, thus making the status of foreign spouses less desirable (Ding et al. 2004; Quan 2007). As China's annual growth rate of GDP reached 8.5 percent in 2000 and 14.2 percent in 2007, coupled with the impacts of the global financial crisis, the annual growth rate for international marriages in China has reached its lowest period in the latest decade.

Although the extant literature investigates general trends in Chinese–foreign marriages, comprehensive analysis of gender and spatial patterns and determinants has been limited. Some findings in prior studies may be inconsistent due to the limitations of data and method, while the most recent developments in Chinese–foreign marriage remains underexplored. Using a set of consolidated data from marriage registrations and censuses, this chapter aims to fill the gaps in the literature by exploring the gender differences and spatial patterns of Chinese–foreign marriages, the relationship between internal migration and international marriages, and the socioeconomic determinants of international marriages in China.

2.4 Data and Measurement

Research into international marriage has been limited by insufficient data and inconsistency in definitions of international marriage. China is no exception. Due to a lack of consensus, government collected data sets can vary widely and are often not compatible. Since data collection is based on local concerns and interests, it is also specific to local context, that is, the cultural, political and historical practices related to marriage in that region. Among studies of international marriage, descriptive statistics are more commonly used

while the lack of comparison or “global perspective” is mainly caused by inconsistency of definitions and thus incompatible data.

To better understand the relationships between socioeconomic factors, spatial patterns and international marriages in China, this chapter consolidates data from a range of sources, including the national marriage registration record from *China Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbooks* (1979 to 2016), China’s 5th (2000) and 6th (2010) Population Census data, and the national accounts (2000 and 2010) from the National Bureau of Statistics of China’s *National Data* base. It also utilizes data from other records and surveys, such as *Marriage and Divorce Trends in Hong Kong* (1991 to 2013), *Marriage Registration in Taiwan* (1998 to 2015), and the 2016 Vital Statistics of Japan as supplementary materials.⁴ Utilizing a wide range of marriage registration data from mainland China and incorporating data from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Japan, should enhance our understanding of mainland China’s international marriage in the Asian context.

The only available individual record data of international marriage in mainland China is the registration record from the Bureaus and Ministry of Civil Affairs.⁵ The marriage registration record provides basic demographic and socioeconomic information for the married couples, including date of birth, nationality of foreigner and ethnicity of Chinese spouse, education, occupation, marital status and current residency of foreigner and *Hukou* of Chinese spouse. Comparing this information to census or survey data, the marriage registration record contains timely information of all legally recognized domestic and foreign marital relationships for decades. Since the record is husband–wife matched, it also can depict the similarities and differences between spouses by gender. It is noted, however, that the data only contains limited demographic characteristics of spouses. *De facto* relationships are not included in the record.

The annual number of national registrations of international marriage is also available in the Ministry’s yearbooks, published as tabulated data. The annual total number is also divided by gender of mainland spouses and five types of residency of foreign spouses: Hong Kong and Macao special administrative regions, Taiwan, overseas Chinese, or foreign countries (see footnote 3). Although the dataset is publicly available and is used by most existing quantitative research (Ding et al. 2004; Yang and Lu 2010; Gao et al. 2013; Jeffreys and Pan 2013) in international marriages in mainland China, this study also utilises additional data, such as population census and national accounts, which enables comprehensive analysis

thus enhancing our understanding of the relationships between gender, migration, socioeconomic development, and international marriage.

Since the registration record itself does not provide overall population structural, socioeconomic or cultural contexts for international marriages in different provinces and times, the population census and the *National Data* base are useful sources for this type of information, such as level of higher education, ethnicity, urbanization and so on. The *National Data* base also holds indicators on national status that reflect economic and social changes in recent decades. Using this database, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP), and domestic consumption are analysed in this study to understand the variations in socioeconomic development at the provincial level and between rural–urban areas. Because the unit of analysis in this study is at the provincial level, these socioeconomic and cultural variables are treated as repeated cross-sectional data. The selected variables of different regions in 2000 and 2010 from these two nationally representative data sets can be merged into one pooled time-series and cross-sectional data set, which allows more detailed analysis on the effects of socioeconomic factors on international marriages, such as the relationships between international marriages and education attainment, foreign investment, level of consumption, sex ratio of the marriageable population, ethnic diversity, and political opportunity.

As aggregate number can hide variations in population structure and socioeconomic status in different provinces and enumeration-based national percentage comparisons might overlook age–sex structure differences, this chapter expresses the international marriage ratio (IMR) for a given province i observed in year t , as a statistic $IMR_{(i,t)}$, such that

$$IMR_{(i,t)} = \frac{MI_{(i,t)}}{MD_{(i,t)}} \times 1000\% \quad (2.1)$$

where $MI_{(i,t)}$ are the numbers of international marriages and the $MD_{(i,t)}$ are the numbers of domestic marriages, both observed in province i in year t . The values $MI_{(i,t)}$ and $MD_{(i,t)}$ are the number of recorded marriages. By comparing Chinese citizens' international marriages to domestic ones, this function $MI_{(i,t)}/MD_{(i,t)}$ states the ratio of international marriage to domestic marriage for a given region. This method not only removes the distortion of population structure, but also measures and compares the incidence of international marriage in mainland China among different genders, regions, and years. This

indicator is used as a dependent variable and combined with other socioeconomic variables for further analysis on gender, spatial, and socioeconomic characteristics of international marriage in mainland China.

2.5 Methods

The analysis in this chapter is carried out in three steps. First, it identifies a series of pattern changes for mainland China's international marriage in recent decades. As this type of marriage is highly gendered world-wide, in this step separate analysis is conducted for different genders to reveal changes in China in the most recent decade. All comparisons in this step are measured using original registration data and the absolute change in numbers of marriages.

The second step of the analysis focuses on the spatial relationship of mainland China's international marriages. This stage uses the international marriage ratio ($IMR_{(i,t)}$) as a dependent variable, which is calculated using original data taken from the Ministry's 2001 and 2011 yearbooks. The numbers of marriages per year is affected by internal migration, structure of regional population, and geo-economic conditions. The existing research suggests that, since provinces located on the eastern seaboard and north-east area have higher numbers of registered international marriages and are spatially associated with industrialized Asian countries and areas, international marriages in China follow the pattern of geo-economic disparity (Ding et al. 2004; Jeffreys and Pan 2013). Provincial level of economic development and geospatial locations are related to potential commercial and personal connections, which might affect the spatial pattern of international marriages. As Tobler's First Law explains, nearer values are more related than distant ones, therefore we can extrapolate that provinces⁶ adjacent to each other might have positively higher or negatively lower numbers of international marriages due to their spatial similarity.

Following the widely-used technique of measuring potential spatial autocorrelation of model residuals for regional observations, Moran's I (1950) is a good indicator to depict such correlation for international marriages. The indicator looks for the correlation of different values for the same variable among each adjacent region. It is used to estimate the strength of spatial correlation between observations as a function of the distance separating them (Oliveau and Guilmoto 2005). By using this tool, the measurement of spatial autocorrelation is a simultaneous calculation of locations and values, thus providing the mean and deviation. For Moran's I value, if the lower bound equals -1, there is strong negative autocorrelation, the value 0 shows no autocorrelation, and the upper bound equalling 1 suggests strong positive spatial autocorrelation.

Therefore, Moran's I can be used to demonstrate the dimension of spatial autocorrelation for intensity of international marriages in mainland China.

Since spatial variations of Chinese–foreign marriages are argued to be closely related to the geographical area and distance between different provinces, this proximity is represented as a spatial weight matrix. The spatial continuity for further calculation of spatial association in intensity of international marriages between different provinces is described as rook contiguity weights. Moran's I is applied on the dependent variable, along with the model, which estimates changes of international marriages stemming from changes of economic variables based on the commonly addressed “economic exchange” from previous research. It is specified as

$$y_{it} = \beta X_{it} + P_i + e_{it} \quad (2.2)$$

where y_{it} denotes the $IMR_{(i,t)}$ in province i in year t , while X_{it} represents the logarithm of independent variables (FDI *per capita*, GRDP *per capita*, rural and urban consumption level *per capita*), β is the estimated coefficient, P_i is a dummy variable for provinces and e_{it} is the error term. Moran's I is applied for the test of both $IMR_{(i,t)}$ and the model to detect whether there will be spatial autocorrelation. Since the limitation of Moran's I is the trend of averaging local variations, local indicators of spatial association (*LISA*) is also applied to examine the local level of spatial autocorrelation among different provinces (Anselin 1988, 1995).

The third step of the analysis explores the possible influencing factors for international marriages in mainland China. This step introduces regional variations, such as socioeconomic conditions, cultural similarity, policies and population structure from census and the *National Data*. The final data set is a pooled panel data of 31 provinces in 2000 and 2010, with the incidence of international marriage as a dependent variable while the independent variables include a series of social, economic, cultural, political, and demographic vectors. Gender is treated as a dummy variable. Provinces are also clustered as “eight areas”⁷ in order to examine the interference of possible unobserved latent proximity. The effect of the opening-up policy and whether the province belongs to a border area are also introduced as dummy variables. Percentage of ethnic minority among the provincial population is also applied to denote the stock of ethnic endogamy market within province. Other socioeconomic covariates include percentage of population with college and above education, urbanization, general marriage rate, logarithm of FDI, GRDP

and level of rural-urban consumption, and sex ratio of the marriageable population. The sex ratio is calculated from original census data and conducted in five-year intervals between ages 15 to 49, with another open age group 50 plus.⁸ The zero-order correlation coefficient is used to check the correlation between these variables and incidence of international marriage.

Since the dataset is a set of time-series and cross-sectional variables, panel regression methods are considered more suitable for further examination of determinants for international marriages to improve the efficiency of estimation. As there are disparities among China's regions in terms of socioeconomic development, independent variables might be related to such hierarchical structure, and therefore a random effects model is applied to control unobserved heterogeneity among provinces. Further application of feasible generalized least squares estimation, the LM test (Breusch and Pagan 1980) for individual-specific effects, and the Hausman test (Durbin 1954; Wu 1973; Hausman 1978) on this data set all support the modelling choice of a random effects model. As the incidence of international marriage is not subjected to Gaussian distribution and the statistic $IMR_{(i,t)}$ is based on the events of international marriages to every thousand local marriages in given years, a random effects Poisson regression model is applied, which, as developed by Hausman, Hall and Griliches (1984), is specified as

$$\tilde{\lambda}_{it} = \lambda_{it}\alpha_i = \exp(X_{it}\beta + \mu_0 + \mu_i) \quad (2.3)$$

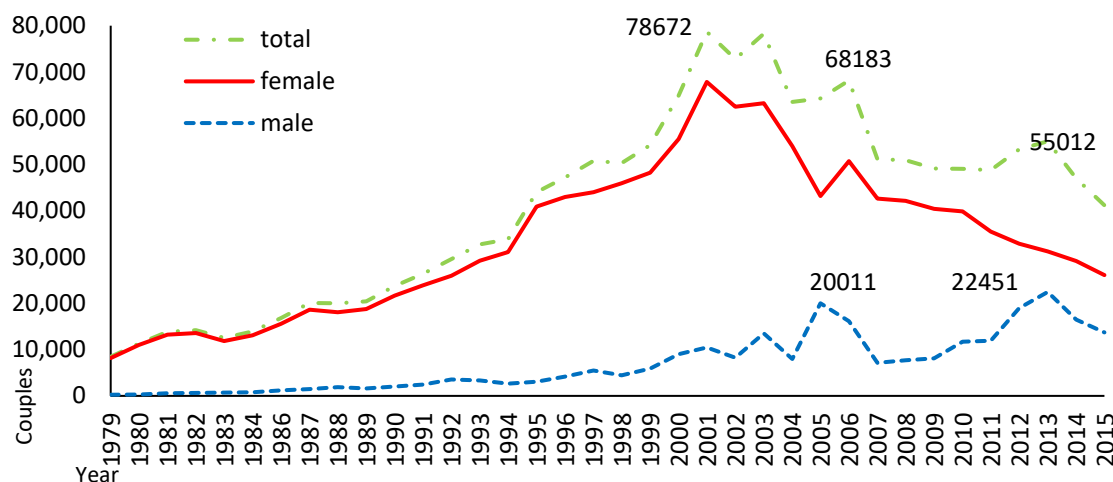
where $\alpha_i (= \exp(\mu_i))$ is the province specific random variable and distributed as a Gamma random variable. X_{it} is a vector of the regressors and μ_0 is the overall intercept. The coefficients are estimated by maximum likelihood estimation.

2.6 Empirical Results

2.6.1 The Trends of International Marriages

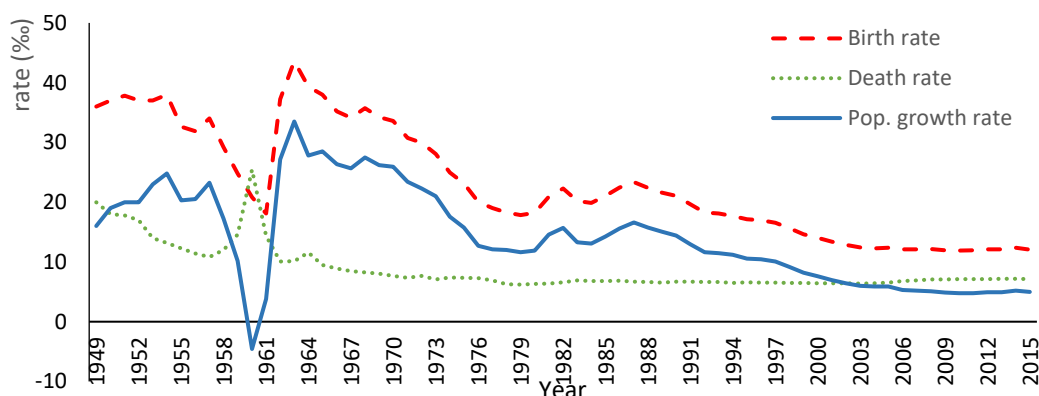
The total number of registered Chinese–foreign marriages is presented in Figure 2-4. Since strict regulation related to international marriages was relaxed in 1979, this type of marriage experienced dramatic growth throughout the 1990s. Peaking in 2001 and 2003, the total number of international marriages has since declined. According to Sun and Tan (2015), the sex-ratio of “first marriage” marriageable population is firstly increased beyond then dropped below 100 from 1997 to 2005, which marks the same period of increase and decrease of international marriages. The increase of male international marriage since the

2000s also marks with the time when two birth peaks after 1980 entering marriage market. There were 8,460 registered Chinese–foreign couples in 1979, rising to 78,672 in 2001, before dropping to 41,168 in 2015 (Figure 2-4, 2-5).



SOURCE: *China Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbooks, 1979 to 2016*

Figure 2-4 Chinese–foreign International Marriages, 1979 to 2015



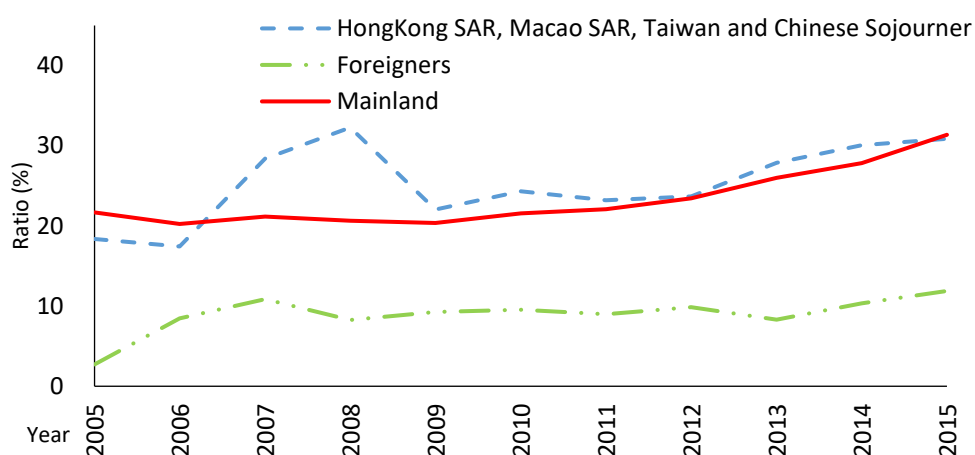
SOURCE: National Bureau of Statistics of China

Figure 2-5 Birth Rate, Death Rate and Population Growth Rate of China, 1949 to 2015

Since 2004, the gendered trend has become more complicated. The decrease in international marriages after 2009 was slowed by a fluctuated increase in mainland Chinese male international marriages. Mainland Chinese male international marriages have continuously increased while Chinese female international marriages have continuously dropped from 2007 to 2013. As Chinese–foreign marriages in the 1980s were largely female, recent increase in male international relationships might have other socioeconomic roots which leads to further pattern changes.

In addition, the increasing number of mainland Chinese male international marriages turns out to be more diverse than the stereotyped image of low status, less educated, rural, doomed single peasants. In Shanghai, so-called “high-end” match-making services, such as “CU Love Dating Club”, aim to introduce “young,

beautiful, white” females to “rich, successful” Chinese men. Also, since Taiwan and mainland have recently established economic cooperation, personnel and cultural exchange across the strait has increased, which not only provides more opportunities for cross-strait intimacy but also changes the demographic profiles of mainland spouses when compared to the 1990s. According to the registration record of Taiwan, over 90 percent of cross-strait marriages are between male residents of Taiwan and female residents of mainland, and most wives are aged 20 to 45. Among mainland spouses, both genders fall into similar age categories. Even when compared to mainland male spouses, mainland female education achievement is relatively lower, as more than half of the wives only attained secondary education; yet the structures of education achievement between genders are similar as more than 20 percent female and 30 percent male attained higher education. A recent study by Gao et al. (2013) suggests that “well-educated” Chinese citizens account for a high proportion of cross-nation marriages in Beijing.



NOTE: The divorce-marriage ratios are calculated within-groups, which equals to annual number of divorce divided by annual number of marriage.

SOURCE: *China Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbooks*

Figure 2-6 Divorce–Marriage Ratios by Residency of Foreign Spouses, 2005 to 2015

Debates on the difference between domestic and international marriages centred on the disparities between spouses and the “quality” of their marriage (Yang and Lu 2010). Figure 2-6 depicts the differences in marital stability between domestic couples and international couples. Compared to foreigners, Overseas Chinese and residents from SARs and Taiwan are considered to have higher cultural, linguistic, and racial similarities with mainland Chinese citizens. The trends in divorce–marriage ratios reflect a certain level of convergence. Even so, based on the registration statistics, marriages of mainland Chinese citizens and foreign spouses are expected to be more stable than Chinese couples who share more similarities.

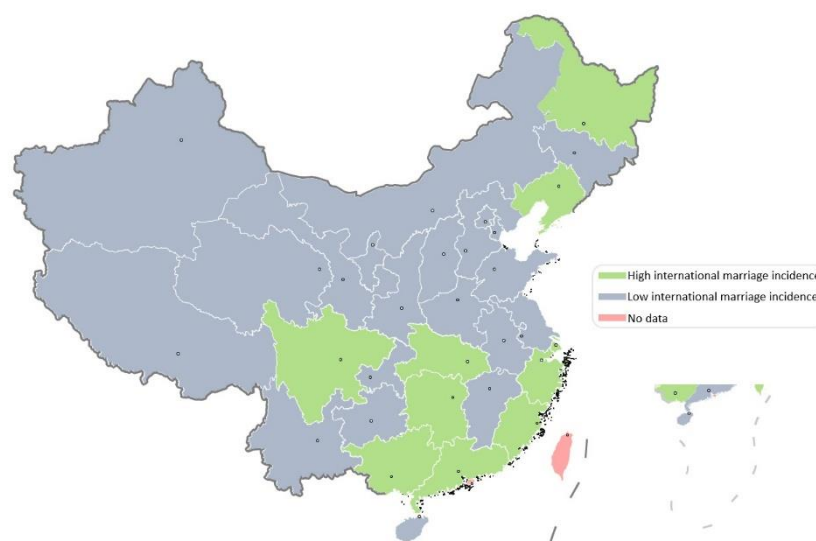
Meanwhile, the annual number of registered Chinese–foreign marriages is closely related to marriages between mainland Chinese citizens and residents from SARs. The decrease in international marriages in China in the most recent decade is probably caused by the decrease in marriages between residents of mainland, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. Recent research of international marriages in South Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, and Taiwan also shows that the numbers of wives who come from mainland China is gradually decreasing (Yang and Lu 2010).

2.6.2 Spatial Patterns of International Marriages

It is commonly accepted that the patterns of Chinese–foreign marriages vary considerably in different regions in mainland China. Among 31 provinces Guangdong and Fujian have the largest number of international marriages over time. From 1979, about 87.5 percent of Chinese–foreign marriages were in Guangdong, there has been a gradual decline to 54 percent in 1991 and then a rapid decrease to 19.9 percent in 1999. During the 2000s, aside from the sudden peak in 2007, international marriages in Guangdong province slowly decreased to 18.7 percent of national total in 2015. Meanwhile, international marriages increased dramatically in Fujian province during the 1990s and the 2000s. From 1999 to 2005, Fujian became the province with the highest number of annual registered international marriages. These two provinces have close linguistic, cultural, and geospatial connections with Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan, and with their historical tradition of global emigration, the two provinces are also closely connected with Overseas Chinese communities.

From 1979 to the present, Guangdong and Fujian have one third of the total international marriages while other provinces, such as Xizang or Xinjiang, have very few of it (Figure 2-7). Prior studies suggest that international marriage is concentrated by region (Ye and Lin 1996; Ding et al. 2004; Jeffreys and Pan 2013; Gao et al. 2013). They argue that the majority of this type of marriages was registered either in provinces on the eastern seaboard where early economic and political reforms occurred, or in provinces where cross-border minority groups lived. This may explain why Guangdong and Fujian have the largest number of registrations of international marriages between 1979 and 2010. Thus, Chinese spouses, predominantly females, in such locations tend to “marry up” to spouses in the economically developed areas such as Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan.

Although 30 percent of the number of annual international marriages are registered in Guangdong and Fujian provinces, 40 percent of international marriages in mainland China have been registered in eight other provinces combined since 2000. Despite the existing literature focusing on the social, economic, or cultural variables and related geographic patterning, less attention has been given to quantitative analysis of spatial proximity, which is often simplified as background information and control variables without further examination. As a result, spatial patterns have been largely overlooked in the existing research on international marriage in China.



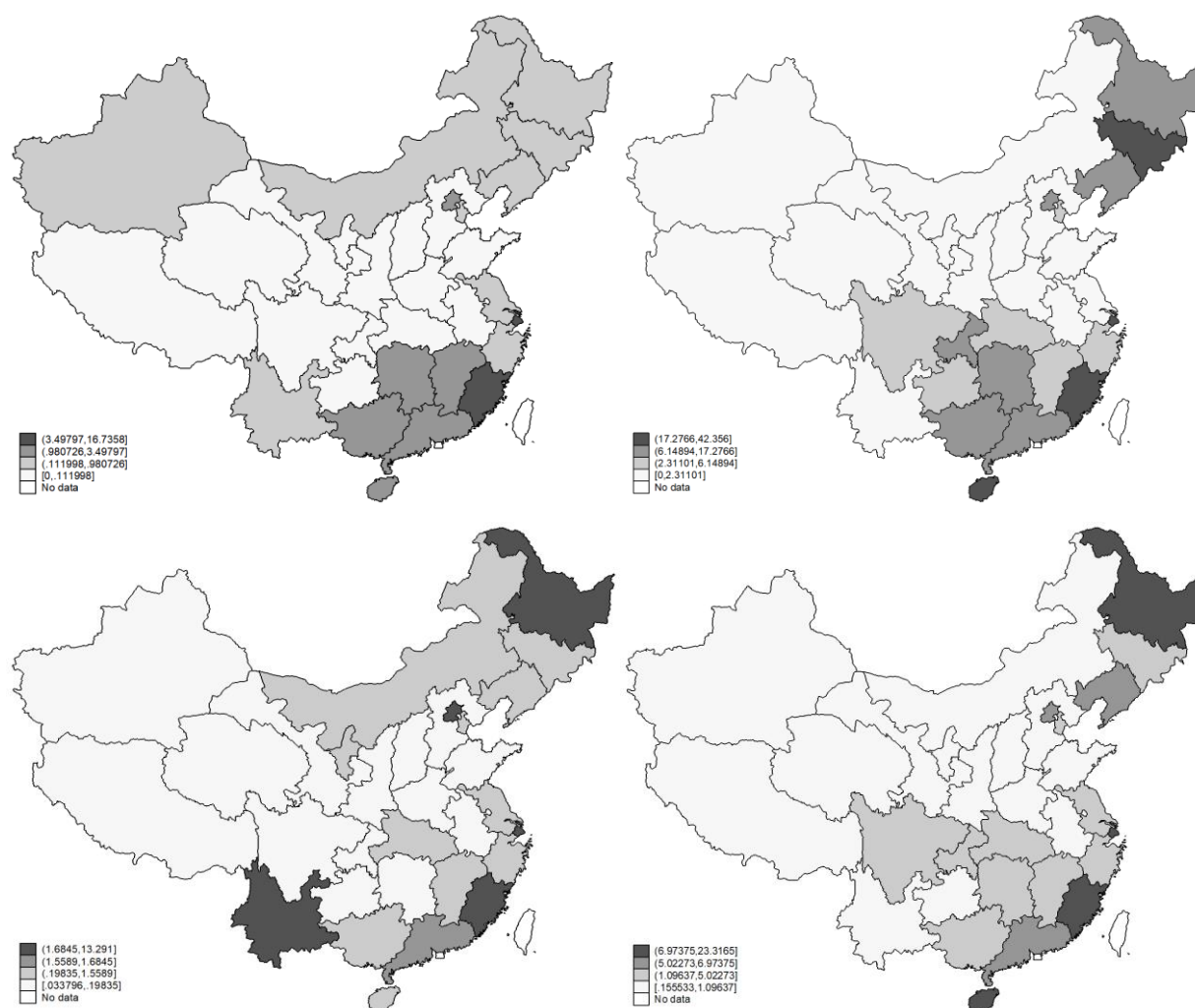
SOURCE: *China Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbooks*, 1979 to 2016

Figure 2-7 Spatial Distribution of Chinese–foreign International Marriages, Top-Ten Provinces Since 2000

This study constructs a series of maps to illustrate the spatial patterns for international marriages in mainland China. Since the relative incidence of Chinese–foreign marriage for mainland Chinese citizens in different regions can be calculated by $IMR_{(i,t)}$, gendered distributions can be compared and mapped (Figure 2-8). It shows changes for each province in 2000 and 2010, respectively. Although at the national level this type of marriage is decreasing, it is more complex on a regional level. This research shows that this type of marriage is concentrated in two major areas, the northeast provinces and the south-southeast provinces, namely Heilongjiang, Liaoning, Zhejiang, Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, Hubei, Hunan, and Sichuan. In addition, three municipalities, Beijing, Tianjin, and Shanghai, which have the highest GDP *per capita*, also show higher incidence of international marriages.

The maps suggest that spatial patterns of international marriages are not a perfect match with the country's geo-economic distribution. The differences between genders are apparent in this decade. In 2010, for some

of the border areas with a high proportion of minority population, the incidence of Chinese male married internationally is relatively equal or even higher than Chinese female, especially in Yunnan. Even though annual registered Chinese–foreign marriages in Guangdong are decreasing, the province still has a relatively high incidence of international marriage for both genders. Since 2005, the number of international marriages has also decreased in Fujian, but it maintains the highest incidence for mainland Chinese male



NOTE: Top-left, 2000 mainland Chinese male; top-right, 2000 mainland Chinese female; bottom-left, 2010 mainland Chinese male; bottom-right, 2010 mainland Chinese female.

SOURCE: *China Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbooks*, 2001 and 2011

Figure 2-8 Distributions of International Marriage Ratio, by Gender and Year

Table 2-1 Global Moran's I Index for Intensity of Chinese–foreign Marriages

	2000 female	2000 male	2010 female	2010 male
Moran's I	0.173	0.130	0.166	0.066
Z	2.074	2.894	2.244	1.342
p	0.038	0.004	0.025	0.096

NOTE: Distance based spatial weights matrix, unstandardized. Two-tail test.

and female. Meanwhile, the spatial pattern in international marriage have shown resemblance to inter-provincial migration (Li 2008) and marriage migration (Guo and Ding 2015). According to Chan (2012), the predominate flows of inter-provincial internal migration are from inland to the coast. The similarity of

spatial distributions between mainland females international marriage incidence (Figure 2-8) and inter-provincial migration during 2005 to 2010 (Chan 2012) is evident.

These maps provide visual support for partial spatial proximity in both years. Yet, the relationship between spatial similarity and regional socioeconomic conditions is not quite clear. To test the spatial autocorrelation, Table 2-1 shows that without controlling for the effect of other factors, there is a spatial correlation for the incidence of mainland Chinese female and male international marriages among all provinces. Further computation of *LISA* shows that such spatial correlation is only significant for incidence in Guangdong and Fujian provinces.

Table 2-2a Ordinary Least Squares Estimators for Chinese–foreign Marriages

	IMR female		IMR male	
	2000	2010	2000	2010
FDI <i>per capita</i> (log)	8.422***	2.971**	1.238	0.546
	2.126	1.109	0.885	0.676
GRDP <i>per capita</i> (log)	−16.833	−6.137**	−2.586	−2.545
	7.198	2.735	1.965	1.528
Consumption(rural) <i>per capita</i> (log)	8.514	3.932	1.904	3.402
	4.255	4.205	1.430	2.211
Consumption(urban) <i>per capita</i> (log)	2.153	1.021	1.289	−0.044
	7.123	5.646	1.308	2.494
Constant	7.818	−2.699	−11.141	−6.065
	51.750	28.03	10.352	14.921
Observations	31	31	31	31
R-squared	0.460	0.385	0.203	0.173

NOTE: IMR – international marriage ratio; FDI *per capita* – Foreign Direct Investment *per capita* (yuan); GRDP *per capita* – Gross Regional Domestic Product *per capita* (yuan); Consumption (rural) *per capita* – Rural Consumption Level *per capita* (yuan); Consumption (urban) *per capita* – Urban Consumption Level *per capita* (yuan). ** denotes significance at 5% level; *** denotes significance at 1% level. Robust standard errors. The table reports coefficients of regression models and standard errors.

Table 2-2b Global Moran's I from OLS Regression

	2000 female	2000 male	2010 female	2010 male
Moran's I	0.632	0.553	0.549	0.520
P value	0.527	0.580	0.583	0.603

NOTE: Distance based spatial weights matrix, unstandardized. Two tail tests.

Based on this finding, it is necessary to examine whether such spatial correlation still exist if other variables are controlled. The result of ordinary least squares regression coefficients suggests that the provincial incidence of mainland female Chinese–foreign marriages is significantly correlated with FDI and GRDP while the economic factors are not correlated with mainland Chinese male international marriage incidence (Table 2-2a). Regions with higher level of FDI have relatively higher incidence of Chinese female international marriage; but with higher level of GRDP the incidence is reduced. The coefficients between Chinese female international marriage incidence and economic indicators decreased at the end of the decade while the coefficients between Chinese male international marriage ratio and rural consumption level have largely increased.

Table 2-2b demonstrates that as the socioeconomic variances are controlled, mainland Chinese male and female international marriage incidence has no significant spatial autocorrelation among provinces in 2000 and 2010. At the same time, none of the test results of spatial error and spatial lag can reject the hypothesis that there are no spatial autocorrelations existing between nearby regions. In other words, the regional similarity of international marriage incidence might be related to regional economic development. Still, economic factors are certainly not the only influencing variables of international marriages and its spatial pattern.

Previous decomposition and spatial analysis demonstrate that mainland Chinese male and female international marriages are related. The maps show a certain level of relationship between mainland Chinese male and mainland Chinese female international marriage incidence at the provincial level. Although the decomposition shows opposite trends between Chinese male and Chinese female international marriages at the national level (Figure 1), the relative incidence of Chinese male and Chinese female is positively correlated at the provincial level. Regardless of whether the decline in Chinese female international marriage leads to fewer international marriages in mainland China, the increase of Chinese male international marriage tends to happen in provinces that hold a relatively higher incidence of Chinese female international marriages. Two of the four economic factors, FDI and GRDP *per capita*, become significantly related to Chinese male international marriages in 2010 once the gender effect is controlled. Compared to Chinese female, increase of FDI *per capita* will decrease Chinese male incidence while increase of GRDP *per capita* will increase the incidence.

2.6.3 Determinants of International Marriage Ratio

To explore the possible determinants for Chinese–foreign marriage, the zero-order correlation coefficient is calculated, which provide correlation between structural variables and relative incidence of international marriage⁹. Compared to Chinese male, Chinese female international marriage incidence is significantly related to the period. Similar as the results from linear regression, FDI has a stronger influence on Chinese female international marriages than Chinese male. The rise in rural consumption level can increase the relative densities of male international marriages, but the effects on Chinese female international marriages are not statistically significant. In neither urban nor rural areas are Chinese female international marriage significantly related to consumption level, but the increase in urban consumption is related to the decrease

of international marriage. In addition to the social and economic variables, sex ratio of marriageable population in a region could also affect international marriage incidence. Research in China's imbalanced sex ratio and domestic marriage market suggests that the abnormally high sex ratio at birth in the past decades has cumulated a large amount of surplus men in the marriage market (Poston 2011; Jiang, Feldman, and Li 2014; Sun and Tan 2015), which combined with China's universal marriage and spousal selection behaviour might lead to structural imbalance and marriage squeeze in local marriage market, especially in rural and less developed regions (Liu and Cai 2015). The influence of sex ratio of marriageable population on the incidence of international marriages is not significant for the population aged 15–49. However, the 50 plus cohort shows significant negative correlation with the incidence for both Chinese male and Chinese female. The sex ratio is negatively related to Chinese male international marriage incidence while positively associated with Chinese female international marriage incidence for the age group 20 to 34. Meanwhile, economic and political factors have significant effects on Chinese–foreign marriage. Policy factors are measured according to the opening-up policy around the 1980s, which shows positive correlation for both Chinese male and Chinese female. The stock of ethnic endogamy market is denoted by provincial percentage of minority population, which suggests a significant negative effect on Chinese female international marriage incidence.

Based on the results of spatial analysis, regression model, and test results for heterogeneity, the logical modelling for Chinese–foreign marriage is random effect panel Poisson model. Model 6 in Table 2-3 demonstrates that the international marriage incidence for mainland Chinese male and female is positively and significantly correlated. The estimated provincial Chinese female international marriage ratio is 5.749 times larger than Chinese male. Given the other predictor variables in the model are held constant, for a one-unit change in the provincial logarithm of FDI, the difference in the logs of expected international marriage ratio is expected to change by 0.673. Like the linear model estimation, the rural consumption level has a positive influence (8.125 times) on the international marriage ratio while the effect of urban consumption level is not significant. The rise of GRDP *per capita* also relates to the decrease in the international marriage ratio.

Taking political and social variances into consideration, a province with a relatively high percentage of minority population might have a lower incidence of international marriages. At the same time, the probability of mainland Chinese marriage to foreigners is positively correlated to border areas. Model 3

shows that compared to other regions, provinces with opening-up policies might have a relatively lower incidence of Chinese–foreign marriage. Once policy and location variables are incorporated into the model (model 4), the coefficients of socioeconomic variables drop while gender increases. Consider the effect of sex-ratio, marriageable population aged 25 to 44 has the highest sex ratio while the age group 50 plus has the lowest. The regression results demonstrate that sex ratio of the marriageable population aged 25 to 39

Table 2-3 Maximum Likelihood Estimation Coefficients for Determinates of Chinese–foreign Marriage Ratio

	IMR (1)	IMR (2)	IMR (3)	IMR (4)	IMR (5)	IMR (6)
Gender (ref=male)	4.532**	1.700***	1.691***	1.711***	1.748***	1.749***
	0.944	0.220	0.236	0.228	0.178	0.178
FDI <i>per capita</i> (log)	3.306***	0.823***	1.107***	1.052***	0.663***	0.673***
	0.619	0.132	0.179	0.184	0.169	0.169
GRDP <i>per capita</i> (log)	−5.784***	−2.002***	−2.675***	−2.913***	−1.871***	−2.011***
	2.385	0.553	0.524	0.547	0.559	0.561
Consumption(rural) <i>per capita</i> (log)	3.319	2.189***	2.488***	2.391***	2.131**	2.095***
	3.094	0.728	0.599	0.599	0.591	0.585
Consumption(urban) <i>per capita</i> (log)	−0.142	−0.550	0.443	0.803	0.332	0.469
	2.978	0.676	0.590	0.637	0.513	0.559
Education (percent of college and above)			−0.075	−0.051	0.006	0.016
			0.039	0.041	0.033	0.036
Urbanization (percent of urban population)			−0.004	−0.007	−0.033	−0.034
			0.019	0.019	0.017	0.017
Minority (percent of minority population)			−0.022***	−0.022***	−0.043***	−0.042***
			0.007	0.007	0.011	0.010
Opening-up policy (ref=without policy)			−0.415		0.241	
			0.307		0.314	
Border area (ref=inland area)			1.131***		1.331***	
			0.278		0.266	
Policy and location (ref=Inland without opening-up policy)						
Border without opening-up policy				1.489***		1.528***
				0.353		0.390
Inland with opening-up policy				−0.025		0.412
				0.388		0.330
Border with opening-up policy				0.507		1.485***
				0.346		0.401
Sex ratio of marriageable population 15–19					0.002	0.008
					0.023	0.022
Sex ratio of marriageable population 20–24					0.009	0.008
					0.018	0.017
Sex ratio of marriageable population 25–29					0.012**	0.012**
					0.005	0.005
Sex ratio of marriageable population 30–34					−0.014***	−0.014***
					0.004	0.004
Sex ratio of marriageable population 35–39					0.015**	0.014**
					0.006	0.006
Sex ratio of marriageable population 40–44					−0.017	−0.015
					0.010	0.010
Sex ratio of marriageable population 45–49					0.012	0.010
					0.009	0.009
Sex ratio of marriageable population 50 plus					−0.026***	−0.024***
					0.008	0.008
Constant	3.673	−0.573	−7.101**	−7.126**	−7.699**	−8.095**
	9.688	2.121	3.111	3.075	3.813	3.933

NOTES: (1) Panel MLE; (2) Panel Poisson; (3)–(6) Panel Poisson, random effect; Robust standard errors for (5) and (6) ** denotes significance at 5% level; *** denotes significance at 1% level. The table reports coefficients of logistic regression models and standard errors.

correlates with the provincial international marriage ratio. Model 4 and model 6 shows that in border provinces with the opening-up policies, the sex ratio of marriageable population has stronger effects on

Table 2-4 Maximum Likelihood Estimation Coefficients for Determinates of Chinese–foreign Marriage Ratio, by Gender

	IMR female (1)	IMR male (2)	IMR female (3)	IMR male (4)
FDI per capita (log)	0.714*** 0.170	0.995*** 0.234	0.752*** 0.177	0.174 0.279
GRDP per capita (log)	-1.788*** 0.467	-2.492*** 0.662	-1.789*** 0.651	-2.766*** 0.968
Consumption(rural) per capita (log)	1.456*** 0.444	4.471*** 1.201	1.411*** 0.527	4.343*** 1.066
Consumption(urban) per capita (log)	-0.189 0.616	-0.461 0.916	0.505 -0.720	-0.126 0.735
Education (percent of college and above)	-0.044 0.029	-0.054 0.043	-0.004 0.029	0.100 0.057
Urbanization (percent of urban population)	0.007 0.008	-0.036*** 0.011	-0.016 0.016	-0.061*** 0.022
Minority (percent of minority population)	-0.026*** 0.008	-0.013 0.010	-0.035*** 0.011	-0.070*** 0.022
Policy and location (ref=Inland without opening-up policy)				
Border without opening-up policy	0.913** 0.392	1.989*** 0.446	1.426** 0.603	2.037*** 0.476
Inland with opening-up policy	0.171 0.492	0.240 0.612	0.149 0.348	1.860** 0.768
Border with opening-up policy	0.794** 0.387	0.629 0.661	1.305*** 0.409	2.663*** 1.030
Sex ratio of marriageable population 15–19			0.001 0.027	-0.069** 0.032
Sex ratio of marriageable population 20–24			0.012 0.018	0.049 0.032
Sex ratio of marriageable population 25–29			0.008 0.005	-0.013 0.012
Sex ratio of marriageable population 30–34			-0.009*** 0.003	0.005 0.008
Sex ratio of marriageable population 35–39			0.008 0.004	0.019*** 0.007
Sex ratio of marriageable population 40–44			-0.005 0.007	-0.024** 0.009
Sex ratio of marriageable population 45–49			0.005 0.006	-0.018 0.013
Sex ratio of marriageable population 50 plus			-0.027** 0.007	-0.018 0.023
Constant	2.649 2.294	-15.304*** 3.031	-4.233 4.42	-1.809 5.818

NOTES: (1) (2) Panel MLE; (3) (4) Panel Poisson, random effect, robust standard errors. ** denotes significance at 5% level; *** denotes significance at 1% level. The table reports coefficients of logistic regression models and standard errors.

international marriage incidence. Although insignificant, the coefficients of policy and education effects become positive once the sex ratio is considered (model 3 and 5), and the opening-up policies would significantly increase the international marriage ratio for the border areas with relative higher sex-ratio among marriageable population (model 4 and 6).

This study also conducts panel Poisson analysis for each gender separately to compare the gendered regional differences (Table 2-4). The results show that if a province were to change the proportion of minority population by one point, the rate ratio¹⁰ for Chinese female and Chinese male international marriage ratio would be expected to change by a factor of 0.966 and 0.932 while all other variables in the model would be held constant. With a higher level of rural consumption, the provincial rate ratio would be expected to increase by 4.1 times for Chinese female and 76.9 times for Chinese male. Compares to inland areas, Chinese male and Chinese female in border regions have higher rate ratio of international marriage than other areas while the policies might decrease Chinese female rate ratio but increase male ratio. With higher sex ratio of marriageable population aged 30 to 34 and 50 plus, Chinese female international marriage ratio decreases significantly by 0.991 and 0.973 while Chinese male negatively relates to age group 15 to 19 and 40 to 44 but positively relates to 35 to 39. A higher sex ratio increases Chinese male international marriage ratios by 1.019 times for age group 35 to 39.

In sum, the pattern of international marriages at provincial level in the recent decade have been affected by a number of structural factors. There seems to be a clear gendered pattern as well. It is apparent that economic factors play an important role in affecting the international marriage ratio in China for both male and female. A higher level of GRDP discourages international marriages while higher FDI and rural consumption is likely to fuel this type of marriage. Notably, Chinese male international marriages are more responsive to changes in regional rural consumption. Percentage of minority population has negative effects on international marriages for both genders; Chinese female is more reactive to policy and border location, which seems to reject the conventional understanding that Chinese female international marriages are mainly intra-ethnic endogamy. Sex-ratio interact with international marriages, especially for the marriageable population aged 30 to 39, but the correlations are not strong. Socioeconomic, population, and policy factors have affected China's international marriages in the latest decade diversely.

2.7 Discussion and Conclusion

The public image of international marriages in China is a mix of a promising yet unstable life and a method for emigration. The prior literature argues that there are three types of Chinese–foreign marriage: exchange marriage due to international disparity, intracultural marriage due to cultural similarity, and heterogamous marriage for unwed males – yet thorough examination of these is largely absent. The results from this study suggest that the combined effects of socioeconomic conditions, geospatial location, and population structure have promoted mainland Chinese international marriages.

Compared to the existing research, this chapter uses a different approach to understand the importance of gender in China's international marriages. It provides a crucial perspective for understanding the patterns and changes of international marriage in China, in which Chinese female marriage is more responsive to changes in intra-regional socioeconomic condition while Chinese male is more sensitive to inter-regional variance in rural consumption. The results suggests that ethnicity is not the key push factor for cross-national relationships as previous studies suggested. Higher percent of minority population within a province might increase the possibility of ethnic endogamy, but it can also lead to interethnic marriages. It is possible that cultural similarities can be the driving force of endogamy, but the economic factors and border location might make greater impact than ethnic identity itself in international marriage market. A high level of international marriage ratio in border-minority areas is related to the combined effect of convenient spatial locations, commercial exchanges, and population structure. This finding challenges the conventional understanding that international marriage is the calculative exchange for Chinese females and the last resort choice for Chinese males from less developed areas, where marriageable Chinese female spouses are not available.

This study finds that regional economic development is negatively correlated with international marriage in China, which is consistent with current understanding. Although the opening-up policies boosted international marriages in early years, in the most recent decade, provinces with such policies tend to have a lower incidence of Chinese-foreign marriages compared to less-developed regions. This also suggests that advanced socioeconomic conditions might reduce regional international marriage incidence. However, the results also show that international marriage remains concentrated in more developed provinces as economic development, international exchanges and associated mobility of people might have built up the

momentum, network and cultural acceptance of international marriages. It is also possible that men with modest socioeconomic status in socioeconomic advanced regions were further excluded by local marriage market, hence international marriage became the last resort. The positive correlation between international marriages and rural consumption might relate to hypergamous marriage, internal migration, and the *hukou* system. Rural–urban and provincial socioeconomic disparities and segregation inherent in the *hukou* system have further compressed choice of marriage, international relationships therefore provide an efficient path to overcome this barrier – even for residents from economic developed areas.

Spatial analysis suggests clear links between international marriages and internal migration (Zhu, Ding, Wang, Shen, Li, and Ke 2016), especially for Chinese females. According to census data,¹¹ inter-province in-migration is concentrated in Beijing and southeast provinces, such as Guangdong, Zhejiang, Shanghai, Jiangsu and Fujian, while out-migrants are mostly from south inland provinces, such as Sichuan, Anhui, Hunan, Henan, Chongqing, Hubei, Jiangxi, Guizhou, and Guangxi. The similarity of spatial distribution patterns among international marriage incidence, internal marriage, and internal migration are considerable, especially for Chinese female.

Table 2-5 Variable definitions and descriptions

Variable	Definition	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
IMRf	International marriage ratio of female	5.64	8.30	0.00	42.36
IMRm	International marriage ratio of male	1.11	2.74	0.00	16.74
Refopu	Whether have reform and open-up policy	0.35	0.49	0	1
FDIpc	Foreign direct investment per capita	10701.50	17314.21	329.05	99759.74
GRDPpc	Gross regional domestic product per capita	20744.03	17534.69	2742.07	74537.47
CONu	Domestic consumer level, urban	10821.26	6392.54	3552.00	34588.00
CONr	Domestic consumer level, rural	3720.68	2661.39	1039.00	13609.00
EEcoA	Eight economic area	4.87	2.34	1	8
Minority	Percent of minority population	14.99	21.31	0.26	93.94
Border	Whether is border area	0.26	0.44	0	1
Urban	Urbanization	39.54	18.15	12.78	89.31
Educo	Percent of population with college and above education	8.42	5.52	1.86	34.46
GMR	General marriage rate	101.76	27.69	24.27	171.62
SRM1519	Sex ratio of marriageable population, age 15 to 19	110.04	6.96	87.33	129.53
SRM2024	Sex ratio of marriageable population, age 20 to 24	136.88	23.66	99.48	206.47
SRM2529	Sex ratio of marriageable population, age 25 to 29	229.87	87.02	125.06	446.56
SRM3034	Sex ratio of marriageable population, age 30 to 34	277.61	110.73	107.45	518.29
SRM3539	Sex ratio of marriageable population, age 35 to 39	232.79	75.37	96.64	406.06
SRM4044	Sex ratio of marriageable population, age 40 to 44	190.97	68.77	71.51	350.12
SRM4549	Sex ratio of marriageable population, age 45 to 49	143.97	52.24	66.06	278.62
SRM50p	Sex ratio of marriageable population, age 50 and above	58.19	12.08	36.63	124.47
Year	Year 2000 and 2001	2005	5.04	2000	2010

SOURCE: China Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbooks, 2001 and 2011; National Bureau of Statistics of China 2000 and 2010

Notes

An earlier version of this article was presented at the 18th Biennial Australian Population Association Conference, Sydney, NSW, December 1, 2016. The authors acknowledge the support of the Higher Degree Research Office at Macquarie University and Centre for Population and Development Studies at Renmin University of China. Address correspondence to Shenghan Cai at shenghan.cai@mq.edu.au

1 Bridewealth is a type of wealth paid by groom or his family to the parents of bride as a ritual and symbolic gesture to ratify marriage. Marriage squeeze is the effects on marriage behaviour of an imbalance between the numbers of males and females.

2 Higher status can be social-economic or physical advantages. A husband is expected to have higher education achievement, higher income, better *Hukou*, or be physically older and higher in status. This gradient rule of marriage applies when men marry younger and attractive women with relatively lower educational attainment and occupational status.

3 According to the Ministry, Chinese–foreign marriages are classified into five types: (a) marriage between mainland China citizen and Hong Kong SAR (special administrative region) resident; (b) marriage between mainland China citizen and Macao SAR resident; (c) marriage between mainland China citizen and Taiwan resident; (d) marriage between mainland China citizen and “Overseas Chinese Sojourner” (Chinese citizens with long-term or permanent residency, or residential qualification of foreign country); (e) marriage between mainland China citizen and foreigner (including Overseas Chinese with foreign citizenship). Marriage between mainland citizens and residents from SARs should be considered as internal rather than international, but as common and civil law systems and government systems of mainland China, Taiwan and SARs are different, it is important and necessary to identify these types of marriage as institutional foreign marriage.

4 Yearbooks, census data and the system of national accounts retrieved from <http://chinadataonline.org/>, <http://www.stats.gov.cn/english/Statisticaldata/AnnualData/>, <http://chinadataonline.org/>, and <http://tongji.cnki.net/kns55/navi/NaviDefault.aspx>. Marriage data of Hong Kong retrieved from <https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp160.jsp?productCode=FA100055>; Taiwan retrieved from https://www.moi.gov.tw/files/site_stuff/321/2/year/year.html; Japan retrieved from <https://www.e-stat.go.jp/stat-search/files?page=1&query=人口動態統計特殊報告婚姻&layout=dataset>. November 2017.

5 The registration record is the only available source for international marriage in mainland China. Census data does not contain any relevant information. Marriage-related data in the registration record is different from Population Census. To maintain consistency, this research centres on the registration record. Marital information in census data provides cross-section snapshots for population structure of the regional *de facto* marriageable population.

6 Spatial variation and geographical distance between mainland China and SARs are not used due to availability and comparability of data. Thus, spatial analysis is based on the proximity of nearby mainland provinces.

7 The classification is commonly accepted and used in various disciplines. It divides the 31 provinces into eight areas based on their spatial distance, level of socioeconomic development, and sociocultural similarities. The spatial similarity of international marriages has also been calculated through different cluster methods in this research, but the results can vary dramatically and without satisfactory explanation, which leads to the same conclusion, that is, that the geographic distribution of international marriages in China is likely more complicated than a simple correlation between spatial location and socioeconomic development.

8 According to existing research into the age gap between mainland Chinese spouses, since the 1990s, it is commonly accepted that the age gap between spouses is husbands are one-year younger, same age or one to four years older than their wives; nearly 70 percent of all married couples follow this pattern. There are three types of marital status among the marriageable population: never married, divorced, or widowed. The differences of marital status have also been tested, and results are not significantly different from the final models.

9 The zero-order correlation coefficient was calculated to reveal potential relationships between variables, not all the information could be displayed due to space limitation.

10 The rate ratio, also known as incidence density ratio or incidence rate ratio, is computed as the comparison of incidence rate of events occurring in given time.

11 See also Li (2008), Chan (2012), Guo and Ding (2015), and Zhu et al. (2016).

References

- Adsera, Alicia and Ana Ferrer. 2014. "Immigrants and demography: Marriage, divorce, and fertility," IZA Discussion Papers 7982, Institute for the Study of Labour (IZA).
- Anselin, Luc. 1988. "Lagrange multiplier test diagnostics for spatial dependence and spatial heterogeneity," *Geographical Analysis* 20(1): 1-17.
- Anselin, Luc. 1995. "Local indicators of spatial association—LISA," *Geographical Analysis* 27(2): 93-115.
- Breger, Rosemary and Rosanna Hill. 1998. "Introducing mixed marriages," *Cross-Cultural Marriage: Identity and Choice*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Breusch, Trevor S. and Adrian R. Pagan. 1980. "The Lagrange multiplier test and its applications to model specification in econometrics." *The Review of Economic Studies* 47(1): 239-253.
- Chan, Kam Wing. 2012. "Migration and development in China: Trends, geography and current issues," *Migration and Development* 1(2): 187-205.
- Charsley, Katherine. 2011. *Transnationalism, Migration and Marriage*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Constable, Nicole. 2009. "The commodification of intimacy: Marriage, sex, and reproductive labour," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 38(1): 49-64.
- Croll, Elisabeth. 1981. *The Politics of Marriage in Contemporary China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Department of Services and Management for Migrant Population (DSMMP), National Health and Family

- Planning Commission. 2016. *2016 Report on China's Migrant Population Development*. Beijing: China Population Publishing House.
- Ding, Jinhong, Hongyan Yang, Shaoyun Zhou, Jixiang Zhou, Kewu Lin, and Yuzhi Zhang. 2004. "Characteristics and trends of cross-nation marriage in modern Shanghai," *Chinese Journal of Population Science* 3: 66-70.
- Durbin, James. 1954. "Errors in variables," *Review of the International Statistical Institute*. 22(1/3): 23-32.
- Fan, C. Cindy. 2003. "Rural-urban migration and gender division of labour in China," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 27(1): 24-47.
- Farrer, James. 2014. "China wants you: The social construction of skilled labour in three Employment sectors," *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 23(4): 397-420.
- Gao, Ying, Xiulan Zhang and Weilong Zhu. 2013. "A study on cross-nation marriage of Beijing in recent years," *Population and Economics* 1: 27-36.
- Guo, Yongchang and Jinhong Ding. 2015. "Spatial pattern of Chinese inter-provincial marriage migration," *Journal of Arid Land Resources and Environment* 29(03):1-7.
- Guo, Weiming. 2003. "China's marital and obstetrical patterns in 1990s," *Population Research* 28(5): 18-21.
- Gullickson, Aaron. 2006. "Education and black-white interracial marriage," *Demography* 43(4): 673-689.
- Hausman, Jerry A. 1978. "Specification tests in econometrics," *Econometrica* 46(6): 1251-1271.
- Hausman, Jerry A., Bronwyn H. Hall, and Zvi Griliches. 1984. "Econometric models for count data with an application to the patents-r & d relationship," *Econometrica* 52(4): 909-938.
- Jeffreys, Elaine and Wang Pan. 2013. "The rise of Chinese-foreign marriage in mainland China, 1979-2010," *China Information* 27(3): 347-369.
- Jiang, Haishun. 1999. "Discussion on some issues of international marriages between China and South Korea," *Journal of Yanbian University (Social Science)* 32(3): 128-131.
- Jiang, Quanbao, Marcus W. Feldman, and Shuzhuo Li. 2014. "Marriage squeeze, never-married proportion, and mean age at first marriage in China," *Population Research and Policy Review* 33(2): 189-204.
- Khoo, Siew-Ean. 2001. "The context of spouse migration to Australia," *International Migration* 39(1): 111-132.
- Kofman, Eleonore. 2004. "Family related migration: A critical review of European Studies," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30(2): 243-262.
- Lee, Everett S. 1966. "A theory of migration," *Demography* 3(1): 47-57.
- Lesthaeghe, Ron J. 2010. "The unfolding story of the second demographic transition," *Population and Development Reviews* 36(2): 211-251.
- Li, Meng. 2009. "Yearning for life, A study about North Korean cross-border brides' social adaptation in China," *Legal System and Society* 2: 213.
- Li, Wei. 2008. "Spatial patterns of interprovincial migration in China," *Population Research* 32(4): 86-96.
- Liang, Zai and Chunyu D. Miao. 2013. "Migration within China and from China to the USA: The effects of migration networks, selectivity, and the rural political economy in Fujian Province," *Population Studies* 67(2): 209-223.
- Lin, Mingxian and Shunfen Shen. 2006. "Resource and exchange in marriage, case study on Chinese-Korean females' international marriages in Yanbian city," *Population Research* 30(3) :50-55.
- Liu, Shuang and Shenghan Cai. 2015. "Who has been 'left'? A study on the unwed youth in China," *Youth*

Studies 4: 76-84.

- Lyngstad, T.H. 2004. "The impact of parents' and spouses' education on divorce rates in Norway," *Demographic Research* 10: 121-142.
- Mai, Yinhua and Xiujian Peng. 2012. "Estimating China's rural labour surplus," *Chinese Economy* 45(6): 38-59.
- Massey, Doreen. 1994. *Space, Place and Gender*. Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press.
- Miao, Lu and Huiyao Wang. 2017. *International Migration of China: Status, Policy and Social Responses to the Globalization of Migration*. Singapore: Springer.
- Moran, P. A. P.. 1950. "Notes on continuous stochastic phenomena," *Biometrika* 37(1/2): 17-23.
- Oliveau, Sébastien and Christophe Guilmoto. 2005. Spatial correlation and demography: Exploring India's demographic patterns. XXVe Congrès International de la Population, Jul 2005, Tours, France.
- Peng, Xiujian. 2009. Demographic shift, population ageing and economic growth in China: A computable general equilibrium analysis," *Pacific Economic Review* 13(5): 680-697.
- Penny, Janet and Siew-Ean Khoo. 1996. *Intermarriage: A Study of Migration and Integration*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.
- Poston, Dudley Jr., Eugenia Conde, and Bethany DeSalvo. 2011. "China's unbalanced sex ratio at birth, millions of excess bachelors and societal implications", *Vulnerable Children and Youth Studies* 6(4): 314-320.
- Quan, Xinzi. 2007. "Case study on the pattern of Chinese-Korean females' international marriages in South Korea," *Dongjiang Journal* 24(4): 99-105.
- Quan, Xinzi. 2012. *Analysis of Chinese-Korean females' International Marriage Migration between China and South Korea*. Beijing: Xueyuan Press.
- Ravenstein, Ernest George. 1885. "The law of migration," *Journal of the Statistical Society of London* 48(2): 167-235.
- Romano, Dugan. 1997. *Intercultural Marriage: Promises and Pitfalls*. Yarmouth: Intercultural Press.
- Sassen, Saskia. 2003. "Globalization or denationalization?," *Review of International Political Economy* 10(1): 1-22.
- Schoen, Robert. 1975. "California divorce rates by age at first marriage and duration of first marriage," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 37(3): 548-555.
- Shen, Jianfa. 2013. "Increasing internal migration in China from 1985 to 2005: Institutional versus economic drivers," *Habitat International* 39: 1-7.
- Sun, Weihong and Yuanfa Tan. 2015. "The study on marriage squeeze among Chinese population from 1989 to 2030," *Youth Studies* 5: 78-84.
- The State Council of People's Republic of China. 2014. *Report on the Work of the Government 2014*. Beijing: Government of China.
- UNDESA. 2016. *International Migration Report 2015, Highlights*. http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2015_Highlights.pdf. Retrieved (accessed 26 March 2018).
- UNFPA. 2006. *State of World Population 2006: A Passage to Hope: Women and International Migration*. <http://www.unfpa.org/publications/state-world-population-2006> (accessed 26 March 2018).
- van de Kaa, Dick J. "Europe's second demographic transition," *Population Bulletin* 42(1): 1-59.

- Vermeer, Eduard B. 2006. "Demographic dimensions of China's development," *Population and Development Review* 32(1): 115-144.
- Wang, Feng. 2011. "The future of a demographic overachiever: long-term implications of the demographic transition in China," *Population and Development Review* 37(1): 173-190.
- Wang, Guangzhou. 2013. "'Only-child-death' family and its developing trends under the current family planning policy," *Chinese Journal of Population Science* 1: 57-65.
- Weeks, John R.. 2014. *Population: An Introduction to Concepts and Issues*. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing.
- Williams, Lucy. 2010. *Global Marriage: Cross-Border Marriage Migration in Global Context*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Wu, Demin. 1973. "Alternative tests of independence between stochastic regressors and disturbances," *Econometrica* 41(4): 733-750.
- Xu, Qi, Zeqi Qiu and Jianxin Li. 2016. "Is the "seven-year itch" real? A study on the changing divorce pattern in Chinese marriages," *The Journal of Chinese Sociology* 3: 17.
- Yang, Wenshan and Melody Chiawen Lu. 2010. *Asian Cross-Border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press.
- Ye, Wenzhen and Qingguo Lin. 1996. "Chinese-foreign marriage in Fujian province," *Population and economics* 95(2): 21-29.
- Yu, Jia and Yu Xie. 2017. "Prevalence and social determinants of premarital cohabitation in China," *Population Research* 41(2): 3-16.
- Zhang, Yinfeng and Jiawei Hou. 2016. "The actual and ideal fertility age of Chinese population: 1994-2012," *Population and Development* 2: 2-11.
- Zhao, Shujuan. 2011. "A survey of cross-border marriages, a case study of Sino-Burmese Border in Yunnan," *Journal of Chuxiong Normal University* 26(10): 89-95.
- Zhao, Zhongwei. 2006. "Towards a better understanding of past fertility regimes: The ideas and practice of controlling family size in Chinese history," *Continuity and Change* 21(1): 9-35.
- Zheng, Zhenzhen. 2013. "Migration and changes", in *Annual Report on Gender Equality and Women's Development in China 2008-2012*. Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press.
- Zhu, Yu, Jinhong Ding, Guixin Wang, Jianfa Shen, Liyue Lin, and Wenqian Ke. 2016. "Population geography in China since the 1980s: Forging the links between population studies and human geography," *Journal of Geographical Sciences* 26(8): 1133-1158.

Chapter 3: Gendered Patterns and Solidarity of the Unions: Differences between International Marriages and Domestic Marriages in China

Abstract

With implementation of the economic reforms, opening-up, and the family planning policy, China has experienced profound socioeconomic and cultural changes since the 1970s. Following the relaxation of migration control, the country's youthful population structure and adequate labour force contribute to a geospatial imbalance of socioeconomic prosperity and large scale of emigration. Recently, with China's economic success, internal and international migration has increased, while international marriages have considerably fluctuated in number. Using a unique dataset of international and domestic marriage registration from 2010 to 2014, this chapter aims to examine the differences between international marriages and domestic marriages, and the effects of educational attainment, occupation, and marital status on the choice of transnational relationships. Logistic and Cox's regression models are used to analyse the probability of international marriages and the solidarity of both international and domestic marriages. The results show that although couples in international marriage show a higher probability of having large age-gaps, remarriage, and divorce; however, most of the couples of both types of marriages are homogamous matches. Although husbands tend to show higher achievement on both education and occupation attainments, there has been a steady increase in the number of well-educated couples in international marriages in recent years. The average ages of spouses at the first marriage in international marriages are higher than that of domestic couples and increased over time. Different from conventional understanding, the results from this study suggest that transnational couples experienced the lowest hazard of divorce than couples who share more cultural similarities while younger birth cohorts may have less solidarity for both types of marriage.

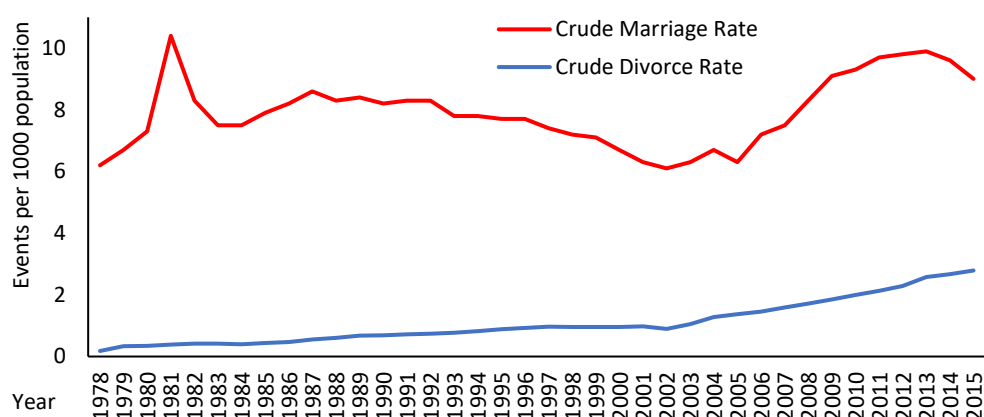
Keywords: International marriage, Marital choice, Divorce

3.1 Introduction

It is commonly recognised that the 1980s was not only the beginning of systematic economic reforms but also an era of dramatic social transformation and family changes in China. Its profound marriage-family related individual behavioural changes are direct reflections of macro level demographic changes and socioeconomic, ideological, and cultural transformations. The opening-up and economic reform policies have accelerated economic growth and social disparity, while creating bridges for ideational changes in the society. China prioritises its economic development and modernisation, and major policy changes were taken place to ensure success in economic advancement (Lin, Cai, and Li 2003). With the implementation of strict “one-child” family planning policy and the lifting restrictions on migration within China in the early 1980s, the age-sex structure and geospatial distribution of China’s population went through profound changes. At the same time, socialist ideological directives and restrictions over marriage-family behaviour were also lifted, as more lenient marriage laws and regulations granted more freedom for marriage and divorce, and the clauses in new inheritance law protected female rights of inheritance. Actions were taken to eliminate discriminations against women, especially in employment and education, such as labour laws and compulsory education laws, which ensured women could gain economic independence (Wang 2006).

Recent decades have witnessed major transformations in marital and family relationships. After achieved low levels of fertility and mortality, China began to experience further changes in marital-family behaviour of its people. With loosening control from the Party and extended family, *ziyou lian'ai* (Westernized free-will choice) partner selection replaced *baoban huyin* (arranged marriages) (Croll 1981; Li 1995; Yan 2003); local and international marriage brokers, and social media have started to play supplementary roles in partner selection. Following the dramatic increases of rural-urban migration since the early 1980s, the number of women marrying spouses across greater geographic distances has also increased considerably, both nationally and internationally (Fan and Huang 1998), which also reflected the reduction of isolation in the pre-reform Maoist era and the promotion of modernisation and globalisation. Under the state control of family reproductive decisions, family size decreased to 2.5 persons per household, while nuclear and stem family became the predominant household types. Divorce rates have also increased since the implementation of the 1980 marriage law and 2003 marriage regulation. In 1979, the divorce rate was only 0.3 permille, but it increased to 1.05 permille in 2003 and 2.8 permille in 2015 (Figure 3-1). Meanwhile,

family forms also became more diversified, as the proportion of marriages and families that include unconventional relationships has increased substantially in the following decades. International marriage families, increasing along with single-parent families, DINK families, empty-nest families, one-person households and step-families, mark this reformation period of China's interpersonal relationship patterns (Deng and Xu 2000).



NOTE: See footnote 2.

SOURCE: *China Social Statistical Yearbook*, 2016

Figure 3-1 Crude Marriage Rate and Crude Divorce Rate in Mainland China, 1978 to 2015

Nowadays, the country is no stranger to cohabitation, *de facto* marriages, international marriages, “speedy” marriages, out-of-wedlock births, surrogate motherhood, and same-sex relationships. With delay in the ages of marriage and first child, low levels of fertility, increasing cohabitation among the younger generation (Yu and Xie 2015), and increasing rates of union dissolution (Liang 2017), notable changes in marital and family behaviours have emerged during the recent decade. Despite the persistence of China's universal hypergamous marriage pattern, intolerance towards out-of-wedlock births, and increasing payments of bridewealth¹ or dowry (Ji and Yeung 2014). Responding to the changes, scholars have directed attention to studies of spouse selection and matching (Xu and Li 2004; Li 2008), cohabitation (Yu and Xie 2015; Liang 2017), later marriage, marriage squeeze (Li and Jin 2006; Jiang and Li 2009; Poston, Conde, and DeSalvo 2011), and marriage dissolution (Zeng, Schultz, and Wang 1993; Wang and Zhou 2010; Xu, Zhang, and Amato 2011; Xu 2012). Studies about international marriage have been mainly focused on cross-border marriages of minority groups, diseases transmission in transnational relationships, marriage squeeze and couple matching in international marriages, and legal applications for international union dissolutions. International marriages are regarded as a special phenomenon that are associated with the issue of economic underdevelopment and/or sociocultural preservation.

Utilising a unique set of data, this research will treat domestic and international unions as two mutually exclusive choices of marriage arrangements. By taking a set of demographic background information into consideration, this chapter aims to depict the variations of different types of marriage, as well as examine the relationships between human capital and marriage choice, and the timing and risk factors of marriage disruptions among these two types of union. It will enhance our understanding of international marriage in the context of the mainland China, along with the characteristics and changes in the state of marriages and families in China.

Since the 1990s, international marriage among Asian countries has attracted much attention from scholars around the world. With the help of registration records, immigration data, censuses, national surveys, and qualitative data, the existing research have provided fruitful sources of information and findings on international marriage and migration (Yang and Lu 2010). However, due to the transnational nature of international marriage and the limitations of data, most of the existing studies of the international marriage have been in the context of the more developed Asian countries and regions, the study of international marriage in the context of the mainland China is still inadequate. Since the beginning of its reformation era, China has been increasingly globalised economically and politically with substantial socioeconomic changes and increasing emigration, and recently immigration (Pieke 2012; Liang and Miao 2013; Farrer 2014). Although the international marriages between people from China and other ethnically homogeneous nation-states in Asia have caused major concerns for some foreign government, in China, international marriage is not considered as a major social issue which must be confronted with urgency (Lee, Seol, and Cho 2006; Yang and Lu 2010; Luo 2013). The lack of data and the restriction over international marriage research in mainland China have resulted in inadequate understanding of international marriage in China, which in turn has limited our understanding of overall patterns of international marriage in Asia and in other parts of the world.

By analysing a unique dataset of international marriage registrations over a period of time (2010-2014) when China was experiencing rapid economic growth and profound social transformation, this chapter examines the key influencing factors of people's choices for international marriages in comparison with domestic marriages, as well as gendered patterns of marriage choices. It also examines the timing and determinants of marital dissolution for both domestic and international marriages. The duration of a

marriage (how long a marriage lasts) is used to measure the solidarity of a marriage. It should be pointed out that the duration of a marriage can be affected by both divorce and mortality within a relationship. However, mortality is not the focus of this study, therefore, dissolution of marriage by divorce is the only factor affecting the duration of marriage in this study.

3.2 Partner Selection and Marital Dissolution in China

China's universal pattern of heterosexual marriage in the contemporary time is a peculiar phenomenon compared with other industrialised societies or Asian countries (Ji and Yeung 2014). In contrast with the general trend of "marriage revolution," "sexual transformation," or "modernity of love" (Goode 1982; Giddens 1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995; 2014) in other industrialised countries, Chinese attitudes and behaviours towards marriage and relationship have been very diverse. While cohabitation and premarital pregnancy have become more acceptable among young people (Wu 2010; Pan 2011; Yu and Xie 2015; Li and Tian 2017), the older generations and the government still holds conservative attitudes towards traditional marital and family relationships (Pan and Huang 2013). Fei (1992) and Ocko (1991) point out that the traditional marital relationship in China is created and defined by patriarchal property rights, which treat women as the property of their father, husband, son, and household. Even though the modern regime promotes civil rights for women, the strong state control has hindered individual rights of marriage and divorce in the name of social stability, which has turned marital relationships into social property under collective ownership for decades (Davis 2010). The reform era strengthened women's civil rights in public realm, but it did not change their underprivileged status within familial relationships (Davis 2010), as the traditional familial power structure and marital relationships largely remain intact, especially in rural areas (Liu 2002; Zhang 2010).

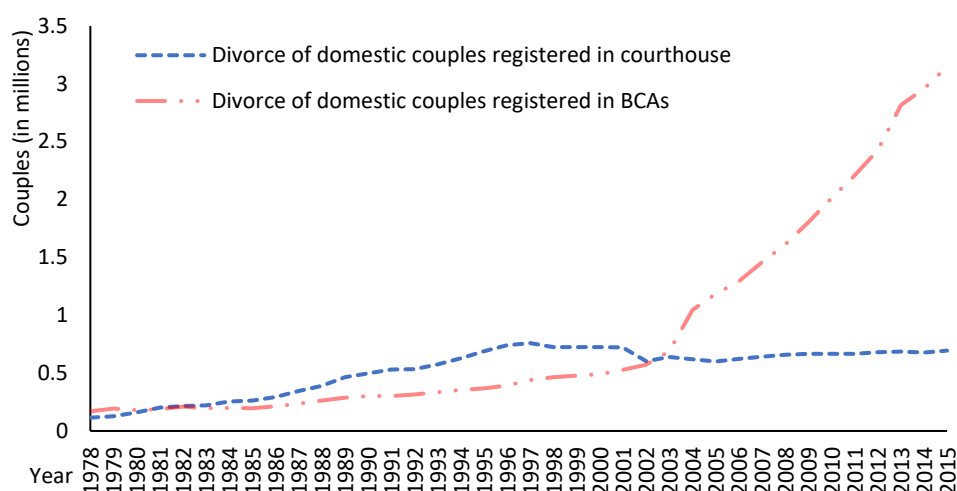
Although younger generations have seized their newly acquired freedom of partner selection, their selection criteria have not substantially changed from conventional expectations, and parents remain heavily involved in their children's marital decisions. Modern interpersonal intimacy and Chinese familial traditions intertwined with each other as assortative matching of families (*mendang hudui*) and hypergamous matching of spouses³ (*nangao nvdi*), still persist in practice (Greenhalgh 1985; Ocko 1991; Watson 1991; Fei 1992; Veevers 1998; Wei and Tsay 2014). Assortative matching focuses on a series of spousal similarities, such as familial background, socioeconomic status, habits, and cultural practice

between two families. This is to safeguard the solidarity of marriage and reinforce social status and boundaries. On the other hand, hypergamous matching is where women marry men with higher educational attainment, occupational status, and social origin to obtain upward social mobility (Croll 1981; Watson and Ebrey 1991; Farrer 2013; Wei and Tsay 2014). Existing research reveals that the majority of China's marital relationships, modernised or not, are homogamous matches, in which the couples and their parents demonstrate similar socioeconomic status, while husbands are generally "above" their wives in age, human capital, and socioeconomic resources (Mu and Xie 2016; Wang and He 2014; Guo and Qin 2016).

Meanwhile, the strong son preference in Chinese culture, coupled with the strict One Child policy, has inevitably resulted in a higher-than-normal sex-ratio in the younger generation after the 1980s, which has led to a large pool of surplus males (Jiang, Li and Feldman 2005; Poston and Glover 2005; Cai 2014) and regional imbalanced marriageable population. The spousal selection criteria and titled sex-ratio, together with conservative gender norms, have led to imbalance in the structural composition of the marriageable population, which has been further intensified by the country's profound internal migration, rapid economic development, and stagnated sociocultural reformation. *Hukou* differences between rural-urban and underdeveloped-developed areas hold significant effects on people's choice of future spouse, especially for rural females (Lavelly 1991; Xing and Nie 2010; Wang and He 2014). The segregation of *hukou* and regional socioeconomic disparities have resulted in a segmentation of the marriage market, since advanced and additional welfare and public services are attached to developed areas and urban residency. Thus, intermarriage between a resident from a rural region and a resident of an urban area is a heterogenous pair, in which the spousal differences in residential/regional status needs to be compensated by the advanced socioeconomic resources or human capital of one spouse. Marriage between people with low human capital but high status and those with high achievement, but low status becomes an efficient way of status exchange and social mobility (Davis 1941; Merton 1941; Xing and Nie 2010).

During the past three decades, market-oriented economic reform has reduced family functions and increased the economic value of reproductive work, which has largely elevated the cost of childbearing, housework, child education, childcare, and eldercare. Meanwhile, the institutional empowerment of females has provided them with more choices and rights in negotiating their marriage, family, and professional life, which have largely elevated the overall female human capital. Under China's conventional

practice of heterogenous spousal matching, the standards of suitable husbands have also been elevated. With the large scale of internal migration and free-will choice of marriage and divorce, the deficiency of marriageable female was generated in less-developed regions (Jiang and Li 2009).



SOURCE: *China Social Statistical Yearbook*, 2016

Figure 3-2 Annual Number of Divorces of Domestic Couples in Mainland China by Type of Registration, 1978 to 2015

Since the 1980 Marriage Law ensured individual's freedom of divorce, with a substantial increase in divorce rates, there has been debates around the association between modernisation and dissolution of marriages. After 2003, the drastic increase in divorce rates is considered as to be the result of the changes in governmental regulations, patterns of migration (both internal and international), family structure, and female social status, as well as globalisation (Li and Yang 2011; Gao, Zhang and Zhu 2012; Tan and Song 2015). Zeng (1993; 1995) points out that with socioeconomic development and the amendment of the marriage law, the socio-political acceptance of divorce has increased, which contributes to the continuous increase in divorce rates. The modifications of marriage regulations in 2003 have further weakened social control over individual divorce (Figure 3-2), as the couples no longer need permission from their work places or residents' committees. This also provides new solutions for conflicts within families, which contributes to the decrease in abnormally high suicide risk among Chinese rural females since the 1980s (Pritchard 1996; Xie 2000; Qin and Mortensen 2001; Liu 2002; Zhang, Conwell, Zhou, and Jiang 2004; Yip, Liu, Hu and Song 2005; Zhang 2010; Wang, Chan and Yip 2014). The average lifespan of a marriage has decreasing for both genders in the latest decade (Tan and Song 2015). Research also shows that legal disputes, emigration, hukou restrictions, birth quota, eligibility of school district, subsistence allowance, relocation compensation, and macroeconomic control over real estate, tax, and bank interest rates, have

also created surges of divorce shenanigans (Chi 2015). Chinese couples divorcing in order to maximise their utilisation of resources with minimum costs, as marital relationship in Chinese culture are traditionally centred on reproduction rather than affection and love (Fei 1992). The couples might still living together and being recognised by their community as husband and wife. These couples might restore their marital relationship after they achieve their goals, but reports from social media and courthouses also indicated that the divorce shenanigans might leads to real breakdown of marriages and legal disputes. In this case, divorce has become an instrument to circumvent unfavourable rules, regulations, and policies in hope of maximisation of resource and profit.

Market-oriented socioeconomic developments and ideological adjustment may have contributed to the increase trend of divorce. Macro socioeconomic reforms have changed people's familial attitudes and behaviour, and combined with the structural variation of the marriageable population, may lead to increasingly fragile marital unions. Although various models and theories have been provided to interpret this surge of marital dissolution, scholars have not been able to reach a consensus. Due to the limitations of data (Li and Yang 2011; Gao et al. 2013), while the public and authorities tend to attribute the dissolution of marriage to the couples' materialism and irresponsible attitudes towards familial life, the intrinsic motivations behind this trend have not been fully understood. By utilising a set of consolidated data, it is expected that this study will provide some further explanations.

3.3 Spousal Matching and Solidarity of International Marriage

Existing studies have mainly focused on changes and variations of local marriage market while less attention has been paid to the regional interactions among different countries, as relevant data are not readily available (Tseng 2010). The common approach is to compare international marriages with domestic marriages, which often focus the deviations and inferiority of transnational relationships, such as low human capital, large age-gaps, language and cultural barriers, manipulative wives, and abusive husbands (Jin 2013; Kim 2013). Compared to local marriages, international unions are regarded as perpetually at risk of divorce, while potentially threatening the safety of a society and wellbeing of its citizens (D'Aoust 2013).

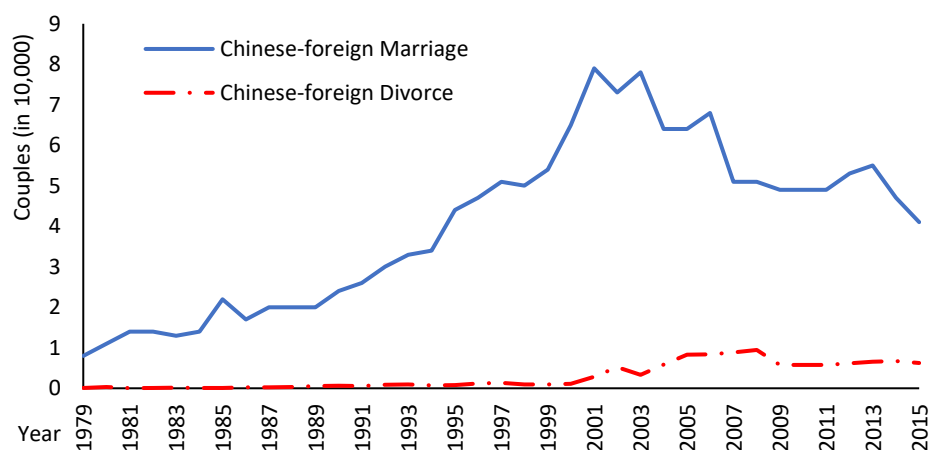
Main scholarly view tends to use a labour-marriage market approach to explain the formation of international marriages. Some scholars simply treat this kind of marriage as a specific type of migration (Piper 2003), while for scholars who focus on the cultural implication, the cultural linkages between ethnic

communities becomes the main motivation for the cross-national marital relationship (Berger and Hill 1998, Charsley 2011). In addition to the ongoing debates between “marriage for migration” and “migration for marriage”, researchers also believe that an exchange of relative advantages between spouses can be used to depict the mechanism of international marriage, even for cross-national ethnic communities. Combined with global socioeconomic and gender disparities, the structural imbalance of marriageable population has created a chain of hierarchical flow for global intimacy, as less-developed countries and areas became the “suppliers” of brides for lower class males in the developed world (Charsley 2011).

Some researchers argue that intra-Asian international marriage is a typical case of “reciprocal exchange” which aims for economic advantage and security to improve one’s socioeconomic status (Ding, Yang, Zhou, Zhou, Lin and Zhang 2004; Quan 2012; Kawaguchi and Lee 2017). Women use their youthfulness as a reward in exchange for men’s advantage of residency in a more developed country. Both parties are less educated, of low status, with limited human capital and socioeconomic resources, and thus cannot find or afford a suitable partner or attain such residency through their own efforts. Some radical studies conclude that international relationships, as exchange marriages, are an instrumental and immoral abuse of interpersonal union. They argue that the motivation of such marriage is not ultimate love and affection between individuals, but constitutes a calculation and manipulation of the sacred institution of marriage (Lin and Shen 2005; Quan 2012).

Researchers from Hong Kong use the “gradient rule” to explain the dramatic increase of cross-regional marriages between Hong Kong males and mainland Chinese females (Ma, Lin and Zhang 2010; Pong, Post, Ou and Fok 2014). The imbalanced sex-ratio among the population and economic disparities between the two regions from the 1960s to the 1980s are the main pull factors for this type of marriage. Although the sex-ratio has returned to normal since the 1990s, with Hong Kong females’ increasing educational achievement and labour force participation, the following decade has witnessed a reduction in their desire for marriage and decreasing involvement in the local marriage market, which has led to an imbalance of the marriageable population and a surge in cross-regional marriages between mainland females and low-achieving Hong Kong males since 2000. Research has expected that as China’s rapid process of modernisation will improve the overall income and living standard of its population, there will be fewer exchange marriages and more “real love” international relationships, especially in more developed areas

(Ding et al. 2004). In some less-developed rural ethnic communities located in mainland border areas, international marriage has become a common choice for local male residents (Zhang and Bao 2013; Wang 2015; Xiong and Yang 2016), which is reasoned to be connected with economic disparities and cultural similarities between countries/regions, the gradient matching and the out-migration of local females, and thus the shortage of marriageable female in local marriage market.



SOURCE: *China Social Statistical Yearbook*, 2016

Figure 3-3 Annual Number of Marriage and Divorces of Chinese-foreign Couples in Mainland China, 1979 to 2015

Under the framework of exchange, most of the research on international marriage in Asian also held an assumption that most of international marriages are doomed to fail as they are an abnormal relationships result from the opportunistic calculation. Transnational relationships are believed either to be built on intra-cultural similarities or to break down due to inter-cultural differences, where the cultures are imagined to be homogeneous. The relatively low levels of educational achievement, income, and social status, large age-gaps, and differences in marital histories and culture, and language barriers of both parties, are considered to reveal the natural defects in quality of international marriage (Kim 2015). It is also claimed in the existing studies that the formation or dissolution of international marriages is inevitably associated with the similarity or difference of cultures, without considering the socioeconomic and political context (Breger and Hill 1998). Due to differences in legal systems among different countries, the dissolution of a transnational relationship can face more obstacles. As a result, legal procedures are more often applied. In some cases foreign spouses could be deported even before the necessary paperwork for divorce is filed (Kim, Park, and Shukhertei 2017). To date, our knowledge about international marriage dissolution has largely been limited to the analysis of legal cases, retrospective interviews, and small-scale surveys. In China, existing studies on international marriage are focusing on the formation of the relationship, as well

as the quality of transnational marriage. Although scholars across Asia argue that mainland Chinese citizens' international marriages have a high risk of divorce (Yang and Lu 2010; Kim 2013), the annual number of international divorces maintain a relatively low level in mainland China (Figure 3-3).

This study aims to fill some major gaps in the current knowledge on the formation and dissolution of international marriage by providing a comprehensive analysis of the connections between individual human capital and their choices of marriage between international and domestic spouses, socioeconomic characteristics of spouses, and solidarity of these two types of marriage. This study uses a unique set of consolidated data and applied regression models to capture the dynamics of China's domestic and international marriages in the period of 2010 to 2014 when China was experiencing rapid economic growth and profound social transformation. Although existing studies depict the overall pattern and trends of marriage in mainland China, detailed examination of the similarities and differences between domestic and international marriages has been far from adequate. This study will produce new knowledge in understanding changes in family and marriage dynamics in the contemporary China and its relationships with countries in Asia and elsewhere through international marriages.

3.4 Data

It is commonly accepted that research into international marriages is constrained by the availability and comparability of data. As this type of transnational relationship inevitably encounters at least two different political and legal institution systems, the government method of data collection might vary vastly, from basic definitions of a lawful marital relationship and the scope of background information to the focus and aim of data collection itself. It is even more difficult to collect international divorce records and information. Meanwhile, the majority of the research into international marriage or divorce has applied methods such as interviews or sample surveys (Ye 2010; Kim 2013), only a few of the studies have effectively utilised registration records (Ye and Lin 1996; Ding et al. 2004; Kim 2010; Liaw, Ochiai, and Ishikawa 2010; Ma et al. 2010; Gao et al. 2013; Jeffreys and Pan 2013; Pan 2014; Wang, Mi, and Wen 2016).

In mainland China, in addition to the annual statistic yearbooks⁴ of Ministry of Civil Affairs (MCA), marriage registration records from provincial Bureaus of Civil Affairs (BCAs) is the only source for international marriage data with basic demographic information on the couples.⁵ Records of divorce by agreement from provincial Bureaus of Civil Affairs and cases of litigious divorce from the courthouses are

the only two sources of international divorce data. However, the courthouse cases can only cover a small proportion of overall international divorce cases, in which the background information of the couple is not sufficiently collected and filed, thus cannot be used for further data analysis (Lin and Shen 2005).

The administrative records of marriage and divorce registration from the Bureaus contain statistics about general information for the husband and wife, in which the completeness and accuracy of the provided information is verified, and a digitised database of all Chinese-foreign marriages occurring in mainland China is constructed, as well as one of all divorce by agreement records. The Bureaus' marital database also include administrative records of Chinese-Chinese (domestic) marriage and divorce records, but the digitisation program for domestic marriage and divorce registration records is yet to be finalised; thus early marriage records are incomplete due to the high costs and work load for record inputting. In the Bureaus' database of the marriage and divorce registration records, the data is couple-matched, and includes basic demographic characteristics of wife and husband, and the start date of their marriage. The domestic marital record includes a category of hukou region⁶ and the international one includes a category of foreign spouse's citizenship, while the divorce record of both includes the end dates of a marriage, but lacks information for previous marital history.

There have been some debates about the issue of coverage of Civil Affairs' marriage registration records, compared to the census data, which also capture the number of couples who married below legal marriage age. The main source of data on marriage is marriage registration, which also has some limitations. Marriage registration is incomplete in capturing all marriages as some *de facto* couples would not register unless necessary, such as when registering a new born child, enrolling a child in school, applying for medical care, or receiving treatment in hospital that requires official status. The same coverage problem also exists among co-ethnic couples in international marriages in China, as has been confirmed by some researchers (Hao 2013; Zhang and Bao 2013; Wang 2016; Xiong and Yang 2016). But the transnational nature of this type of marriage has largely reduced the couples' autonomy on whether registration is carried out or not, since without the marriage registration procedure, it is unlikely the foreign partner would be able to have legal status and the right of abode. Nevertheless, registration records are the only available source for this type of marriage in mainland China, and the census⁷ does not contain any information regarding this matter. Thus, to achieve the objectives of this research, registration data will be used as main data source.

It should be pointed out that as marriage-related data in registration records are different from the Population Census, to maintain consistency, this study will centre on the data from registration records for both international and domestic marriages.

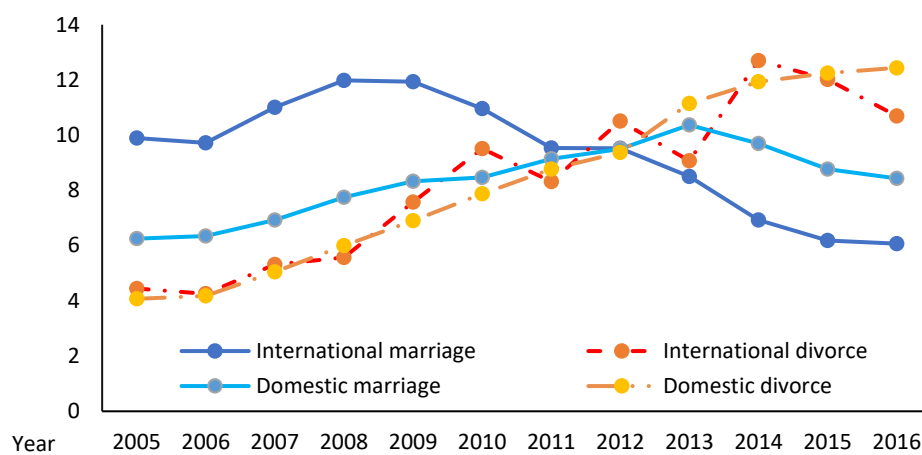
Data used in this study are from a provincial Marriage-Divorce Registration Record Database. After assessing the structure and availability of data, records between 2010 and 2014 are applied for model construction and estimation, while international marriage records between 2005 to 2009 are also applied to depict the general trends and patterns. This provincial registration record of marriage datasets contains annual registered marriage and divorce records for both international and domestic couples in this province X.⁸ It also contains a wealth of demographic variables, such as age at marriage, marriage history, educational attainment, occupation, countries of origin, and duration of marriage, which have not been utilised fully in the extant literature. Analysing this dataset can provide a better understanding of international marriage in the past decade. The main methods applied in this study are logit regression and survival analysis. The effect of demographic characteristics on individual's marriage choices, either choose an international or domestic spouse, is analysed by using logit regression model. Records of international and domestic divorce are pooled for the analysis of the timing, determinants, and differences of union dissolution. Detailed information on methods will be presented in a later section.

3.5 Empirical Results

3.5.1 Demographic Characteristics of International and Domestic Marriage

International marriage, with its inherited natural diversity, has always been considered as a result of different human behaviour and pursuit. Much of the existing research tends to focus on the similarities and differences between the two types of marriage, from demographic characteristics, cultural similarities, and diversities of spouses within global economic structures and socioeconomic inequality. Prior studies of international marriage in mainland China have provided information on general patterns and demographic characteristics of international marriage in metropolitan cities and remote border villages (Ye and Lin 1996; Ding et al. 2004; Quan 2012; Gao et al. 2013; Jeffreys and Pan 2013; Wan, Zhu, and Tang 2013; Zhang and Bao 2013; Pan 2014). But due to the limited access of China's international marriage data, most of extant studies focus on specific geospatial areas, such as Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and co-ethnic villages along border areas, while the study applies either registration records or interviews. However,

of existing studies into international marriages in mainland China that applied registration data to provide basic trends or demographic characteristics of this type of marriage, the majority focus on descriptive analysis. Moreover, the theoretical structure of these studies is largely restricted, and sometimes carries strong ethical judgment (Ye and Lin 1996; Jiang 1999; Ding et al. 2004; Lin and Shen 2006; Liaw et al. 2010; Quan 2012; Jin 2013; Kawaguchi and Lee 2017). As a result, these studies cannot touch upon the central concerns of international marriage, such as the similarities and differences, the solidarity of unions, and the characteristics of spousal matching. Although the depth of information in registration records is still limited, a more comprehensive technique and analysis can be achieved.



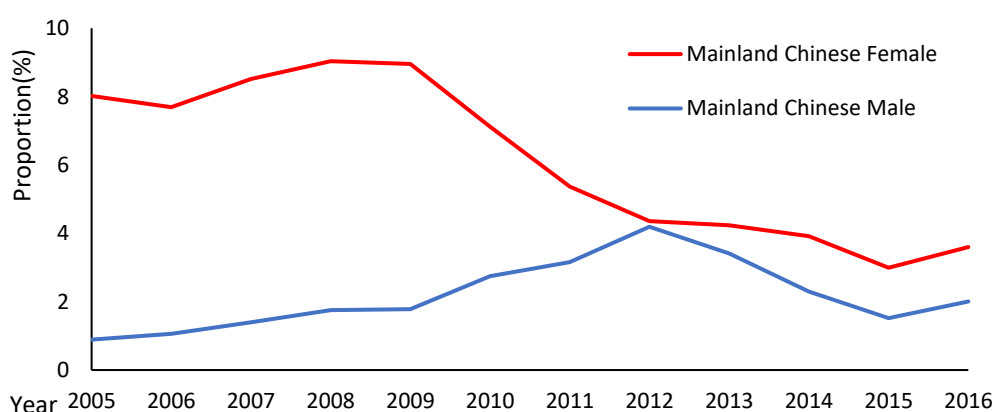
NOTES: In hopes of safeguarding the confidentiality and anonymity of married/divorced couples, the province X is not identified in this research. The number represents the annual percentage of marriage (or divorce) among the total numbers of marriages (or divorces) in a given year for 12 years. All numbers are based on the annual number of marriage registrations from the Bureau of Civil Affairs, which does not include de facto couples.

SOURCE: BCA provincial *Marriage-Divorce Registration Record Database*, 2005 to 2014.

Figure 3-4 Proportions of International Marriage and Divorce for Province X, 2005 to 2016

Based on the registration records of province X, a general trend of international and domestic marriage and divorce can be observed in Figure 3-4. It is obvious that from 2005 to 2016, the annual number of divorces for both international and domestic marriage has increased, while the number of international marriages has decreased since 2009. For domestic marriages, divorce rates firstly increased then gradually decreased after 2013, which is similar to the national trend for the annual number of domestic marriages. As the Ministry's report (2018) confirmed, the nation-wide crude rate of marriage has decreased continuously since 2013, while the crude rate of divorce has increased continuously since 2004. However, unlike the national trend of international marriages, which showed a sudden increase in 2012 and 2013 after 2007 (MCA 1979-2016), the annual number of international marriages in this province has decreased continuously since 2010.

Existing research discusses the gender differences in international marriage; most of this type of marriages happened between females from developing countries and males from developed areas (Jeffreys and Pan 2013; Pan 2014). In China's case, a similar gendered pattern also exists, but has also changed during recent years. It is commonly accepted that the majority of the mainland Chinese citizens who married internationally are female. According to the Ministry's yearbook (1979-2016), from 1979 to 1999, 90 percent of international marriages registered in mainland China are mainland Chinese females married to foreigners or residents from Taiwan or Special Administrative Regions. During 2000 to 2009, the annual number of registered mainland Chinese male international marriages increased, while the number of mainland Chinese females decreased continuously. Since 2010, more than 25 percent of international marriages are mainland Chinese men married to foreign spouses, and there has also been another sudden increase of mainland Chinese male international marriage. The decrease in the number of international marriages since 2009 is mainly due to the decrease in mainland Chinese female international marriages, but this is slowed by a fluctuating increase in mainland Chinese male international marriages. Some research argues that mainland Chinese males in border areas or less-developed villages marrying internationally has led to the sudden increase in the annual number of international marriages. In province X (Figure 3-5), the same trend can be observed. However, after 2012, the annual number of mainland Chinese male international marriages has decreased, along with mainland Chinese female international marriages.



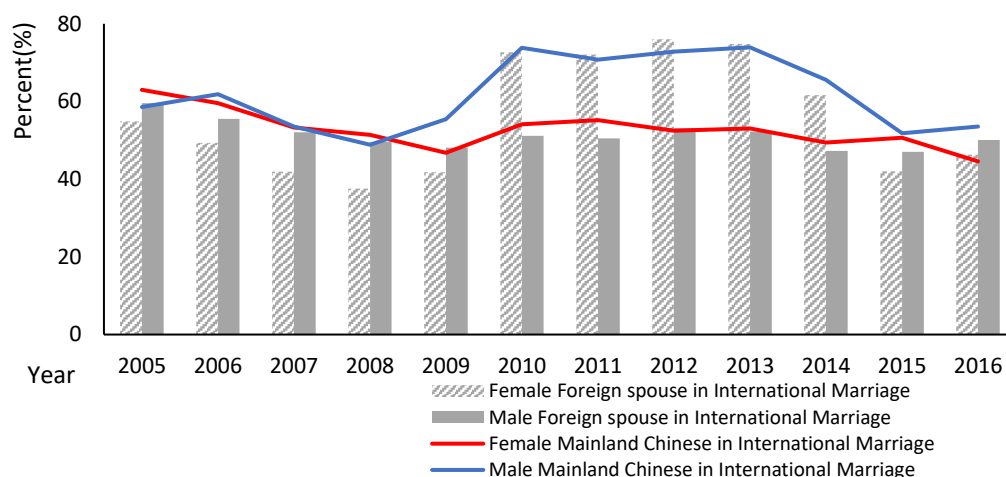
SOURCE: BCA provincial *Marriage-Divorce Registration Record Database*, 2005 to 2014.

Figure 3-5 Proportions of Mainland Chinese Citizens in International Marriages for Province X by Gender, 2005 to 2016

Much existing research also argues that the majority of international marriages between mainland Chinese females and foreigners share a pattern of high possibility of remarriage, in which a larger percentage of international married individuals have been previously married, compared to domestic married couples in mainland China (Ding et al. 2004; Quan 2012; Gao et al. 2013). Since the Ministry's statistic data does not

provide this type of information for international marriage in mainland China, the general pattern of marriage history cannot be depicted on the national level. According to Gao et al. (2013), from 2004 to 2011, the percentage of remarried mainland Chinese citizens in international marriages is similar for both genders, that is, two times their domestic counterpart, while the percentage of remarried foreign males is the highest (37 to 42 percent) of all.

Based on the provincial registration dataset applied in this study, couples' marriage status at registration date can be observed in Figure 3-6. The provincial data clearly demonstrates gender differences in individual marriage histories in international marriages from 2005 to 2016. From 2005 to 2009 and 2015 to 2016, male foreign spouses were more likely to have been married previously than female foreign spouses, but there has been a larger percentage of previously married mainland Chinese males and females who married internationally. The marriage status is also likely to be matched between mainland Chinese citizens and their foreign spouses.



SOURCE: BCA provincial *Marriage-Divorce Registration Record Database*, 2005 to 2014.

Figure 3-6 Percent of First Marriage in International Marriages for Province X by Gender and Residency, 2005 to 2016

The gender differences among mainland Chinese citizens in international marriages from 2010 to 2014 is obvious. Mainland Chinese females are more likely to have been married previously before their registration of international marriage and their foreign spouses are also more likely to have married previously, which is consistent with the trend from 2005 to 2009 and 2015 to 2016. However, from 2010 to 2014, mainland Chinese males have been closer to their counterparts in domestic marriages, and their foreign spouses have also been closer to mainland Chinese females in domestic marriages (Table 3-1). It is clear that since 2005, the percentage of remarried mainland Chinese females and their foreign spouses in

international marriages are rather consistent. Yet, there has been a sudden peak of mainland Chinese males in international marriages (first marriage) during 2010 to 2014, it also elevated the annual percentage of foreign females in international marriage (first marriage) respectively.

Table 3-1 Percentage of First Marriage and Remarriage by Gender and Marriage Type, 2009 to 2014

	Year	Female			Male		
		Foreign spouse in IM	Mainland Chinese in IM	Domestic Marriage	Foreign spouse in IM	Mainland Chinese in IM	Domestic Marriage
First Marriage	2009	41.75	46.83	-	48.09	55.42	-
	2010	72.68	54.12	78.22	51.13	73.84	79.12
	2011	72.09	55.19	77.93	50.54	70.79	78.66
	2012	76.06	52.47	77.54	53.17	72.84	78.47
	2013	74.84	53.05	75.65	52.19	73.93	77.03
	2014	61.64	49.44	71.74	47.27	65.61	73.59
Remarriage	2009	58.25	53.17	-	51.91	44.58	-
	2010	27.32	45.88	21.78	48.87	26.16	20.88
	2011	27.91	44.81	22.07	49.46	29.21	21.34
	2012	23.94	47.53	22.46	46.83	27.16	21.53
	2013	25.16	46.95	24.35	41.81	26.07	22.97
	2014	38.36	50.56	28.26	52.73	34.39	26.41

NOTE: It is not possible to calculate the provincial percentage of first marriage and remarriage in domestic marriage before 2010 and after 2014. Since census, the Ministry's yearbook and report, and other statistical yearbooks have not provided such detailed information. Also, provincial digitalisation of hardcopy marriage registration records is not finished, thus the database does not contain all domestic marriages before 2009 and might be biased. And the records after 2014 were not available for this research. However, based on existing studies and general trends of domestic marriage in mainland China, the distribution of marriage history between genders is likely to be consistent with the data applied in this table.

SOURCE: BCA provincial *Marriage-Divorce Registration Record Database*, 2010 to 2014.

Compared to couples in domestic marriage (Table 3-1), it is obvious that there is a higher possibility of remarriage among couples in international marriage. But from 2010 to 2014, the percentage of first-time married mainland Chinese males and foreign females in international marriage increased abruptly to 70 percent, almost like their domestic counterpart. This might indicate that there has been an unexpected surge of never-married mainland Chinese males in the international marriage market. Compared to the proportion of annual numbers of mainland Chinese males and females in international marriage (Figure 3-5), for the former, the increase in proportions are consistent with the increase in first marriages, while for the latter are consistent with the increase in remarriage. Although, since 2004, the obstruction to freedom of divorce has been lifted, divorce is still being considered a defect for mainland Chinese females (Xu 2012; Peng 2015). According to the long form sampling data of 6th Census (2010), the grand sex ratio of the marriageable population (those not currently in marriage relationships) from age 20 to 44 is higher than 200. This suggests that among those who are not in marriage relationships, males are outnumber females by roughly 50%, which are resulted from the cumulative effects from high sex ratio at birth (Jiang et al. 2005; Jiang and Li 2009; Jin et al. 2013; Cai 2014) in the previous decades. International marriage can be

a bridge of empowerment for mainland Chinese females, while also being a method for mainland Chinese males to reduce the pressure of the marriage squeeze.

Since previously married individuals on average are naturally older than their never married counterparts in domestic marriage, with a higher possibility of remarriage among international married couples, it is likely that for individuals who married internationally, their age at marriage are higher than that of their counterparts in the domestic scene. Prior study provides similar interpretations. Table 3-2 depicts the average age at first marriage for both international and domestic marriages during 2010 to 2014.

According to Gao et al. (2013), mainland Chinese males' and females' average age at first marriage in international marriage in Beijing are higher than that of their counterparts in domestic marriages. Based on the provincial data applied in this study, the result is different during 2010 to 2014. Both international married mainland Chinese males and females have a relatively lower average age at first marriage, compared to domestic married males and females. Meanwhile, overseas Chinese sojourners have the lowest average age at first marriage, while foreigners have the highest. Females from foreign countries also have a relatively lower average age at first marriage.

Table 3-2 Average Age at First Marriage by Residency, 2010 to 2014

	Year	Domestic Marriage	International Marriage				
			Mainland	Overseas Sojourn	Hong Kong and Macao	Taiwan	Foreign Countries
Male	2010	30.60	28.16	25.88	40.67	36.43	41.30
	2011	30.87	29.48	24.80	38.77	35.83	40.71
	2012	30.80	28.88	27.24	37.67	37.95	40.62
	2013	30.56	29.39	25.24	33.55	36.99	40.35
	2014	30.51	29.76	26.77	46.00	37.11	39.26
Female*	2010	28.50	27.09	23.50	37.00	30.80	23.62
	2011	28.99	27.33	22.60	37.50	38.00	24.35
	2012	28.39	27.92	24.22	-	35.22	24.32
	2013	29.02	28.21	26.37	37.00	30.17	25.13
	2014	29.13	28.98	24.37	37.80	33.11	26.28

NOTE: Calculated based on the Bureau's registration database. *The average age at first marriage of Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan female residents are limited by the number of cases, which results in a large fluctuation between years.

SOURCE: BCA provincial *Marriage-Divorce Registration Record Database*, 2010 to 2014.

Further calculation of average age at first marriage by different residency in international marriages (2005 to 2009, 2015 and 2016) also revealed that the age pattern of first marriages is consistent from 2005 to 2016 for overseas Chinese sojourners, Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan residents. For mainland Chinese females in international marriage, the average age at first marriage increased from 25 to 29, while for mainland

Chinese males it increased from 26 to 29. For male foreigners, the average age at first marriage dropped from 41 to 39, while for female foreigners, including the sudden decrease during 2010 to 2014, the average age was maintained at 27 to 28. Combining the result from marriage status, average age at first marriage, and the annual number of international marriages by gender, it appears that during 2010 to 2014, there has been a surge of first-married mainland Chinese males aged 28 to 29 who married with younger foreign female. Figure 3-1 shows that 2010 to 2014 saw the second peak of marriage in mainland China, which also echoed the country's second birth peak in the 1980s. It is also clear that during this period, the percentage of first marriage males and females also increased in domestic marriages. The relationship between the marriageable population in the local marriage market and the incidence of regional international marriage has also been tested in previous studies, and the data from provincial registration records corroborates these findings.

Gao et al. (2013) demonstrate that the relatively high average age at marriage for male foreigners (39 to 40) in Beijing is likely to be the result of the high percentage of remarriages, which is not supported by this provincial record. Taking the overall average age at marriage into consideration, if the marriage status at registration is not take into account, then the provincial data gives a comparable result to that presented by Gao et al. (2013). On average, the age at marriage of mainland Chinese female gradually changed from 29 to 34 from 2005 to 2016, while mainland Chinese males' age increased from 32 to 35 (except 2010 to 2014). For overseas Chinese sojourner males, age at marriage increased from 32 to 36, while females changed from 29 to 36. The average age at marriage of male foreigners increased from 44 to 46. But for female foreigners, including the sudden drop during 2010 to 2014, the average age at marriage increased from 33 to 35 during 2005 to 2009, then dropped to 31 in 2016. Gao et al. (2013) high-lighted that on average, the age difference between mainland Chinese citizens and residents from other countries and areas has decreased continuously in Beijing, which they believe might mark the change of spousal homogenous matching on age at marriage. However, the provincial records show that if we take marriage status into consideration, the internal differences in international marriage is still obvious.

The age-gap between couples is believed to have significant impact on the quality of marriage, especially for the solidarity of international marriage (Ding et al. 2004; Quan 2012; Gao et al. 2013; Kim 2013). Ding et al. (2004) applied the marriage registration records from Shanghai in 2002 to present the "abnormally

large gap” of average age at marriage between mainland Chinese females and their foreign spouses. He concludes that this proves that residents from other countries and areas holds an advantage in their social status and country of origin, and mainland Chinese females in Shanghai used their youth in exchange for higher socioeconomic status and exotic foreign life. According to Kim (2013), the majority of international married mainland Chinese citizens and South Korean citizens share a large gap of age at marriage compared to domestic couples of South Korea; on average the Korean husbands are seven to nine years older than their Chinese wives. More than 80 percent of Korean husbands are five years older than their foreign wives, while for domestic married couples in South Korea, this number is only 21 percent. It is believed that this above average age-gap is due to the marriage squeeze in South Korea; male Koreans have to postpone their marriage and marry foreigners, as there are a large number of surplus males in the marriage market. Although Kim (2013) hypothesises that the large age-gap within international married couples is highly related to the dissolution of international marriage, his empirical analysis does not support this assumption.

Table 3-3 provides a comparison of age-gaps between husband and wife among different types of marriage and sources of data. The calculation of age-gap within couples is based on the category of age pattern of domestic marriage in mainland China: if the husband’s age at marriage is one year younger to four years older than the wife’s ($4 \geq \text{husband's age} - \text{wife's age} \geq -1$), their age-gap is categorized as equal (husband=wife); if husband’s age at marriage is five or more years older than the wife’s (husband’s age – wife’s age > 4), their age-gap were categorised as the husband’s age being larger than the wife’s (husband>wife); if the husband’s age at marriage is two or more years younger than the wife’s (husband’s age – wife’s age < -1), their age-gap is categorised as the husband’s age being less than the wife’s (husband<wife).

Table 3-3 Age-gap between Husband and Wife by Type of Marriage

	Domestic Marriage	International Marriage	1990	CWSS 2000	2010	1% population sampling survey
Husband>Wife	61.6	65.49	69.8	67.7	67.9	67.0
Husband=Wife	15.5	25.72	16.4	16.7	16.9	15.4
Husband<Wife	22.8	8.79	13.8	15.6	15.2	17.7

NOTE: The age-gap of international marriage is calculated from 2005 to 2016, while domestic marriage is calculated from 2010 to 2014. Age-gaps were categorised to three interval, $(-\infty, -1)$, $[-1, 4]$, and $(4, \infty)$. The results from CWSS and population survey are national-wide overall distribution of age-gap within couples. Raw data was applied from all sources without being weighted. SOURCE: BCA provincial *Marriage-Divorce Registration Record Database*, 2005 to 2016; *Chinese Women's Status Survey*, 1990, 2000 and 2010; 1% *Population Sampling Survey*, 2005.

It is clear that on average, couples in international marriage are not more likely to have a larger age-gap than their domestic counterparts. In fact, further calculation on age-gap of couples in international marriage from 2005 to 2016 revealed that before 2008, more than 70 percent of the husbands were at least five years older than the wife; from 2010 to 2016 the percentage dropped from 67 to 50, along with a continuously increased percentage of husband and wife matched homogenously on age at marriage. The group with “husband at least five years older than the wife” in international married couples was further divided into two subgroups: husband five to nine years older than wife and husband at least ten years older than wife. The results show that before 2010, more than 50 percent of husbands were at least ten years older than their wives; the percentage dropped continuously to 33 percent in 2016, which might also indicate the changing patterns of spousal matching in recent years.

Industrialisation and globalisation have integrated societies around the world into one inter-connected economic and politic systems, in which the global movement of labour has a profound impact on local educational and employment systems and practices. This shift is contributing to the global uniformity of national educational systems (Spring 2008). Much of the existing research on international marriage tends to address the importance of individual educational attainment. Since, historically speaking, international marriages relate to international movements of human capital or treated as nothing but international migration (Piper 2003), it is natural that the existing research pays much attention to the characteristics of educational attainment within couples in international marriage. Meanwhile, from the perspective of marriage and family studies, educational attainment, and the similarities and differences between spouses, are important to the formation and dissolution of interpersonal relationships, especially among different racial or ethnic groups. Individuals tend to match on their educational attainment as homogamous marriage is the main form of spousal selection (Raymo and Xie 2000; Li 2008). Yet, individual educational attainment as a self-achieved factor can also break barriers among different social classes, which in turn makes intermarriage possible (Davis 1941; Merton 1941; Fu 2001; Gullickson 2006).

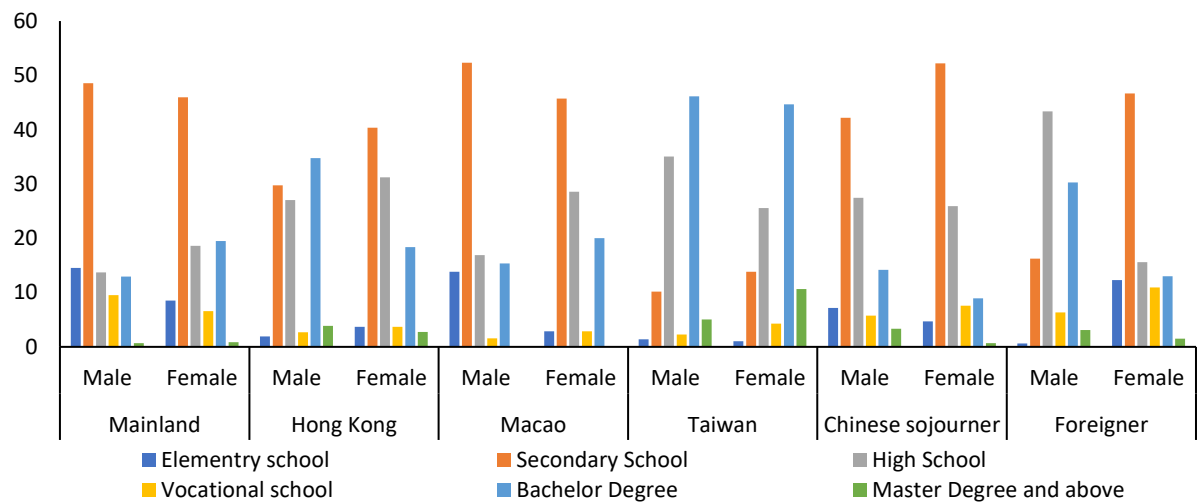
In the research area of international marriage, educational attainment is believed to significantly affect spousal selection in transnational marital networks. Studies show that individual educational attainment can be both an advantage and a shortcoming in the international marriage market, and it is also highly gendered (Breger and Hill 1998; Constable 2004; Farrer 2008). The commonly accepted hypothesis is that

international marriage is a type of status exchange marriage, in which individuals from less-developed areas seek for upward socioeconomic mobility through marriage. Some of the research argues that individuals (mostly female) from developing countries trade their youthfulness or physical attractiveness for the trait they lack: higher socioeconomic origin, higher level of income, or social mobility (Ye and Lin 1996; Ding et al. 2004; Lin and Shen 2006; Kim 2010; Quan 2012; Kim 2013; Kim 2015). It is commonly believed that individuals (mostly male) from more developed areas have to seek their spouses outside the conventional local marriage market due to their relatively low social status in their home countries. As with cross-race intermarriage research, existing studies argue that in a transnational marriage market, the party with the preferred country of origin is likely to be disadvantaged in human capital and resource compared to their domestic counterparts. With local females' homogamous or upward spousal selection, a vacuum of marriageable females arises for the male, creating the need for international marriage. As a result, there will be two types of heterogenous pairs in spouses' human capital: underprivileged men with below-average socioeconomic status from developed regions marrying to underprivileged women with high human capital from less-developed regions; or underprivileged men with below-average socioeconomic status from developed regions marrying to underprivileged, young, and attractive women with low human capital from less-developed regions.

Scholar have not reached an agreement on the pattern of spousal matching of socioeconomic status in international marriage. Some of the research provides support for the first type of heterogenous matching (Breger and Hill 1998; Yamanaka and Piper 2005); some emphasise the generality of the second one (Ye and Lin 1996; Ding et al. 2004; Lin and Shen 2006; Liaw et al. 2010; Quan 2012; Kim 2013); while others cast doubt on the research paradigm of status exchange (Constable 2004; Farrer 2008). Studies based on South Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, and Taiwan argue that marriage between their residents and mainland Chinese citizens belongs to the second type of heterogenous pair (Nakazawa 1996; Saihanjuna 2007; Liaw et al. 2010; Kim 2013; Kawaguchi and Lee 2017).

Research on international marriage in mainland China is inconclusive as it is limited by the availability of data. Existing research tends to focus on specific cases, such as cross-border marriage between co-ethnic groups from rural areas of Jilin, Neimenggu, Yunan, and Guangxi or Korea, Mongolia, Vietnam, and Myanmar (Hao 2013; Zhang and Bao 2013; Zhong 2013; Wang 2015; Huang and He 2016), in which the

spouses are both considered to be lower class in their home countries. Meanwhile, in the research about metropolitan areas or more developed regions, some studies provide a sketch of the social origin of international married couples; though the data is largely limited, the majority of these studies argue that in international marriage, the mainland Chinese citizens' social origin and economic status are below average for both male and female (Ye and Lin 1996; Ding et al. 2004; Lin and Shen 2006; Quan 2012; Jin 2013; Pan 2014). However, Farrer (2008; 2013) and Gao et al. (2013) both point out that in Shanghai and Beijing, the educational attainment of Chinese men and women in international marriage is relatively equal or even higher than their domestic counterparts.

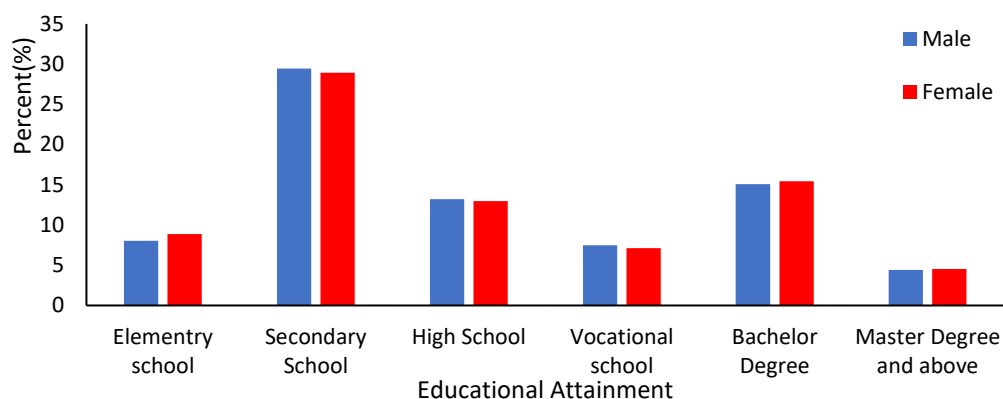


NOTE: The educational attainment is self-reported by individuals and categorised by the Bureau, which means that the foreign spouse's educational attainment was converted to the six-category based on mainland China's standards. Unfortunately, individual's year of education is not available in this dataset; the results show the degree attained rather than years of education. SOURCE: BCA provincial *Marriage-Divorce Registration Record Database*, 2005 to 2014.

Figure 3-7 Distributions of Educational Attainment in International Marriage for Province X by Gender and Residency, 2005 to 2016

From the provincial Bureau's database, the educational attainment of international married couples can be observed in Figure 3-7. Among all types of residency in international marriage, the residents of Taiwan have a high percentage of higher education levels, while women from Taiwan have the highest educational attainment. A similar pattern can be observed in Taiwan's marriage registration records of mainland Chinese-Taiwanese marriages; male foreigners also have a high percentage of higher education levels. Residents from Hong Kong and Macao also holds a high percentage of higher education levels, but the educational attainment of males from Macao show a relatively high percentage of primary and secondary school education. Compared to mainland Chinese males in international marriage, in general, the educational attainment of mainland Chinese females is clustered around secondary/high school and university levels, and the percentage of higher education levels is relatively low among mainland Chinese

males. Female foreigners' pattern of educational attainment is also similar with mainland Chinese males. Overseas sojourner Chinese females also have a low percentage of higher education. Compared to the general pattern of educational attainment among domestic marriages in mainland China (Figure 3-8), the similarity of the pattern between overseas Chinese sojourners and individuals in domestic marriage is obvious. The results cast doubt on the hypothesis of two types of status exchange.



SOURCE: BCA provincial *Marriage-Divorce Registration Record Database*, 2010 to 2014.

Figure 3-8 Distributions of Educational Attainment in Domestic Marriage for Province X by Gender, 2010 to 2014

Detailed analysis on the registration dataset enhanced our understanding of international marriage and its domestic counterpart, yet it also led to more questions regarding conventional assumptions and hypotheses of international marriage in mainland China. To provide a more comprehensive analysis of marriage choice and solidarity while also putting the hypothesis to test, further study is conducted through different modelling methods.

3.5.2 Statistical Methods

The annual numbers of marriage registration in province X are more than 300,000 domestic couples and less than 3000 international couples, while the numbers of divorce are below 200,000 and even less for international ones. Responding to this data structure, random sampling was applied to construct a pooled dataset of both international and domestic marriages (Table 3-4).

According to Allison (2012), the disproportionate stratified random sampling on the dependent variables will not generate biased estimates for coefficients of maximum likelihood estimation. The slope coefficients are not biased by disproportionate random sampling, but the intercept does change under such sampling schemes. Thus, full marital records for all Chinese-foreign marriage couples and 1% random selected sample of the Chinese-Chinese marriage couples were pooled to construct a choice-based dataset of Chinese

citizens' marital outcomes between 2010 and 2014.⁹ In total, 22,412 couples and 33,606 mainland Chinese citizens were included in the logit analysis. Gender and age are used as control variables; other variables represent the effect of occupation, education, ethnicity, registration period, and marriage history.

Table 3-4 Descriptive Means and Proportions for Variables in the Analysis

Variable		Sample	Population
Gender	Male	50	50
	Female	50	50
Average Age at marriage(year)		34.05	33.78
Marital choice	Domestic	50	99.9
	International	50	0.1
Marriage year	2010	24.17	17.95
	2011	20.88	19.38
	2012	20.97	20.14
	2013	18.76	21.97
	2014	15.22	20.56
Marriage history	Never married	70	71.74
	Divorced	28	26
	Widowed	2	2.26
Education achievement	Primary school	7.86	7.31
	Secondary school	39.5	38.1
	High school	15.26	15.28
	Vocational school	11.7	12.2
	College and uni.	20.57	19.82
	Graduate school	4.05	4.48
Residency*	Mainland	74.96	-
	Overseas sojourn	3.65	-
	Hong Kong	0.34	-
	Taiwan	2.08	-
	Macao	0.13	-
	Foreign countries and areas	18.84	-

NOTE: Percentage. Population data of MCA's registration record have been adjusted due to a small amount of systematic errors and missing cases; however, the final structure of data did not change, and the distribution of key variables remains the same. The distribution of residency is not reported, as compared to the large numbers of the domestic married mainland Chinese population, the proportion of foreign residents will be extremely low.

SOURCE: BCA provincial *Marriage-Divorce Registration Record Database*, 2010 to 2014.

The outcome of marriage is coded as an underordered binary choice, in which the value 0 denotes domestic marriage while 1 equals international marriage, and the case observations with 1s ($Y = 1$) is equal to the control observations with zeros ($Y = 0$). A logit model is applied to analyse the odds ratios of probable outcome of a marital choice π_{ij} , such that

$$\text{logit}(\pi_{ij}) = X_i\beta + \eta_{ij} \quad (3.1)$$

where X_i denotes a set of vectors of independent variables. Following the exchange theory in existing research into international marriage, certain assumptions can be made. Based on this scheme, an

individual's marital choice aims to maximise the utility of their marriage. However, the maximisation might encounter errors, as not all the factors influencing marital behaviour can be predicted, observed, or controlled as the interaction between individual characteristics and marital choice cannot be perfectly predicted. Meanwhile, the case-controlled sampling will yield unbiased coefficient estimation for independent variables, but the intercept still needs adjustment (Allison 2012). Thus, to avoid possible violation of three primary limitations of the logit model (Train 2009) and test the soundness of the model, a random-utility model is also applied. The results should be robust in both models. A general model (McFadden 1974; Maddala 1983; McFadden and Train 2000) is specified as

$$U_{ij} = X_i\beta_j + \varepsilon_{ij} \quad (3.2)$$

where X_i denotes the case-specific and alternative-invariant characteristics of individual i , β_j represents the coefficients on the odds of choices, and U_{ij} stands for the value of the j -th choice to the i -th individual. ε_{ij} concludes the latent vectors that might affect marital choices, which follow a type I Gumbel distribution.

To investigate the hazard of marriage dissolution, survival analysis is applied. Although the existing research into divorce and union dissolution points out that there is a possible inverted U shape relationship between the hazard of divorce and duration of marriage, it was mainly based on research from western societies (Diekmann and Mitter 1984; Andersson 1997; Lyngstad 2004); while research into China's divorce patterns has provided inconclusive results. The survival function for international marriages and domestic marriages in mainland China still needs to be estimated. Although existing studies also argues about the potential influences of differences on age at marriage and educational attainment might have on the quality of marriage, the relationships are not sufficiently studied, especially for comparison between international and domestic marriages. This study treats international marriage as mutually exclusive marriage choices for mainland Chinese citizens, and the analysis of marriage dissolution is also based on an integrated dataset of both types of marriage. By merging the marriage and divorce record of international and domestic marriage into one dataset, this study aims to depict the connection between human capital and marriage duration.

Since the bureau's record contains all divorce by agreement cases in mainland China, the Kaplan-Meier product-limit method is applied to estimate the nonparametric survival function for both types of marriage respectively. Demographic characters of the couples provided by the BCA are age, gender, educational

background, and occupation; and these predictors are not time-variant. Because the divorce records also provides precise information on the dates of marriage and divorce, the length of marriage is measured in days, while the window of observation is from January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2014. However, international marriage has only been publicly recognised and recorded by the country since 1979; thus the longest duration of Chinese-foreign marriages in mainland China is limited compared to domestic marriages, and the sample of domestic marriages was adjusted accordingly. It is also noted that due to the limitation of dataset, the marriage and divorce records of domestic couples and international couples before and after the window of observation are not available in the data which is applied for survival analysis. Meanwhile, the longest duration of each type of marriage (continuing without divorce) during this window is five years. Therefore, although half of the marriage in this data is right-censored, the observed divorce cases for both types of marriage during the five year are depleted fully, which means the survival functions are expected to equal to zero at the end of the observation. Cox's proportional hazard model can be applied to measure potential covariances between individual characteristics and dissolution of a marriage without specifying the hazard function, such that

$$\lambda(t|X_i) = \lambda_0(t)\exp(X_i\beta) \quad (3.3)$$

where the β is the vector of unknown parameters and X_i denotes individual characters, while $\lambda_0(t)$ is an unknown function of basic hazard given the condition that X_i equals to 0. It is noted that the dataset does not include all marriage and divorce cases, as not all marriages will fall apart when data collection ends; and some inter-provincial married couples might get married or divorced in another province, while some international couples might get married or divorced outside mainland China. Thus, not all marriage and divorce can be traced by this dataset, and this might cause problems of censoring; yet since no conclusive analysis can be applied to determine the type of censoring, it is treated as noninformative.

The issue of missing detailed information on occupation raises the issue of missing data. The majority of the predictors have a relatively low level of missing information, usually less than two percent, while for occupation at marriage, the information was not sufficiently stratified. Although the detailed information on occupation was recorded during the registration process, the online database only provides classification of eight types of occupation, according to China's GB standards. Some occupation information was missing

due to the computerisation process,¹⁰ and these cases were set aside with sensitivity analyses by refitting models with samples with complete information on the predictors.

Additionally, China's general reform and changes in marital behaviour are key variants, which might influence individual choice of divorce. Since the new marriage law (Palmer 2007) in mainland China was putted into effect in 1981 and further judicial interpretations were applied in 2001, 2004, and 2011, these years marked the cutting points of Chinese marriage and divorce behavioural changes. Since major economic reformation and globalisation has happened during the following decades, the period is also used as a dummy variable to control the time varying covariants in the analysis of divorce.

3.5.3 Marriage Choices and Solidarity of Union

With the aim of providing a more comprehensive understanding of the interaction between human capital and international/domestic marital choice, this study applies a number of statistic models to analyse the relationship between demographic characteristics, similarities and differences, and the formation and dissolution of international and domestic marriages in mainland China. A zero-order correlation coefficient was applied to reveal the possible relationships between the variables, showing that age, gender, marital history, educational attainment, occupation, and ethnicity, are significantly related to individuals' marriage choices and the duration of both types of marriage.

In the logit regression model, a sample of 44,824 individuals' marriage choices are analysed, in which the observations only contain mainland Chinese citizens. For each observation, the marital choice is a discrete alternatives choice between domestic marriage and international marriage. Thus, the estimations examined and predicted the correlation between individual characteristics and marital choices between marrying domestically or internationally.

Scholarly views commonly accept the fact that age at marriage has critical effects on individual choice of marriage in China. The model starts with linear and quadratic effects of individual age at marriage, which shows an inverted U shape curve relationship between individual age at marriage and marriage choices between international and domestic marriage. The results show that in mainland China, individual choice of marriage is significantly related to age at marriage. Compared to individuals who choose to marry a domestic partner, the possibility of marrying internationally will increase, then decrease for both genders if the individual's age at marriage increases, while for female this effect will be more powerful (Model 2).

Although more variables are added through model 2 to model 6 to test and control the effect of individual socioeconomic status, the effect of age at marriage is still significantly correlated with individual marriage choice.

Table 3-5 Maximum Likelihood Estimation Coefficients for Predictors of Marriage Choice of Mainland Chinese Citizens

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Marriage age	0.349*** (33.47)	0.366*** (34.51)	0.275*** (24.86)	0.302*** (26.63)	0.220*** (3.87)	0.220*** (3.87)
Age square	-0.005*** (33.34)	-0.005*** (34.23)	-0.004*** (26.89)	-0.004*** (28.48)	-0.003*** (4.09)	-0.003*** (4.09)
Gender (ref=male)		0.514*** (21.29)	0.409*** (16.51)	0.463*** (18.26)	0.541*** (4.10)	0.541*** (4.10)
Marital history (ref=never married)						
Divorced			0.910*** (29.26)	0.836*** (26.18)	1.176*** (7.81)	1.176*** (7.81)
Widowed			1.220*** (13.77)	1.081*** (11.93)	1.558*** (4.67)	1.558*** (4.67)
Education (ref=Primary school)						
Secondary school				-0.530*** (12.02)	-0.699*** (3.40)	-0.699*** (3.40)
High school				-0.764*** (14.51)	-0.666*** (2.62)	-0.666*** (2.62)
Vocational school				-0.218*** (4.15)	-0.897*** (3.32)	-0.897*** (3.32)
College and undergraduate				-1.008*** (20.30)	-0.433 (1.58)	-0.433 (1.58)
Postgraduate				-2.270*** (22.00)	-1.974*** (3.09)	-1.974*** (3.09)
Occupation (ref= Farming, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery)						
Production and transportation					-0.199 (0.52)	-0.199 (0.52)
Commerce and service					1.633*** (9.75)	1.633*** (9.75)
Professional/Technical					-0.199 (0.47)	-0.199 (0.47)
Staffs in offices					-1.315*** (4.64)	-1.315*** (4.64)
Military personal					-0.299 (0.29)	-0.299 (0.29)
Administrators					-0.612** (2.32)	-0.612** (2.32)
Constant	-6.49*** (36.62)	-7.058*** (38.94)	-5.426*** (28.67)	-5.291*** (27.19)	-7.385*** (7.51)	-7.997*** (7.85)
N	33,590	33,590	33,446	33,395	13,908	27,816

NOTES: (1)–(5) Logit regression, (6) Mixed logit regression. ** denotes significance at 5% level; *** denotes significance at 1% level. The table reports coefficients of logit regression models and standard errors (in brackets).

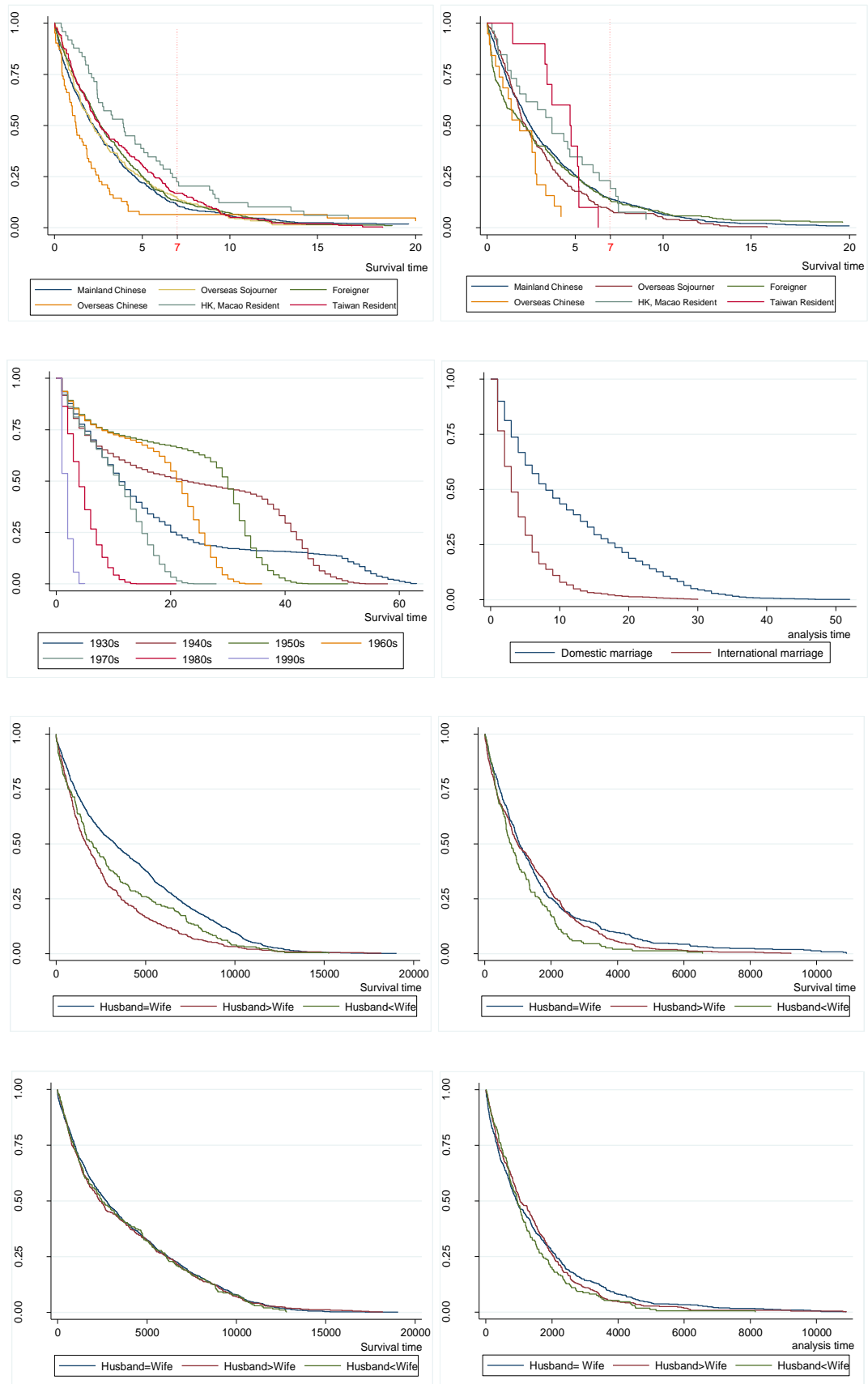
Source: BCA provincial *Marriage-Divorce Registration Record Database*, 2010 to 2014

In models 4, 5, and 6, individual educational attainment is added to examine its relationship with marriage choice between domestic and international marriage. It is obvious that compared to individuals who attained primary school education level, the possibility of choosing international marriage decreases when educational attainment increases. But compared to other types of educational attainment besides primary school education, individuals who attained vocational school education level have a higher possibility to choose international marriage. Once the effect of educational attainment is considered in model 4, the

correlation of age at marriage and gender also increased comparing to model 3. It is possible that for females who attained lower levels of education, the increase in their age at marriage increases the possibility of choosing international marriage.

Models 5 and 6 demonstrate the results of discrete choice and random utility models. As the effect of occupation is added into the model, the correlation between age at marriage and marriage choice decreases, but the correlation of gender and marriage history increases. After the effect of occupation is controlled, the possibility of individuals who attained college and undergraduate levels of to marry internationally shows no significant differences compared to individuals with primary school education. The possibility of choosing international marriage is not significantly different among farmers, production and transportation worker, professional or technical personnel. While holding other variables constant, individuals who engage in commerce and service industries have a higher possibility to marry internationally, while staffs in offices and administrators are less likely to be involved in international marriage. Most of these two types of occupations are “in-institution” jobs with political and material privileges, and high social status under the collective state system (Bian, Breiger, Davis, and Galaskiewicz 2005).

Some of the results are also consistent with prior discovery in this study and existing literature: while holding other socioeconomic vectors constant, mainland Chinese females are still more likely to choose international marriage than mainland Chinese males; and individuals with previous marriage history are more likely to marry internationally than individuals who never married before their marriage registration. Even though during 2010 to 2014 there has been a sudden surge of first marriage mainland Chinese males registered for international marriage, the correlations between marriage history and international marriage are still significant. However, there is no significant differences between the influence of primary school and university educational attainment on individual choice between domestic and international marriage, which is also different from conventional assumptions. This might indicate that both well-educated and poorly-educated individuals in mainland China are more likely to choose international marriage than their domestic counterparts. Individuals’ ethnicity¹¹ is another vector that may affect people’s choice of marriage, the zero-order correlations also indicate this. Ethnic identity is also controlled in the modelling process. The results show that cross-border co-ethnic groups have a significantly high possibility of international



Notes: a) Top-left, international (Chinese-foreign) divorce of male by residency, measured by years; b) Top-right, Chinese-foreign divorce of female by residency, measured by years; c) Second-left, domestic (mainland Chinese-Chinese) divorce by cohort, measured by years; d) Second-right, comparison of duration between international and domestic marriage, with weighted adjustment, measured by years; e) Third-left, domestic divorce by gap of age at marriage within spouses, measured by days; f) Third-right, international divorce by age-gap at marriage within spouses, measured by days; g) Bottom-left, domestic divorce by

gap in educational attainment within spouses, measured by days; h) Bottom-right, international divorce by gap in educational attainment within spouses, measured by days. Age-gaps were categorised to three interval, $(-\infty, -1)$, $[-1, 4]$, and $(4, \infty)$.

Source: *BCA provincial Marriage-Divorce Registration Record Database*, 2010 to 2014.

Figure 3-9 Kaplan-Meier Survival Estimate of Chinese-foreign and Chinese-Chinese Divorce

marriage comparing to the Han group, while other non-cross-border minority ethnic groups are not significantly different from the Han group in their choice of marriage.

Although the data here are selected on disproportionate sampling, the estimation results still provide similar possibilities of marriage choice compared to the population, in which, when all individual characteristics are controlled, 99.9 percent of individuals will choose to marry domestically. The estimation also shows that the choice-specific constants are highly significant. According to McFadden (1937), these constants capture the average effect of all unobserved variables; among these the most important vector might be the differences between household registration status, which unfortunately cannot be captured in this study due to limitations of data.

Figure 3-9 demonstrates the nonparametric survival curve estimated by the Kaplan-Meier method. Foreigners are divided into two groups: overseas Chinese with foreign citizenships, and other foreigners. The top two figures (3-9a and 3-9b) show the survival curve of international marriage by gender and residency, in which the similarities and differences are obvious. The survival curve of mainland Chinese males and male overseas Chinese sojourners are close to each other, while mainland Chinese females have a higher risk of divorce than female overseas Chinese sojourners. Male foreigners' survival curve is similar to that of male Taiwan residents', but their risk of divorce elevates after three years of marriage. Female foreigners have the highest risk of divorce within two years of marriage, while female Taiwan residents have the lowest risk among all females. But the observed numbers of divorce between mainland Chinese males and female Taiwan residents/overseas Chinese with foreign citizenships is relatively small; the survival curves may be inconclusive for these two groups. Different from conventional assumptions, marriage between residents from Hong Kong/Macao and mainland Chinese citizens has a lower risk of divorce for both genders, and marriage between overseas Chinese with foreign citizenships and mainland Chinese citizens has the highest risk of divorce. Log-rank tests also confirm that there are significant differences across strata of gender and residency. Compared with the analysis of divorce and marriage ratio at population level presented in Chapter 2 (Figure 2-6), the results from survival analysis here provides a more detailed analysis on the pattern of divorce and marriage using individual level data, which show

solidarity and dissolution of marriages over time (Figure 3-9). At population level, the divorce/marriage ratio could not provide detailed information on the solidarity of marriages, they only provide information on incidences of divorce to marriage in a given year. For example, the seemingly low divorce/marriage ratios for foreign-Chinese couples at population level have a clearly gendered pattern, which could be examined using duration of marriage data at individual level as discussed above.

In domestic marriages (3-9c), the 1950s and 1960s birth cohorts have the lowest risk of divorce within 20 years after marriage, while the 1980s and 1990s birth cohorts have the highest risk of divorce. However, since the longest duration of marriage for 1980s and 1990s birth cohorts is fourteen years in 2014, the results for both cohorts are inconclusive. But the results are similar to those from existing research. The 1930s birth cohort has higher risk of divorce comparing to the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s cohorts. It is possible that the duration of marriage for the 1930s cohort was affected by major historical events, since similar patterns can be observed in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s cohorts. In addition, overall in domestic marriages, males have a higher risk of divorce than females among all cohorts. Comparing international divorce and domestic divorce, international marriages have a higher risk of divorce than domestic marriages (3-9d). Even though the longest duration of international marriage in mainland China is 35 years in 2014, the risk of divorce in international marriages is still higher than in domestic marriage.

When we consider the relationship between solidarity of marriage and patterns of matching of spousal age and educational attainment, the results are quite different. The differences between age-gaps of spouses and the duration of marriage show that international and domestic marriages have different patterns. For domestic marriage (3-9e), if the husband's age at marriage is one year younger to four years older than the wife's, they will have the lowest risk of divorce; if husband's age at marriage is at least five years older than wife's, they will have the highest risk of divorce. In international marriages (3-9f), these two types of age-gap show relatively similar risks of divorce, while after 6.8 years, if husband's age at marriage is one year younger to four years older or at least five years older than wife's, they will have a lower risk of divorce; if the husband's age at marriage is at least two years younger than the wife's, they will have the highest risk of divorce. The differences in educational attainment of spouses are also plotted in this chapter. In domestic marriages (3-9g), the risk of divorce is relatively similar for all types of educational matching

between spouses. However, in international marriages (3-9h), if the husband's educational attainment is lower than the wife's, they will have the highest risk of divorce.

To further test the relationships between individuals' human capital and solidarity of marriage, Cox's model was applied (Table 3-6). The results indicate that couples in international marriage have a significantly higher risk of divorce than domestic couples, but the differences in risk can be explained by a series of predictors of individuals' socioeconomic status. Compared to domestic marriages, the rate of divorce increases by 93.48 percent if all other variables are held constant (Model 5).

In contrast to the existing literature, the differences in educational attainment within couples show no significant impact on the solidarity of both types of marriage (Model 2 and Model 3), which is similar with the Kaplan-Meier output (Figure 9g and 9h). Compared to primary school education, although there is no significant difference for college graduates in their marriage choice (Table 3-5), the differences in duration of marriage are significant (Model 5). An increase in couples' educational attainment will significantly decrease the risk of divorce. The interaction between the husband's and the wife's educational attainment was tested during the modelling procedure. While holding other predictors constant, couples where both have high school education, both have college and above education, or husband has college education and wife has primary or high school education, will have significantly lower risk of divorce than couples where both partners have primary school education. If the husband obtained primary school education but the wife obtained vocational school education, their risk of divorce is significantly higher than for other types of pair on educational attainment.

Although the differences of age within couples at marriage show an effect on the duration of the marriage, compared to couples that are homogenously matched in age at marriage, if the husband's age at marriage is at least two years younger than the wife's, as the age-gap increases by one unit, the rate of divorce increases by 12.08 percent (Model 5). There is also an inverted U curve relationship between individuals' age at marriage and the duration of their marriage (Model 3, Model 4, and Model 5); this demonstrates a different relationship between age at marriage and duration of marriage. According to Li and Wang (2014), for mainland Chinese females in domestic marriage, the risk of divorce is significantly related to their age at first marriage, showing a U shaped curve; with an increase in age at first marriage, the risk of divorce will decrease, then increase, and the cut-off point is 40. Due to the limitations of the dataset, the predictor

“age at marriage” applied in this research cannot separate first marriage and remarriage population among the domestic marriage/divorce couples; thus the relationship is expected to be affected by the observations

Table 3-6 Cox’s Estimation of Solidarity of International and Domestic Marriages

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
International marriage (ref=Domestic marriage)	0.879*** (31.26)	0.775*** (25.41)	0.481*** (14.92)	0.595*** (15.79)	0.660*** (16.31)
Age-gap (ref=Husband=Wife)					
Husband>Wife		0.287*** (9.31)	-0.004 (0.21)	0.011 (0.32)	-0.026 (0.75)
Husband<Wife		0.320*** (8.07)	0.114*** (2.81)	0.112*** (2.76)	0.114*** (2.63)
Educational attainment (ref=Husband=Wife)					
Husband>Wife		0.003 (0.09)	-0.030 (1.05)		
Husband<Wife		0.076 (1.90)	0.049 (1.22)		
Age at marriage			0.141*** (17.34)	0.145*** (17.67)	0.152*** (17.02)
Age square			-0.001*** (12.55)	-0.001*** (12.74)	-0.001*** (12.43)
Residency(ref=Mainland China)					
Overseas sojourn				-0.081 (1.24)	-0.108 (1.61)
Foreign countries				-0.156*** (3.02)	-0.106 (1.94)
Hong Kong, Macao				-0.659*** (4.46)	-0.670*** (4.44)
Taiwan				-0.582*** (6.61)	-0.522*** (5.65)
Education (ref=Primary school)					
Secondary school					-0.153*** (2.92)
High school					-0.267*** (4.52)
Vocational school					-0.118 (1.65)
College and undergraduate					-0.270*** (4.46)
Postgraduate					-0.040 (0.43)
Occupation (ref= Farming, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery)					
Production and transportation					-0.586*** (6.74)
Commerce and service					-0.140 (1.70)
Professional/Technical					-0.653*** (4.26)
Staffs in offices					-0.272*** (5.14)
Military personal					0.357 (0.94)
Administrators					-0.205*** (3.04)
LR chi-square	907.07***	1027.19***	1894.17***	1965.12***	1938.30***
df	1	5	7	10	20
N	6582	6582	6563	6541	5846

NOTES: Gender effect is omitted as the divorce record is couple-matched. Age-gaps in the regression were categorised by the actual differences between couples’ ages at marriage; each category represent three interval respectively, $(-\infty, -1]$, $[-1, 4]$, and $(4, \infty)$. ** denotes significance at 5% level; *** denotes significance at 1% level. The table reports coefficients of cox models and standard errors (in brackets).

Source: BCA provincial *Marriage-Divorce Registration Record Database*, 2010 to 2014.

of remarriage, as the province also has an above-average crude divorce rate in mainland China. The population in this study is different from conventional research, as couples of international marriages are more likely to marry at an older age and have been previously married before their registration (see Table 3-1 and Table 3-2). Based on the results from this dataset, with an increase in age at marriage, the risk of divorce will increase, then decrease, and the cut-off point is 52 for females and 54 for males; males also show a higher risk of divorce through all age groups. Further, the risk of divorce increases with individuals' younger birth cohorts; the 1980s and 1990s birth cohorts show the highest risk of divorce, compared to the 1940s. However, if the interaction of spouses' birth cohorts was taken into the model, the inverted U shaped curve between female's age at marriage and the risk of divorce disappeared, but the effect become much stronger for males.

Compared to all the mainland Chinese citizens, while holding other variables constant, residents from Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan have a lower risk of divorce in international marriage (Model 5), while the risk of divorce shows no significant differences between mainland Chinese-foreigners and mainland Chinese-overseas Chinese sojourner couples. To further dissect the effect of residency and marriage, the interaction between the husband's and the wife's residency was considered. If other variables are held constant, mainland Chinese husbands and their foreign wives have a significantly higher risk of divorce, while other types of residency arrangement between spouses show no significant difference in risk compared to domestic couples. In addition, the mainland Chinese citizens and overseas Chinese sojourner couples show a higher risk of divorce compared to domestic couples, but the results are not statistically significant.

Individuals' occupation also shows significant correlation with their risk of divorce. Comparing to the low social status occupations of farming, forestry, animal husbandry, and fishery, the high social status institutional occupations will significantly decrease the risk of divorce, while the commerce and service industry shows no significant differences in risk of divorce. The ethnic background of spouses is also tested in the survival analysis, which shows no significant correlation with the risk of divorce. Compared to marriages within the Han group, ethnic endogamy and ethnic exogamy show no differences in their risk of divorce in both types of marriages, even for the cross-border ethnic groups.

3.6 Discussion and Conclusion

This study finds that gender, age at marriage, marriage history, educational attainment, ethnicity, and residency have significant impacts on individual marriage choices. The findings in this study shed some new lights on the correlations between individual ascribed conditions, socioeconomic status, relative advantage, and solidarity of unions, which was not adequately understood in the previous studies. This is the first time that the pooled dataset are analysed to understand the marriage dissolution in both domestic and international marriage, as well as the connections between levels of spousal distance and duration of marriages. As the most populous nation with increasing migration across its borders and currently experiencing profound cultural change and social transformation, China is a perfect case to study dynamics of international marriages in comparison with the domestic ones. The results in this study enhance our understanding on the gendered patterns, marriage choices, and solidarity of the marriages.

The descriptive analysis in this study indicates that although couples in international marriages are more likely to be in remarriages, the homogamous features of age at marriage, educational attainment, and marriage history, are clearly evident in the recent decade. In mainland China, the possibility of choosing international marriage for individuals who obtained below average educational achievement and higher educational achievement are not statistically different. This may indicate that international marriage is a choice for individuals from both lower-end and higher-end social statuses, as these two are more likely to confront the pressure of a structural shortage of suitable spouses, especially with highly educated women and low human capital men. What's more, the results also indicate that mainland females have a higher possibility of choosing international marriages than males, which could be connected with the discrimination against women, both on marriage and on human capital (Zhu and Lin 2014). Even with similar human capitals, females are still less likely to be rewarded as that of their male counterparts (Xu, Yu, Zhu, and Lin 2016), hence international marriage and its migration might provide females a passage to overcome their precarious life situation.

Educational attainment also has effects on the duration of marriage; higher education levels would significantly decrease the risk of divorce. Individuals with higher status on occupations would have a lower risk of divorce. If an individual obtains a job in the in-institutional occupations with social, political, and prestige advantages, the possibility of choosing a foreign spouse and the risk of divorce would significantly

decrease. Individuals in commerce and service industries are more likely to choose international marriage and their risk of divorce is higher than for other types of occupation.

People with previous marriages in China are more likely to marry internationally; increased age at marriage would increase, then decrease the possibility of choosing international marriage, following a hump-shaped pattern. In addition, marriage history and age at marriage affect the duration of marriage. With increased age at marriage, the risk of divorce increases then decreases for mainland Chinese males; but for mainland Chinese females, if the influence of their birth cohort is controlled, their risk of divorce will only increase with their age at marriage. As the data does not provide information to identify marriage history in divorce records, and couples with a previous marriage history are older and more likely to divorce, it is possible that the correlation between age at marriage and risk of divorce is over-estimated for first marriage couples.

However, in contrast to existing research, the results indicate that the gap in educational attainment between spouses has no statistically significant effect on the dissolution of their marriage, both internationally and domestically. But for the relationships between risk of divorce and age-gaps between spouses, international and domestic marriages show different patterns. For domestic marriage, different age-gaps show different levels of risk, while the couples who are homogamous in age at marriage have the lowest risk of divorce. For international marriages, compared to their domestic counterparts, if the husband is at least two years younger than his wife, their risk of divorce is significantly elevated.

Overseas Chinese sojourners share more cultural similarities with mainland Chinese citizens, and their risk of divorce is similar to mainland Chinese citizens. Compared to other foreigners, foreigners with Chinese lineage have a much higher risk of divorce. The risk of divorce for foreigners is relatively lower than for mainland Chinese citizens in international marriage, but compared to domestic marriage couples, the risk is not statistically different. Marriage between mainland Chinese citizens and residents from Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan has the lowest risk of divorce, even compared to domestic couples.

It is noted that there are some limitations in this research that are associated with the nature of the data. Since the Ministry's annual statistic yearbooks do not provide detailed individual information for international and domestic marriages, any attempt to confirm or deny the pervasive features and structures of China's international marriage on a national level could be frustrating. With the large number of annual marriage and divorce registration documents, the digitalisation of the records is still in progress, which also

puts limits on the online database. Further, to preserve confidentiality and integrity, the provincial Bureaus often do not permit public access to registration documents.

To better utilise this dataset, multiple imputations with Monte Carlo Markov Chain data augmentation methods were applied. The coefficients were changed, but the general effects of explanatory vectors did not change, especially for the models of marriage choice. This imputation tested the efficiency of the models; even with systemic missing values of occupation, the model still generated similar results.

Notes

An earlier version of this article was presented at the 19th Biennial Australian Population Association Conference, Darwin, NT, July 18, 2018. The authors acknowledge the support of the Bureau of Civil Affairs, the Higher Degree Research Office at Macquarie University, and Centre for Population and Development Studies at Renmin University of China. Address correspondence to Shenghan Cai at shenghan.cai@mq.edu.au

1 Bridewealth is a type of wealth paid by the groom or his family to the parents of the bride as a ritual and symbolic gesture to ratify marriage; it is also known as bride price or bride token. Dowry is a type of parental wealth transferred to the bride at the marriage. In China, both bridewealth and dowry will be paid at the marriage, in the form of dwellings, motor vehicles, jewellery, furniture, home appliances, and a wedding ceremony for the newly wedded couple; sometimes the bride's parents might transfer the bridewealth and dowry to the bride and the new family. However, in less-developed areas, bridewealth becomes a necessary insurance for males to get married: if a family cannot provide enough bridewealth for its son to marry a wife, its daughter will marry another family to get bridewealth from them, which in turn will be transferred to the parents of the son's wife. In recent years, the combined effect of empowerment of females, socioeconomic disparities, and local imbalance of sex-ratio of marriageable population has largely elevated bridewealth, to the extent that some rural males cannot afford to marry. Some local governments intervene by declaring that if the bridewealth is higher than 20 thousand RMB, the marriage will be declared an illegal "mercenary marriage," and the offender will be found guilty of human trafficking. Some provincial BCAs are planning to cancel all kinds of wedding ceremony. For further reference, please see Goody and Tambiah (1973) or Poston, Yang, and Farris (2013).

2 Crude divorce rate = Number of couples registered divorces / ((Number of population at the beginning of the year + Number of population at the end of the year) / 2) × 1000‰; Crude marriage rate = Number of Couples Registered Marriages / ((Number of population at the beginning of the year + Number of population at the end of the year) / 2) × 1000‰

3 In China, conventional mate selection follows both arrangements in practice: *mendang hudui*, also known as assortative matching of families; *nangao nvdi* depicts hypergamous matching of spouses with mating gradients; this "dictates that women should marry up and men should marry down applies not only to age, but also to height, weight, socioeconomic status, education, and perhaps intelligence" (Veevers 1988: 183).

4 The Ministry's yearbooks only provide a summarised tabulation for annual marriage and divorce registration, that excludes detailed demographic information. It is based on provincial Bureaus of Civil Affairs' monthly or annual statements from database. It is noted that there is an inconsistency between the provincial database and the national statistical yearbook data. This does not affect the validity of the analysis, as this chapter utilises the original records from the regional Bureau's database.

5 It is also noted that marriages and divorces of mainland Chinese citizens which occurred outside mainland China cannot be found in the record of the Bureau of Civil Affairs' database, or those of courthouses. In

other countries, in addition to the local government or marriage officiants, China's embassies can provide a marital registration service if one of the spouses is an overseas Chinese sojourner or a Hong Kong resident. The provincial Bureau of Civil Affairs and China's foreign embassies process marriage registration separately, and the registration records from embassies are not available to the public or the BCA.

6 Although the dataset provides detailed geographic information on individual's hukou, it does not sort out the types of hukou; the workload of manual classification is enormously high, and the accuracy might not be ideal. Thus the information is not applied in this research.

7 Although in the 6th Census there was data collection of foreigners in China, the questionnaire and data are not publicly accessible, and cannot be obtained for this research.

8 This province is located in the north region of China and is a typical province with relatively high amount of international marriage. Due to the confidentiality agreement signed by the researcher, the name of the province needs to remain anonymous.

9 Due to the unit variance of population base of these two subgroups, the dataset is an imbalanced choice-based sample. However, this will not affect the slope or goodness of fit of our models, but will affect the standard error terms. The confidence interval of coefficients may vary, but the model basically remains the same.

10 Despite the occupations being classified into eight general types based on Chinese national standards, the provincial Bureau's informatisation process does not strictly comply with the GB standard, hence the missing information was largely classified as "others who are not able to be classified". The robustness tests produced similar results. For practical considerations, the simulation tests and interaction are not provided here.

11 There are 59 categories of ethnicities in mainland China. In the provincial dataset, mainland Chinese males can be categorised into 12 ethnic groups; mainland Chinese females can be categorised into 16 ethnic groups. The ethnicities are not identified in this research in the interest of preserving confidentiality. For practical considerations, the correlations between the interaction of spousal matching in ethnicity and marriage choice/duration are not provided here.

Reference

- Allison, Paul D.. 2012. *Logistic Regression Using SAS®: Theory and Application, 2nd Edition*. Cary: SAS Institute Inc.
- Andersson, Gunnar. 1997. "The impact of children on divorce risks of Swedish women," *European Journal of Population* 13(2): 109-145.
- Balistreri, Kelly S., Kara Joyner, and Grace Kao. 2017. "Trading youth for citizenship? The spousal age gap in cross-border marriages," *Population and Development Review* 43(3): 443-466.
- Beck, Ulrich and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim. 1995. *The Normal Chaos of Love*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

- Beck, Ulrich and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim. 2014. *Distant Love: Personal Life in the Global Age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bian, Yanjie, Ronald Breiger, Deborah Davis, and Joseph Galaskiewicz. 2005. "Occupation, class, and social networks in urban China," *Social Forces* 83(4): 1443-1468.
- Breger, Rosemary and Rosanna Hill. 1998. *Cross-Cultural Marriage: Identity and Choice*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Cai, Yong. 2014. "China's demographic challenges: Gender imbalance," in Jacques deLisle and Avery Goldstein (eds.), *China's Challenges*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 60-82.
- Castles, Stephen. 2014. "International migration at a crossroads," *Citizenship Studies* 18(2): 190-207.
- Charsley, Katherine. 2011. *Transnationalism, Migration and Marriage*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Chi, Guiqin. 2015. "The fake divorce in divorce registration in China," *Journal of Changchun University of Science and Technology(Social Sciences Edition)* 12: 39-43.
- Constable, Nicole. 2003. "A transnational perspective on divorce and marriage: Filipina wives and workers," *Identities Global Studies in Power and Culture* 10(2): 163-180.
- Constable, Nicole. 2003. *Romance on a Global Stage: Pen Pals, Virtual Ethnography, and "Mail Order" Marriages*. London: University of California Press.
- Constable, Nicole. 2004. *Cross-Border Marriages: Gender and Mobility in Transnational Asia*. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Constable, Nicole. 2009. "The commodification of intimacy: Marriage, sex, and reproductive labour," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 38(1): 49-64.
- Cox, D.R. and David Oakes. 1984. *Analysis of Survival Data*. Florida: Chapman and Hall/CRC.
- Croll, Elisabeth. 1981. *The Politics of Marriage in Contemporary China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- D'Aoust, Anne-Marie. 2013. "In the name of love: Marriage migration, governmentality, and technologies of love," *International Political Sociology* 7: 258-274.
- Davis, Kingsley. 1941. "Intermarriage in caste society," *American Anthropologist* 43: 376-395.
- Davis, Deborah. 2010. "Who gets the house? Renegotiating property rights in post-socialist urban China," *Modern China* 36(5): 463-492.
- Davis, Deborah. 2014. "Privatization of marriage in post-socialist China," *Modern China* 40(6): 551-577.
- Deng, Weizhi and Xin Xu. 2000. "The trajectory of contemporary Chinese family changes," *Social Science* 10: 51-55.
- Department of Social, Science and Technology, and Cultural Statistics, National Bureau of Statistics of China. 2017. *China Social Statistical Yearbook 2016*. Beijing: China Statistics Press.
- Diekmann, Andreas and Peter Mitter. 1984. "A comparison of the "sickle function" with alternative stochastic models of divorce rates," in Andreas Diekmann and Peter Mitter (eds.), *Stochastic Modelling of Social Processes*. New York: Academic Press. 123-153.
- Ding, Jinhong, Hongyan Yang, Shaoyun Zhou, Jixiang Zhou, Kewu Lin, and Yuzhi Zhang. 2004. "Characteristics and trends of cross-nation marriage in modern Shanghai," *Chinese Journal of Population Science* 3: 66-70.
- Fan, C. Cindy and Youqin Huang. 1998. "Waves of rural brides: Female marriage migration in China," *Annals*

- of the *Association of American Geographers* 88(2): 227-251.
- Farrer, James. 2008. "From "passports" to "joint ventures": Intermarriage between Chinese nationals and Western expatriates residing in Shanghai," *Asian Studies Review* 32: 7-29.
- Farrer, James. 2013. "Good stories: Chinese women's international love stories as cosmopolitan sexual politics," *Sexualities* 16(1/2): 12-29.
- Fei, Xiaotong. 1992. *From the Soil, The Foundations of Chinese Society, A translation of Fei Xiaotong's Xiangtu Zhongguo*. London: University of California Press.
- Fu, Vincent Kang. 2001. "Racial intermarriage pairings," *Demography* 38(2): 147-159.
- Gao, Ying, Xiulan Zhang, and Weilong Zhu. 2013. "A study on cross-nation marriage of Beijing in recent years," *Population and Economics* 1: 27-36.
- Giddens, Anthony. 1992. *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love, and Eroticism in Modern Societies*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Goode, William J. 1982. *The Family*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.
- Goody, Jack and S. J. Tambiah. 1973. *Bridewealth and Dowry*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Greenhalgh, Susan. 1985. "Sexual stratification: The other side of "growth with equity" in East Asia," *Population and Development Review* 11(2): 265-314.
- Gullickson, Aaron. 2006. "Education and black-white interracial marriage," *Demography* 43(4): 673-689.
- Guo, Ting and Xuezheng Qin. 2016. "Marriage matching, life satisfaction and divorce risk in first marriage: A research based on China Family Panel Studies," *Studies in Labour Economics* 4(6): 42-68.
- Hao, Guoqiang. 2013. "Laos' transnational marriages during the Hmong New Year, taking Bangyan village of Laos as an example," *Journal of Guangxi University for Nationalities (Philosophy and Social Science Edition)* 35(1): 34-37.
- Huang, Pengli and Shining He. 2016. "Money buys good daughters: Vietnamese brides' home remittances," 1: 107-114.
- Jeffreys, Elaine and Wang Pan. 2013. "The rise of Chinese-foreign marriage in Mainland China, 1979-2010," *China Information* 27(3): 347-369.
- Jensen, Todd M., Kevin Shafer, Shenyang Guo, and Jeffry H. Larson. 2015. "Differences in relationship stability between individuals in first and second marriages: A propensity score analysis," *Journal of Family Issues* 38(3): 406-432.
- Ji, Yingchun and Wei-Jun Jean Yeung. 2014. "Heterogeneity in contemporary Chinese marriage," *Journal of Family Issues* 35(12): 1662-1682.
- Jiang, Haishun. 1999. "Discussion on some issues of international marriages between China and South Korea," *Journal of Yanbian University (Social Science)* 32(3): 128-131.
- Jiang, Quanbao, Shuzhuo Li, and Marcus Feldman. 2005. "Estimation of the number of missing females in China: 1990-2000," *Chinese Journal of Population Science* 4: 2-11.
- Jiang, Quanbao and Shuzhuo Li. 2009. *Female Deficit and Society Security*. Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press (China).
- Jin, Hong. 2013. "Commercial matchmaking and China-Korean transnational marriage: Defective intimacy," *Journal of Guangxi University for Nationalities (Philosophy and Social Science Edition)* 35(5): 51-57.
- Jin, Xiaoyi, Lige Liu, Yan Li, Marcus W. Feldman, and Shuzhuo Li. 2013. "'Bare branches'" and the marriage

- market in rural China,” *Chinese Sociological Review* 46(1): 83-104.
- Kawaguchi, Daiji and Soohyung Lee. 2017. “Brides for sale: Cross-border marriages and female immigration,” *Economic Inquiry* 55: 633-654.
- Kim, Doo-Sub. 2010. “The rise of cross-border marriage and divorce in contemporary Korea,” in Yang Wen-Shan and Lu Melody Chia-Wen (eds.), *Asian Cross-border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press. 127-153.
- Kim, Doo-Sub. 2013. “Recent trend in cross-national marriage in South Korea: A focus on spousal dissimilarity, marital stability and fertility,” *Journal of Guizhou University (Social Sciences)* 31(5): 1-8.
- Kim, Hyun Mee. 2015. “Intimacies and remittances: The material bases for love and intimate labour between Korean men and their foreign spouses in South Korea,” in Sara Friedman and Pardis Mahdavi (eds.), *Migrant Encounters: Intimate Labour, the State, and Mobility Across Asia*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 25-45.
- Kim, Hyun Mee, Shinye Park, and Ariun Shukhertei. 2017. “Returning home: Marriage migrants’ legal precarity and the experience of divorce,” *Critical Asian Studies* 49(1): 38-53.
- Lan, Pei-Chia. 2006. *Global Cinderellas: Migrant Domesticity and Newly Rich Employers in Taiwan*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Lavelly, William. 1991. “Marriage and mobility under rural collectivism,” in Rubie S. Watson and Patricia B. Ebrey (eds.), *Marriage and Inequality in Chinese Society*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 286-312.
- Lee, Hye-Kyung. 2008. “International marriage and the state in South Korea: Focusing on governmental policy,” *Citizenship Studies* 12(1): 107-123.
- Lee, Hyeon Jung. 2014. “Fearless love, death for dignity: Female suicide and gendered subjectivity in rural North China,” *The China Journal* 71: 25-42.
- Lee, Yean-Ju, Dong-Hoon Seol, and Sung-Nam Cho. 2006. “International marriages in South Korea: The significance of nationality and ethnicity,” *Journal of Population Research* 23(2): 165-182.
- Li, Ding and Siyu Tian. 2017. “Patterns and determinates of premarital pregnancy in China,” *Population Research* 41(3): 87-100.
- Li, Shuzhuo and Xiaoyi Jin. 2006. *Uxorilocal Marriage in Contemporary Rural China*. Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press (China).
- Li, Yinhe. 1995. *Marriage, Family, and the Changes in China*. Harbin: Heilongjiang People’s Publisher.
- Li, Yu. 2008. “Trends in educational assortative marriage: 1949–2000,” *Chinese Journal of Population Science* 3: 73-96.
- Li, Yutong and Zhu Yang. 2011. “A study of characteristics and reasons of crude divorce rate in Northeast China,” *Population Journal* 3: 47-52.
- Liang, Tonggui. 2017. “Premarital cohabitation and divorce risk of first marriage: An analysis the data of CFPS 2010,” *South China Population* 4(32): 45-55.
- Liaw, Kao-Lee, Emiko Ochiai, and Yoshitaka Ishikawa. 2010. “Feminization of immigration in Japan: Marital and job opportunities,” in Yang Wen-Shan and Lu Melody Chia-Wen (eds.), *Asian Cross-Border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press. 49-86.

- Lin, Justin, Fang Cai, and Zhou Li. 2003. *The China Miracle: Development Strategy and Economic Reform*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press
- Lin, Mingxian and Shunfen Shen. 2006. "Resource and exchange in marriage, case study on Chinese–Korean females' international marriages in Yanbian city," *Population Research* 30(3) :50-55.
- Liu, Meng. 2002. "Rebellion and revenge: The meaning of suicide of women in rural China," *International Social Welfare* 11: 300-309.
- Liu, Yanwu and Qiang Fu. 2017. "Changing demographic characteristics and motives for suicide in rural China, 1980–2009," *Chinese Sociological Dialogue* 2(3-4): 136-148.
- Lu, Changchun. 2014. "Transnational marriage: Under the pressure of imbalanced sex-ratio," *Chuan Cheng* 2: 124-125.
- Luo, Wenqing. 2013. "Research on Sino-Vietnamese transnational marriage from the perspective of Asian marriage migration," *Journal of Yangtze Normal University* 29(3): 1-6.
- Lyngstad, Torkild Hovde. 2004. "The impact of parents' and spouses' education on divorce rates in Norway," *Demographic Research* 10: 121-142.
- Ma, Zhongdong, Ge Lin, and Frank Zhang. 2010. "Examining cross-border marriage in Hong Kong: 1998–2005," in Yang Wen-Shan and Lu Melody Chia-Wen (eds.), *Asian Cross-Border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press. 87-102.
- Maddala, G. S.. 1983. *Limited-Dependent and Qualitative Variables in Economics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Merton, Robert K.. 1941. "Intermarriage and the social structure," *Psychiatry* 4: 361-374.
- McFadden, Daniel. 1974. "Conditional logit analysis of qualitative choice behaviour," in P. Zarembka (ed.), *Frontiers in Econometrics*, New York: Academic Press. 105-142.
- McFadden, Daniel and Kenneth Train. 2000. "Mixed MNL models for discrete response," *Journal of Applied Econometrics* 15(5): 447-470.
- Ministry of Civil Affairs of People's Republic of China. 1979–2017. *China's Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbook*. Beijing: China Statistics Press.
- Ministry of Civil Affairs of People's Republic of China. 2018. *2017 Statistical Report on the Development of Social Service*. www.mca.gov.cn/article/sj/tjgb/2017/201708021607.pdf
- Mu, Zheng and Yu Xie. 2014. "Marital age homogamy in China: A reversal of trend in the reform era?," *Social Science Research* 44: 141-157.
- Mu, Zheng and Yu Xie. 2016. "'Motherhood penalty' and 'fatherhood premium'? Fertility effects on parents in China," *Demographic Research* 35: 1373-1410.
- Nakamatsu, Tomoko. 2005. "Faces of 'Asian brides': Gender, race, and class in the representations of immigrant women in Japan," *Women's Studies International Forum* 28(5): 405-417.
- Nakazawa, Shinnosuke. 1996. "Lives and consciousness of foreign wives from Asia in Japanese rural villages, Chinese/Taiwanese, Korean and Filipina brides in Mogami district, Yamagata prefecture," *Japanese Journal of Family Sociology* 8: 81-96.
- Ocko, Jonathan K.. 1991. "Women, property, and law in the People's Republic of China," in Rubie S. Watson and Patricia B. Ebrey (eds.), *Marriage and Inequality in Chinese Society*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 313-346.

- Palmer, Michael. 2007. "Transforming family law in post-Deng China: Marriage, divorce and reproduction," *The China Quarterly* 191: 675-695.
- Pan, Suiming. 2011. "The view of the relationship between love and sex in Chinese teenagers," *Health Management* 10: 90-93.
- Pan, Suiming and Yingying Huang. 2013. *Changes in Sex: The Sex Life of the Chinese in the 21st Century*. Beijing: Renmin University of China Press.
- Pan, Wang. 2014. *Love and Marriage in Globalizing China*. New York: Routledge.
- Peng, Dasong. 2015. "Personal resource, family factors and remarriage: Analysis based on CFPS 2010 data," *Sociological Studies* 4: 118-142.
- Penny, Janet and Siew-Ean Khoo. 1996. *Intermarriage: A Study of Migration and Integration*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.
- Pieke, Frank N.. 2012. "Immigrant China," *Modern China*, Special Issue: New and Old Diversities in Contemporary China 38(1): 40-77.
- Piper, Nicola and Nina Roces. 2003. *Wife or Worker? Asian Women and Migration*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- Piper, Nicola and Sohoon Lee. 2016. "Marriage migration, migrant precarity, and social reproduction in Asia: An overview," *Critical Asian Studies* 48(4): 473-493.
- Pong, Suet-Ling, David Post, Dongshu Ou, and Maggie S.Y. Fok. 2014. "Blurring boundaries? Immigration and exogamous marriages in Hong Kong," *Population and Development Review* 40(4): 629-652.
- Poston, Dudley L. and Karen S. Glover. 2005. "Too many males: Marriage market implications of gender imbalances in China," *Genus* 61(2): 119-140.
- Poston, Dudley L., Eugenia Conde, and Bethany DeSalvo. 2011. "China's unbalanced sex ratio at birth, millions of excess bachelors and societal implications," *Vulnerable Children and Youth Studies* 6(4): 314-320.
- Poston, Dudley L., Wenshan Yang, and Demetrea N. Farris. 2013. *The Family and Social Change in Chinese Societies*. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands.
- Pritchard, Colin. 1996. "Suicide in the People's Republic of China categorized by age and gender: Evidence of the influence of culture on suicide," *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica* 93: 362-367.
- Qian, Zhenchao and Daniel T. Lichter. 2018. "Marriage markets and intermarriage: Exchange in first marriages and remarriages," *Demography* 55: 849-875.
- Qin, Ping and Preben B. Mortensen. 2001. "Specific characteristics of suicide in China," *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica* 103: 117-121.
- Quan, Xinzi. 2012. *Analysis of Chinese-Korean females' International Marriage Migration between China and South Korea*. Beijing: Xueyuan Press.
- Raymo, James M. and Yu Xie. 2000. "Temporal and regional variation in the strength of educational homogamy," *American Sociological Review* 65(5): 773-781.
- Saihanjuna. 2007. "Chinese women's peripheralization and emigrating marriage: Analysis of the push factors," *Japanese Journal of Family Sociology* 19(2): 71-83.
- Singer, Judith D., Stephen M. Davidson, Suzanne Graham, and Harriet S. Davidson. 1998. "Physician retention in community and migrant health centres: Who stays and for how long," *Medical Care* 36(8): 1198-1213.
- Spencer, Sarah and Katharine Charsley. 2016. "Conceptualising integration: A framework for empirical research,

- taking marriage migration as a case study,” *Comparative Migration Studies* 4:18.
- Spickard, Paul R.. 1989. *Mixed Blood: Intermarriage and Ethnic Identity in Twentieth-Century America*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Spring, Joel. 2008. “Research on globalization and education,” *Review of Educational Research* 78(2): 330-363.
- Suzuki, Nobue. 2000. “Between two shores: Transnational projects and Filipina wives in/from Japan,” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 23(4): 431-444.
- Tan, Yuanfa and Yinshu Cong. 2015. “Research on the effects of population structure changes on the growth of crude divorce rate,” *Population Journal* 2: 34-40.
- Thornton, Arland, William G Axinn, and Yu Xie. 2008. *Marriage and Cohabitation*. Thornton: University of Chicago Press.
- Train, Kenneth E.. 2009. *Discrete Choice Methods with Simulation, 2nd Edition*. New York: Cambridge University Press
- Tseng, Ye-Fen. 2010 “Marriage migration to East Asia: Current issues and propositions in making comparisons,” in Yang, Wenshan and Melody Chiawen Lu. 2010. *Asian Cross-Border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press.
- Veevers, Jean E.. 1988. “The “real” marriage squeeze: Mate selection, mortality, and the mating gradient,” *Sociological Perspectives* 31(2): 169-189.
- Wan, Hui, Hong Zhu, and Xueqiong Tang. 2013. “Female cross-border marriage immigrants: Case studies of foreign brides in Taiwan,” *Collection of Women’s Studies* 3: 106-114.
- Wang, Chong-Wen, Cecilia Chan, and Paul S. F. Yip. 2014. “Suicide rates in China from 2002 to 2011: An update,” *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology* 49(6): 921-941.
- Wang, Fengdong and Shenjing He. 2014. “Spatial patterns of marriage and marriage migration among Chinese labour,” *Chinese Journal of Population Science* 3: 88-94.
- Wang, Jinling. 2006. *Report on Women Development in China: Blue Book of Women Development*. Beijing: Social Science Academic Press.
- Wang, Qingbin and Qin Zhou. 2010. “China’s divorce and remarriage rates: Trends and regional disparities,” *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage* 51(4): 257-267.
- Wang, Xiaofeng, Ge Mi, and Xin Wen. 2016. “Analysis of gender differences in Mongolian transnational marriage,” *Inner Mongolia Social Science* 37(2):187-191.
- Wang, Xiaoyan. 2015. “A study of the different channels for selecting cross-border marriage partners along the Sino–Myanmar border, taking Longchuan county of Yunnan province as a case study,” *Journal of Ethnology* 6(6): 49-54.
- Wang, Xiaoyan. 2016. “A study on the integration of foreign spouses in China–Myanmar Marriage, the dilemma between politics and legitimacy,” *Mnzu Tribune* 3: 28-34.
- Watson, Rubie S.. 1991. “Afterward: Marriage and gender inequality,” in Rubie S. Watson and Patricia B. Ebrey (eds.), *Marriage and Inequality in Chinese Society*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 347-368.
- Watson, Rubie S. and Patricia B. Ebrey (eds.). *Marriage and Inequality in Chinese Society*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Wei, Yan and Wen-Jen Tsay. 2014. “Social mobility of females in rural China: An assortative mating perspective,”

- Williams, Lucy. 2010. *Global Marriage: Cross-Border Marriage Migration in Global Context*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Wu, Fei. 2005. *Elegy for Luck–Suicide in A County of North China*. Harvard University. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.
- Wu, Liping. 2010. “A survey on the knowledge, attitude, and behaviour regarding contraceptive use among pregnant teenagers in Beijing, China,” *Clinical Nursing Research* 19(4): 403-415.
- Xie, Lihua. 2000. *China Reported Suicide Among Rural Women In Rural China: Women Report Series*. Guiyang: Guizhou People’s Publisher.
- Xing, Chunbing and Haifeng Nie. 2010. “When an urban boy falls in love with a country girl: Baby’s hukou, hukou reform and intermarriage,” *World Economic Papers* 4: 1-18.
- Xiong, Wei and Haidong Yang. 2016. “A study of educational problems of the children of transnational marriage in border areas between China and Burma: A case study of C village of De’ang township,” *Journal of Research on Education for Ethnic Minorities* 6(27): 23-29.
- Xu, Anqi. 2012. “The influencing factors of divorce risk: A comprehensive model,” *Sociological Studies* 2: 109-125.
- Xu, Anqi and Yu Li. 2004. *Spousal Selection of the Young Generation in Marriage Market*. Shanghai: Shanghai Academy of Social Science Press.
- Xu, Anqi, Yuanting Zhang, and Paul R. Amato. 2011. “A comparison of divorce risk models in China and the United States,” *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 42(2): 289-295.
- Xu, Qi, Zeqi Qiu and Jianxin Li. 2016. “Is the “seven-year itch” real? A study on the changing divorce pattern in Chinese marriages,” *The Journal of Chinese Sociology* 3: 17.
- Xu, Wei, Li Yu, Yu Zhu, and Liyue Lin. 2016. “Beyond human capital: Determinants of migrant labour market outcomes in urban China,” *China Review* 16(3):175-211.
- Yamanaka, Keiko and Nicola Piper. 2005. “Feminized migration in east and southeast Asia: Policies, actions and empowerment,” *United Nations Research Institute for Social Development*. Occasional Paper No.11. <http://www.unrisd.org/publications/opgp11> (accessed 12 July 2018).
- Yan, Yunxiang. 2003. *Private Life under Socialism: Love, Intimacy, and Family Change in a Chinese Village, 1949–1999*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Yang, Wenshan and Melody Chiawen Lu. 2010. *Asian Cross-Border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press.
- Ye, Wenzhen and Qingguo Lin. 1996. “Chinese–foreign marriage in Fujian province,” *Population and economics* 95(2): 21-29.
- Ye, Yuqing. 2010. *Sociology of the Family: The Promotion and Practice of Human Right for Marriage Migrants*. Taipei: Chuliu Publisher.
- Yip, Paul S. F., Ka Y. Liu, Jianping Hu, and X. M. Song. 2005. “Suicide rates in China during a decade of rapid social changes,” *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology* 40(10): 792-798.
- Yu, Jia and Yu Xie. 2015. “Cohabitation in China: Trends and determinants,” *Population and development review* 41(4): 607-628.
- Zeng, Yi, T. Paul Schultz, and Deming Wang. 1993. “Divorce analysis in Shanghai, Shanxi, and Hebei,”

- Zeng, Yi. 1995. *Divorce in the 1980s in China*. Beijing: Peking University Press.
- Zeng, Yi and Deqing Wu. 1995. "Trends of changes in divorce rate and its age distribution in the 1980s in China." *Journal of Chinese Social Sciences* 6: 71–82.
- Zhao, Shujuan. 2011. "A survey of cross-border marriages, a case study of Sino–Burmese Border in Yunnan," *Journal of Chuxiong Normal University* 26(10): 89-95.
- Zhao, Zhongwei and Fei Guo. 2007. *Transition and Challenge: China's Population at the Beginning of the 21st Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Zhang, Jie. 2010. "Marriage and suicide among Chinese rural young women," *Social Forces* 89(1): 311-326.
- Zhang, Jie, Y. Conwell, L. Zhou, and C. Jiang. 2004. "Culture, risk factors and suicide in rural China: A psychological autopsy case control study," *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica* 110: 430-437.
- Zhang, Jinpeng and Yueping Bao. 2013. "A study of cross-national marriage between the border residents in the institutional perspective, taking Dehong, Yunnan for a case study," *Journal of Guizhou University (Social Sciences)* 31(6): 84-90.
- Zheng, Jin. 2015. "Disintegration and fragmentation, Vietnamese brides' social network and its issues, take four villages in north-east Hubei as example," *Social Sciences in Yunnan* 6: 146-151.
- Zheng, Zhenzhen and Zhenming Xie. 2004. *Migration and Rural Women's Development*. Beijing: Social Science Academic Press (China).
- Zhong, Mingyou. 2013. "On the problems and its solutions to illegal transnational marriages between China and ASEAN countries: An analysis of the situation in Pingxiang," *Journal of Guangxi Normal University: Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition* 49(6): 14-17.
- Zhu, Yu and Liyue Lin. 2014. "From 'integration into cities' to 'an integrated society': Women migrants' needs and rights in Fujian province, China," in Thanh-Dam Truong, Des Gasper, Jeff Handmaker, and Sylvia I. Bergh (eds.), *Migration, Gender and Social Justice: Perspectives on Human Insecurity*. Springer.

Chapter 4: Social Mobility through International Marriage and the Premium of Relative Advantages in the Marriage Market

Abstract

International marriage in the existing literature tended to be regarded as a typical “status exchange marriage”. It is believed that females from less-developed countries utilise their physical attraction and marry males with modest quality or status from socioeconomic advanced countries in exchange for an improvement in their life situation. This hypothesis, although commonly applied, lacks support from empirical analysis. Using the couple-matched dataset of international marriages in mainland China from 2005 to 2016, this study explores the relationships between relative advantages within couples in international marriage and tests the hypothesis of status exchange in the transnational marriage market. The results show that privileged origin and educational attainment can provide individuals with premium in marriage market, but status exchange in the international marriage market is much weaker than gender hypergamous and trait homogamous marriage.

Keywords: Status exchange, Social mobility, Spousal selection, Marriage market, Hypergamy

4.1 Introduction

The beginning of this century has witnessed a rapid increase in international migration and marriage within Southeast and East Asia. With their economic success in the 1990s, some Asian countries and areas, such as Singapore, Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, have experienced an increase in both female labour migrants and international marriages (Piper 2005; Yang and Lu 2010). Compared to the 1980s, international marriage among these economically advanced nations/regions has increased greatly, which has generated concerns among the public and media while attracting the attention of scholars and state governments (Yang and Lu 2010). The change in international marriage in Asia during this period exhibit this pattern: the socioeconomically-advanced Asian countries, which used to be the conventional exporters of females in transcontinental marriages, have become the new destinations for this intra-regional intimacy within Asia. Meanwhile, Asian countries like China, the Philippines, and Vietnam, have started to emerge as the countries that send women abroad in international marriage arrangements.

With world's largest population base and ideological roots that are dissimilar to individualism, China stands out in the transnational marriage market. The rapid development of international marriages originating from mainland China has attracted considerable debate about its effects among the socioeconomically advanced regions. International marriage in mainland China was only decriminalised in 1979, when the state and the Ministry of Civil Affairs started to officially recognise and provide registration services for this type of marriage. According to the Ministry's annual yearbooks, the number of annual registered international marriages in the following decades have increased nearly ten-fold in 2001 and 2003. From 1979 to 1990, the majority of the international marriages registered in mainland China were between mainland Chinese citizens and residents from Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan. Since the 1990s, China has also witnessed a gradual increase in marriage between mainland Chinese citizens and foreigners from other countries. International marriage in mainland China reached its peak during the 2000s, then declined in the following period.

Much research during the 2000s has focused on international marriages in Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, under the geo-political power structure of Southeast Asia. The studies have centred on three aspects of intra-Asian international marriage: the connection between international migration and international marriage; the imbalanced gender pattern; and the intermediary influence of international

marriage brokers. It is commonly accepted that the newly emerged international service industry provides women with opportunities for independent international migration in the twenty-first century. Under conventional gender and family structures, such as female oppression and discrimination still prevail in China and other Southeast Asian countries, marriage and family migration provide a strong motivation for women's international migration (Williams 2010). Since the states have implemented strong control and restrictions over the working visas of the "low quality" service industry (Piper 2003; Lan 2006; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2014), international marriage offers a passage for women to obtain work opportunities in the developed areas (Piper 2003; Thai 2008). Researchers have also argued that under the influence of patriarchal systems, the global socioeconomic hierarchy, and state-thwarted labour migration, international marriage has become a cost-advantage path to reaching the goal of ideal marriage/citizenship and upward mobility, which turn out to both empower and exploit women (Sinke 1999; Piper 2003; Constable 2004; Williams 2010; Lan 2011; Farrer 2012). In addition to the perspectives of personal selection and commercial agency, migrant groups or states have also become the agents of international marriage, with the aims of cultural/religious preservation, or increasing the local population (Breger and Hill 1998; Charsley 2005; Lu 2005; Nakamatasu 2005; Quan 2012).

The existing literature has provided fruitful understandings of international marriage, yet most of the research is restricted by the limitation of methodologies and lack of empirical data. Under the research schema for this subject so far, current understandings of international marriage have focused on similar topics. Even though, nowadays, the causality between marriage and migration is blurred (Sinke 1999), international marriage is still being treated as nothing but migration (Piper 2003). Although scholars commented on the inherent natural love and affection there may be among internationally married couples (Kojima 2001; Constable 2003; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2014), in general, marriage is treated as a convenience based on status exchange, motivated by a series of calculations between benefits and costs. It is commonly believed that international matrimony provides legal rights of better employment or residency for less-educated females from underdeveloped countries, while allowing males with low socioeconomic status from developed areas to find suitable, submissive wives (Piper and Lee 2016). Thus, this type of marriage is believed to be a type of instrumental status-exchange relationship, rather than a liberal practice of free love (Quan 2012; Merali, Bajwa, and Yousaf 2015; Kawaguchi and Lee 2017). However, what constitutes "exchange" varies as the sociocultural context changes. An inter-racial, inter-caste, or inter-

status marriage within a state is presented as an indicator of social diversity and integration, but transnational marriage, true love or not, is always condemned as nothing but a by-product or scam of migration.

Studies also point out that in international marriage, a female's ideals of modern romantic love and marriage with a western man may collide with a male's desire for traditional femininity and a family-oriented wife in a male-dominant relationship (Suzuki 2000; Thai 2008; Williams 2010; Farrer 2013). Meanwhile, the offspring of international marriage may be regarded as a challenge to ethnic homogeneity and cultural purity among monocultural/monoethnic nation-states (Castles and Davidson 2001; Kalmijn 2010; Lee 2010; Lim 2010; Ye 2010; Takeshita 2016), even though, from a historical point of view, there may not be authentic homogeneity among so-called monoethnic states (Miller 2010).

Central to the discussion are the differences between domestic marriage and international marriage, with the latter considered as a potentially disintegrating force in the receiving society. Most of the research is based on individual cases, and sometimes lacks comprehensive empirical support from data (Lin and Shen 2006; Quan 2012; Kim 2013). The problem-oriented viewpoint of scholarly research and policy making has dominated the study of international marriage among Asian countries. However, the existing literature views international marriage as a covert form of international migration, to the extent that marriage itself is largely overlooked. Basic characteristics, similarities and differences between the so-called "abnormal" international marriages and "normal" domestic marriages have not attracted enough research (Tseng 2010). Even though the research field of international marriage continually uses exchange theory to interpret the essence and motivation of this type of marriage, almost none of the existing studies put these assumptions to an empirical test. Consequently, the existing research has applied a status-exchange theory of marriage without much clarification and comprehensive understanding. This chapter aims to fill in this major gap in the literature by investigating the features of spousal matching between international married couples. With the help of marriage registration records, the human capital and social origin of both the spouses can be matched and compared, and the data applied to examine the patterns of matching between couples of different origins, and the potential marriage premium in international marriage.

4.2 Exchange, Intimacy, and Partner Selection

Marriage and family, as the fundamental structure of human society, is considered such a crucial unit that it is substantially controlled and enforced by series of social norms, religious authorities, public order, and institutional design. The decrees issuing from these public realms possess legitimate power to define, regulate, and penalise interpersonal relationships, reproductive behaviour, and inheritance rights within marriage and family (Foucault 2003). This network of power also defines and integrates the private living units and networks of society. Within the context of social history, the structure and transition of marriage and family are intimately linked with gender norms, public institutions, social stratifications (Fortes 1969; Watson 1991; Durkheim 2002), and affection and love between spouses (Giddens 1992).

Marriage and family are not always about love, affection, and companionship among the members; in fact, the idea of the modern family is still a new perspective, considering the length of human history. The remaking of interpersonal marital relationships only developed in late nineteenth century Europe, as the ideals of mutuality between spouses emerged. Under the influence of industrialisation and modernisation, parents lose control over their children's mate selection, and the state gains biopolitical power (Goode 1963; Goody 1971; Becker 1991; Foucault 2003; Collins 2006). The socially defined interpersonal relationships in wedlock were drastically reshaped during the following century, especially with the civil rights, female liberation, and gay liberation movements in America and European countries. Non-materialistic romantic love and intimate companionship became ideals of the foundation for marriage in the twenty-first century under the influence of globalisation and informatisation (Giddens 1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2014; Schwartz, Zeng, and Xie 2016). However, the westernised ideals of love, marriage, and family, although globally acknowledged, did not transform marriage and family related norms and behaviour for all countries and societies. Meanwhile, global labour mobility affected migrants' marriage and family life. With the influence of modernity and globalisation on marriage and family, both genders started to exhibit comparable similarities in educational attainment, occupation, parenthood participation, and housework in modern marriages (Collins 2006). At the same time, the states (or the religious institutions in some societies) retain strong legitimacy rights over marriage.

From a functionalist perspective, the formation of marital relationships, and the construction and continuation of kinship, are the structural foundations of any given social system (Merton 1941). The

hypothesis of specialised gender roles in wedlock is also longstanding (Parsons 1949). Since the predominant patriarchal system among human societies has controlled and created asymmetrical divisions between different gender spheres, marital alliances between segregated men and women are often justified and maintained by economic security, status preservation, and lineage continuity and inheritance. The long-lasting traditional marital roles of the subjugated wife are typically ensured by a positive, assortative matching process, in which demographic, socioeconomic, and cultural characteristics are matched and complemented between spouses and the extended families or their communities. This mechanism of matching of status between two parties in a marriage is central for the reproduction and maintenance of social stratification and mobility among different groups (Davis 1941; Glass 1954; Gordon 1964; Kalmijn 1991; Rosenfeld 2008; Schwartz et al. 2016). This homogenous spousal matching process can be observed even in today's westernised romantic love matches (Schwartz et al. 2016).

Although men and women are generally matched on the basis of comparable socioeconomic status or ascribed characteristics (Burgess and Wallin 1943; Atkinson and Glass 1985; Rosenfeld 2008; Qian and Lichter 2018), under the methodology of structuralism, the marriage market, and exchange theory or evolutionary theory, all assume that all marriages are “intermarriages” in the broad sense, as both parties inevitably derive from different gender norms or social groups (Davis 1941; Merton 1941; Skinner 1964; Lévi-Strauss 1969; Breger and Hill 1998; Geary 1998). Although romantic love is believed to be the foundation of modern wedlock, marriage and economic behaviours are side by side in practice, as financial arrangements will be made through the bond of matrimony (Malinowski 1961), and the transaction and sharing of properties and resources, such as dowry, bridewealth/brideprice, housework and/or care work, continues in modern societies. The mainstream homogamous or endogamous marriage is exchange in the broad sense, a mechanism of competition, as mates are selected based on weighting marital resources and the availability of alternatives (Elder 1969), marital-specific capital (Becker 1993), diminishing marginal utility (Schwartz et al. 2016), or “good genes” from the perspective of biological evolution (Rosenthal 2017).

Much empirical work and debate on spousal selection has revealed that matching and exchange, the two sides of assortative matching, are typically both applied in selecting a mate (Blau and Duncan 1967; Gullickson and Fu 2010; Kalmijn 2010). However, the status exchange or exogamous marriage is

considered different from assortative matching. Compared to a homogenous relationship, marriage with exchange of social origins between spouses, exogamy, or intermarriage, is considered as a marker of the level of mobility in society or a sign of assimilation for immigrants, which might indicate a strong/weak boundary between different ethnic, racial, religious, or cultural groups (Kalmijn 1998). It is commonly believed that segregation within a society will suppress intermarriage, while increases in social mobility or immigration might provide a demographic boost for intermarriage (Qian and Lichter 2011).

However, intermarriage is not only a symbolic marker of the boundaries among separate groups of human society, but also an agent for potential cultural and socioeconomic changes and conflicts of interests between individual rights and the biopolitical power of the state, especially in a transnational context. As partner selection is shaped by disparities between genders, studies argue that males tend to seek youth and beauty, while females seek socioeconomic or emotional insurance, especially in exchange marriages (Buss 1998; Farrer 2013; McClintock 2014). In a transnational space, patterns of selection can be deeply rooted in the gender roles and expectations, which are embedded in international political and economic structures.

International marriage is deeply rooted in colonisation, international migration, and racial segregation. “Mail-order brides” or “picture brides” are well-known practices in the colonial and imperialist era as a method of population control and racial segregation by nation-states or sovereign powers, driven by gender-based international migration, labour markets, marriage markets, and human trafficking (Preffer 1986; Roger 1988; Stark 1988; Enss 2005). Before the 1980s, the sexually-selected global labour market was male centred; the global flow of male labour changed the age-sex structure of the local marriage market and created the need for marriage migration (Stark 1987). Merton (1976) emphasised that social stratification in host countries is an obstacle to immigrants’ social integration, and will push these workers to seek a spouse from their countries of origin. International marriage migration is considered a secondary flow caused by the global male labour movement.

The empowerment of women’s educational attainment, labour force participation, and socioeconomic status in developed countries since the 1970s has drastically altered the gender structure of the global labour market. The increasing demands for labour in the service industries in developed countries have created a global market for female workers. Thus, female international migration is no longer limited to family reunification, while women’s choices in international marriage have diversified. Even though women’s

increased freedom in international migration has provided them with more opportunities to find a suitable partner, most of the research and the states concerned still believe that marriage is a covert way of getting better residency rights and attached social welfare benefits.

4.3 Spousal Selection and International Marriage in Mainland China

In recent decades, China's reforms in marriage, labour, and education law and policies have ensured female rights of freedom of marriage and divorce, education, employment, and migration, while relieving their reproductive burden of childbearing. Nowadays Chinese females hold high levels of independence in their socioeconomic activities and mate selection process (Li and Yang 2011). As the state continuously promotes family planning, compulsory education, and labour force participation by women, the socioeconomic and political status of females have improved in recent decades. However, although the conventional gender roles of submissive wife and dominant husband are challenged by institutional arrangements, household and reproductive work is still deemed to be the vocation of women. While, in economically advanced regions and urban areas, females have gained control and freedom, the traditional patterns of segregation and disparity between genders are largely intact among rural communities (Hershatter 2007 and 2014; Zhang 2010).

Despite the country's rapid development and modernisation, stratification between genders still exists. Fei (1992) points out that the marital bond between husband and wife is conventionally considered as a partial link in the familial reproduction chain rather than an individual living unit. In this traditional construction, the central institution in a family is the continuum of patriarchal linkage between father and son, while spousal relationship is secondary, and females are considered to be the property of the family (Ocko 1991). The separation between genders is physiological, psychological, and socioeconomic: male and female physical contact is forbidden outside of wedlock, and in wedlock, they are divided in socioeconomic and reproductive activities, while emotional affection and companionship are considered to be disintegrative factors that can be subversive to the structural stability of the family and society (Fei 1992). Hence, the relationship between heterosexual spouses in the traditional Chinese context is rather a cooperative machine for reproduction and stratification than a vehicle for romantic love and passion. Greenhalgh (1985) argues that the widespread Confucian culture and values in China, Japan, and Korea are a distinguishing feature of the patriarchal system among these east Asian societies, with significant impact on their gender norms,

marital patterns, and socioeconomic and political structures. In China's case, the cultural and institutional design of the nation is largely embedded with and intervenes in the segregation of genders. Since China finished its demographic transition and has reached a low level of mortality and fertility in the recent decade, the drastic change in the population structure has created a demographic dividend of reduced birthrate and a rapidly ageing population. Recently, under the pressure of low fertility, high percentage of ageing population, and structural gender imbalance of the marriageable population, the government has revoked its restrictions on couples' fertility decisions, is promoting alternative types of age care and pension policies, while promoting a campaign to resurrect traditional cultural norms, which give "full scope" to femininity in family life (*People's Daily Online*, Nov. 2013).

Compared to other societies, matching and exchanging are not mutually exclusive in spousal selection¹ in China. Similar to the general pattern of marriage (Blackwell and Lichter 2004; Rosenfeld 2008), spousal selection in China follow an assortative matching pattern, which not only focuses on the importance of status preservation, but also follows the rule of hypergamous pair between genders. The former emphasises the couples' matches of similar social origins and ascribed conditions, while the latter requires females to "marry-up" and males to surpass their female companions, especially in achieved factors such as educational attainment, occupation, and income (Lavelly 1991). In addition, the household registration (hukou) system has created stratification between rural and urban citizens, and tied social resources, welfare, and prestige together with individual household status. Because this system institutionalises inequality, rural residents have become the casualty of systematic disparities, which cannot be easily compensated by educational attainment or migration, as the hukou status is an ascribed feature, which cannot be changed without official approval. To overcome the disadvantage of household status, status exchange marriage enables rural residents with high human capital to marry urban residents with low socioeconomic status in exchange for upward social mobility for themselves and their children (Xing and Nie 2015).

Marriage is the commonly acknowledged efficient pathway to achieve upward mobility in Chinese society, especially for women (Croll 1981; Watson and Ebrey 1991; Wei and Cai 2014); however, hukou status is also an obstacle for rural females' upward mobility. Under the regulation and segregation of the hukou system, because children used to inherit hukou status from their mother, intermarriage with a rural hukou female is not a desirable option for an urban hukou male. In 1998, the Ministry of Public Security and the

State Council have changed their regulations on how to determine a newborn's hukou status, abandoning the matrilineal principle and allowing children to inherit a hukou status from either their father or their mother. As a result, rural female marriage migration and the number of marriages between rural hukou females and urban hukou males increased significantly after the 1998 change in regulation (Xing and Nie 2010).

Besides the standards of assortative matching of families (*mendang hudui*) and hypergamous matching of spouses (*nangao nvdi*), spousal selection in China is also highly concerned with age at marriage, physical height, and marriage history, while paying less attention to the religious or ethnic background, or love and interpersonal affection of the potential spouse (Li 1989). The blunt announcement of the All-China Women's Federation about "leftover women (*shengnü*)" as a serious social problem to be reckoned with (*China Daily*, Nov. 2011) demonstrated the severe age discrimination and pressure on females who remain unmarried in their late twenties and beyond (Wei, Dong, and Jiang 2013). Nevertheless, the boundaries between different ethnic groups are not prioritised in marital choice, except for certain religious groups or cross-nation ethnic groups (Gao and Zhang 2014). Although the country has more than 50 ethnic groups, they are state-identified rather than self-identified ethnicities. With the state's inscription and elaboration of the "nation-state", they are incorporated into one unified creation of nationality to minimise ethnic distinctions (Mullaney 2010). Recent socioeconomic development, however, reinforced ethnic identity, particularly through migration and the disparities between rural-urban regions (Wu 2012; Wu and Wang 2012).

Gender disparity and the hukou system have not only doubled the pressure for females in China's marriage market, but also depleted the males. With China's large scale of internal migration since the late 1990s, following its rapid but unbalanced economic development among different regions, this population movement has altered the structural and spatial distribution of the marriageable population profoundly. Correspondingly, less-developed and remote rural areas have seen a substantial decrease of their labour force and marriageable population. However, because the conventional spousal selection of females holds assortative and hypergamous matching in high regard, the combined effects of demographic, cultural, political and socioeconomic factors have led to a structural imbalance in the marriageable population (Jin, Li, and Li 2011). The latest decade has also witnessed increases in female educational attainment, labour

force participation, and migration, improving women's economic independency. Increases in internal and international migration motivate females to seek more socioeconomic opportunities and desirable spouses. With this overall increase of women's socioeconomic status, it is difficult for a male in a remote and less-developed rural area to find a wife who is "below him" in all aspects in the local marriage market; while a female with advanced achievements in education and socioeconomic status may not be able to find a husband who is "above herself" in all aspects in the local marriage market (Ji and Yeung 2014; Liu and Cai 2015; Yu and Xie 2015).

Since this chain of matching and mobility has reshaped the marriage market, internal marriage and migration markets are intimately bonded with international markets under the global economic order. In some remote and less-developed rural areas of mainland China, international marriage with females from South-east Asia become the last resort choice for Chinese males, as marriageable Chinese females are not available in the local communities (Zhang and Bao 2013; Wang 2014). Meanwhile, in metropolitan cities like Shanghai and Beijing, the age at marriage and overall educational attainment of mainland Chinese females in international marriages tends to be higher than for females in local marriages (Ding et al. 2004; Gao, Zhang and Zhu 2013). A similar phenomenon has happened in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea in the past few decades. With development and urbanisation, females have moved from rural regions to urban areas to seek higher education or occupational opportunities, which has created vacuums in the rural marriage market, hence generating the demand for and marketing of foreign brides (Nakamatasu 2005; Ma, Lin and Zhang 2010; Ye 2010; Kim 2013). With the changes of sex ratio in the labour/marriage market, the global socioeconomic hierarchy, and gender disparities, combined with state control over migration, international marriage has become a confluence of interests, a chain of global intimate economies (Thai 2008).

Prior research has investigated the theme of spousal selection; however, marriage in the transnational field has not had enough attention from this area of academic research because the majority of the family studies view international marriage as a special form of international migration. Although numerous works on international marriage in mainland China and Asia tend to believe that another motivation for this type of marriage is status exchange (e.g., Lin and Shen 2005; Yan and Lu 2010; Quan 2012; Kim 2013), few researchers have put this assumption to the test. It is commonly accepted (without empirical assessment)

that the essence of this exchange is that females from developing countries and areas trade their youth and beauty for the traits that they lack: residency or working permits in an advanced socioeconomic environment. Since existing research continuously uses status exchange theory as an explanation for the motivation of international marriage among Asian societies, comprehensive analysis of the hypothesis of “intermarriage in exchange for international mobility” is needed.

4.4 Data

This study utilises a set of data from the provincial Marriage-Divorce Registration Record Database from 2005 to 2016. This digitalised online database contains registration records of international and domestic marriages. Since the state began to publicly legalise international marriage in 1979, the only source of information on international marriages in mainland China is the marriage and divorce registration records from the Ministry and Bureaus of Civil Affairs. The Chinese embassies in foreign countries can also provide registration for mainland citizens and Hong Kong residents overseas, but such data is not accessible. Although the Ministry has published yearbooks that contain information related to the general trends of international marriage in mainland China, the depth of the information it provides is limited. To examine the feature of spousal matching of international marriage in mainland China, the data of marriage registration records are the most suitable source of this type of information. It also needs to be stressed that the data applied in this research originated from a set of provincial registration records, which means it cannot represent international marriage across the whole country. But since international marriage is a highly diversified phenomenon in mainland China, and the country has significant variations among regions, it will enrich the literature for this field of research, as the province holds a large percentage of annual international marriage registrations over decades.

Since the aim of data collection during marriage registration is to provide information for the state’s population governance and legalisation of wedlock, it is hardly accidental that this dataset can be largely related to local concerns rather than academic foci. This is also the reason why, in the research field of international marriage, empirical research has been largely limited to small surveys or case studies. In recent years, some Asian governments, such as South Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, have either started to include information on international marriages in their census, or allowed scholars to utilise their vital

registration data. Consequently, this led to a series of fruitful studies of Asian international marriages in the 2010s, but the scope and methodology of the research is still limited.

The registration records applied in this research includes information about married couples from 2005 to 2016. Since the husband and wife are paired in these records, with the help of the Bureau's digitalised online database, further analysis of matching patterns and features between spouses is possible. The dataset from this database also contains a range of individuals' demographic information at the date of their registration. Compared to the census or survey data, this dataset is not subject to survivorship bias, as it records the historical information about the couple and their marriage without the selective depletion of union dissolution. Information contained in the dataset includes age at marriage, educational attainment, country of origin, occupational status, marriage history, and so on.

However, due to the aims of the registration record, the dataset does not provide enough information to identify the household registration status of mainland Chinese citizens at marriage. Meanwhile, there are considerable missing values in individuals' occupational information, and the record does not contain information about both parties' parents. Considering the aim of this study, the information on educational attainment and country of origin are applied as status variables in the analysis to compare couples in assortative and hypergamous matching.

For information on educational attainment, the data in the dataset is recorded as categorical data with seven scales: primary school, secondary school, high school, vocational school, college and university, graduate school and above, and others. The data itself cannot provide information to indicate whether a person was currently enrolled or had dropped out of certain types of education, thus the measurement of education represents a maximum educational attainment. The categories of educational attainment of individuals are based on the degree attained rather than the years of education, and foreigner's educational attainment is also categorised based on their highest degree attained, to ensure accuracy. The "other" category in educational attainment contained individuals with no schooling, home schooled, or other types of education that cannot be categorised by the modern educational system; it also included individuals who refused to provide information on their educational attainment. The total of this category among all cases is seven percent. In the analysis, educational attainment was divided into six subgroups, as other types of education were dropped due to a limited number of cases and information. Differences of educational attainment

within spousal couples are also included in the tabulation analysis, and divided into three groups: husband's education higher than wife's; husband's education equal to wife's; and husband's education lower than wife's. These gaps in educational levels are calculated based on the categorical data of individual educational attainment.

The measurement of country of origin in international marriage is different from the conventional understanding of this type of marriage. With China's unique social and historical changes since 1949, international marriage in China is complicated by the country's political relationship with the rest of the world. The official definition of international marriage in mainland China includes five types of marriage: mainland Chinese citizens marry foreigners; mainland Chinese citizens marry overseas Chinese with Chinese citizenship; mainland Chinese citizens marry residents from Hong Kong SAR; mainland Chinese citizens marry residents from Macao SAR; and mainland Chinese citizens marry residents from Taiwan. In addition, marriage between non-Chinese citizens can also get registration in mainland China if the match conforms with China's marriage law. In the dataset applied in this study, only the records of these five types of international marriage in mainland China are utilised. Other types of marriage that do not include mainland Chinese citizens, such as foreigner marry foreigner, or resident from SAR marrying foreigner, are not included in the analysis. The number of non-Chinese citizens' marriage in mainland China for this research window is extremely small and is not the focus of this research.

Among all the international married couples, non-mainland Chinese males originate from 106 countries or areas, while non-mainland Chinese females originate from 53 countries or areas, of which half of the number of marriages with citizens from foreign countries is lower than five. The countries of origin include not only socioeconomically developed regions, but also less-developed areas. To conduct an efficient analysis, the country of origin is converted into three types, based on the average score of each country's Human Development Index of 2005, 2010 and 2015 (UN 2018). The HDI of country of origin was compared to China's to provide the relative advantage of the foreign spouse's origin, and all the countries are allocated into three different advantage/disadvantage groups. Taking the structure of the data and the aim of this research into consideration, overseas Chinese, residents of Taiwan, and residents from Hong Kong or Macao are categorised as mutually exclusive comparison groups, with three relative advantage/disadvantage groups of countries of origin.

Since age at marriage has a significant effect on mainland Chinese citizens' choice of marrying internally or internationally, following the general age pattern of marriage in China, the age at marriage is also converted into categories, with the husband's age one year younger to four years older than the wife's classified as the homogenous one, while the husband's age at least five years older or husband's age at least two years younger than the wife's are classified as the heterogenous pairs.

4.5 Methodology

Since the aim of this chapter is to test the assumption of status exchange in international marriage, it is appropriate to consider some of the commonly used methodology in the literature. In the research area of spousal selection of marriage, the test of exchange is applied to both contingency tables and linear regression models (Gullickson 2006 and 2014; Agresti 2013; Schwartz, Zeng and Xie, 2016). However, a methodological concern about the status-exchange hypothesis is the differences of efficiency between two dimensional cross-tabulation and complex log-linear approaches (Rosenfeld 2005; Gullickson and Fu 2010; Kalmijn 2010). The two-dimensional tabulation method is not as sensitive as the complicated modelling procedure, as early studies of status exchange tend to produce contrary views; while the linear regression model is over-sensitive to minor effects of status exchange, which might exaggerate the effect of exchange (Rosenfeld 2005; Fu 2008; Gullickson and Fu 2010). Since the law of parsimony is a heuristic preference, the cross-tabulation method seems to be the logical option. However, more sophisticated approaches in previous studies have revealed status exchange across a variety of datasets since the 2000s. Compared to the tabulation method, the estimated linear model can control for inter-trait correlations within individuals, while examining whether unions that are consistent with exchange are more frequent than in selection by random chance (Schwartz et al. 2016; Gullickson 2017).

It is understandable that doubt has risen over the conflicting empirical results of different research approaches in previous studies (Rosenfeld 2005). Since a variety of empirical work has demonstrated that most of the spousal matching tends to be homogenous pairing, some key questions rise in the research into status exchange. Because intermarriage among different racial backgrounds and social stratifications is viewed as status-exchange marriage, the latent assumption is that the marriage is anything but homogenous matching. However, according to Fu (2008), even in the clearest cases of status exchange like marriage between the minority ethnic groups and the whites in America, there is no difference in status exchange

compared to endogamous marriage within racial groups. One of the most important issues here is that with the gradual increase in overall educational attainment, gender equality, and social equality among different ethnicities, the pattern of homogenous pairing might be strengthened by these changes, even in intermarriage.

In the research into international marriage, the question becomes more complicated than for research into intermarriage in the domestic marriage market. Since the spousal selection process inevitably contains the mechanisms of both matching and competition, it is possible that the exchange is also based on homogenous pairing between spouses' ascribed and achieved statuses across countries, and the imbalanced matching of macro-political and macro-economic structures. The potential exchange is related to the gender differences or socioeconomic status of individuals, as well as being intertwined with possible prejudice and global political and economic structures of countries of origin. To make things more complicated, this geo-political stratification might obscure the observation of possible homogamy in the transnational field. Another issue is that whether the international marriage is indeed a status exchange marriage is also highly related to its reference group, so the ideal of "homogenous pairing" in marriage can be various depending on the baseline sociocultural contexts of different countries. If status exchange does exist in international marriage, then the best way to test this exchange is to isolate the effect of this intra-trait correlation and imbalanced structure.

To investigate exchange in partner selection in international marriage and overcome some of the limitations of the previous studies, this study began with contingency tables, which provide a straightforward description of the spousal matching pattern in international marriage. If a hypothesised relationship exists in a basic approach to the analysis of exchange, then the complicated linear regression will also be able to detect this effect if it is robust and consistent (Kalmijn 1998; Rosenfeld 2005; Fu 2008). The tabulation method is a matrix format display on frequency distribution of the variables, which will provide an overall picture of the interrelation between two variables and the interactions between them. Tabulation analysis is applied to test the mobility between couples of different origin, age-gap, and level of education. The existing literature on partner selection in international marriage tends to emphasise that exchange is a trade-off of relative advantage between spouses. It predicts that for the exchange to happen, one partner will possess certain assets, such as youth, beauty, advanced socioeconomic status, which their partner lacks, and vice

versa. The relative measurement of differences between spouses became the best way to measure this exchange, which is used in the cross-tabulation analysis.

Correspondingly, in this study, all couples in international marriage are classified as nine types (Table 4-1), in which the exchange of relative advantage in international marriage can be classified into a cross-tabulation. Take the tabulation of relative advantage of educational attainment and social origin for example: $\pi_{1,1}$ is the husband- advantaged hypergamous marriage with both the husband's traits higher than the wife's. In domestic marriage, this will be the type of marriage conventionally accepted and valued in mainland China; in international marriage, if the hypothesis of status exchange in the existing literature is correct, this is the type of marriage is less likely to happen, as the husband with advanced country of origin is believed to have below-average socioeconomic status and under the pressure of competition in the marriage market, is thus forced to find a wife outside his own country. The $\pi_{3,3}$ represent the hypogamous marriage that advantages the wife. In mainland China's domestic marriages, based on conventional spousal matching patterns and unwavering gender disparities, this type of marriage will hold a low percentage among all types of marriages. While in international marriage, the existing research has largely overlooked this type of marriage; it is possible that the marriage happens when the female originates from socioeconomically advanced countries. $\pi_{2,2}$ will be the homogenous matching of spouses for both international and domestic marriage, as both parties share relatively equal traits. $\pi_{3,1}$ will be a status-exchange marriage following the assumption of existing literature in international marriage, while for domestic couples in mainland China, the intermarriage of urban hukou husband and rural hukou wife can be categorised as this marriage. $\pi_{1,3}$ is also a status-exchange for both international and domestic marriages.

Table 4-1 Classification of Marriages by the Relative Advantage between Spouses

		Spouse's relative origin		
		Husband>Wife	Husband=Wife	Husband<Wife
Spouse's relative educational attainment	Husband>Wife	$\pi_{1,1}$	$\pi_{1,2}$	$\pi_{1,3}$
	Husband=Wife	$\pi_{2,1}$	$\pi_{2,2}$	$\pi_{2,3}$
	Husband<Wife	$\pi_{3,1}$	$\pi_{3,2}$	$\pi_{3,3}$

NOTE: Husband>Wife means that husband has relative advantage in the trait; Husband=Wife means that the spouses share the same trait; Husband<Wife means that the wife has relative advantage. The row i and column j positions of each cell are shown by $\pi_{i,j}$.

The test of exchange can also be related to how homogamy is defined and controlled (Rosenfeld 2005).

Thus, log-linear models are applied to test the exchange under a set of assumptions of homogamy in

education and social origin. The assumption is that international marriage can be explained by the general pattern of origin exogamy, educational marginal distributions of husband and wife, and educational matching across all couples. The general model of log-linear regression is specified as

$$\ln(F_{ij}) = \mu + \mu_i^R + \mu_j^C + X_{ij} \quad (4.1)$$

where F_{ij} is the expected frequency of marriages between husband of the i th educational category and wife of the j th educational category, μ is the overall effect, μ_i^R denotes the row effect of i th row, and μ_j^C denotes the column effect of j th column. X_{ij} denotes the inter-trait correlation matrix based on the model design. For a two-way relationship, the expected frequency of marriage between husband and wife with different social origins can be calculated in the same way. To test the exchange between a husband with the i th category of educational attainment and the k th category of country of origin, and a wife with the j th education and l th origin, the model will include parameters that represent these effects. The model assumes that the expected distribution of international marriages can be explained by: the marginal distribution of husband and wife in categories of educational attainment and social origin; the general pattern of origin and educational homogamy ($\mu_{ik}^{HE \cdot HO}$ and $\mu_{ik}^{HE \cdot WE}$); the association of individual education and origin is controlled by ($\mu_{kl}^{HO \cdot WO}$ and $\mu_{jl}^{WE \cdot WO}$); and the X_{ij} are a set of dummy variables to identify the possible interactions between spouses' traits of relative advantage.

4.6 Empirical Results

The debates in the existing literature of status exchange and its context in international marriage have not been able to provide a comprehensive or applicable research paradigm. It is commonly accepted that the desirable trait in international marriage is the potential right of residency, or work opportunity, in a socioeconomically advanced country or area (Piper 2016). But the analysis of what trait is used in exchange for the rights of residency is rather vague. Age, psychical attraction, sexuality, educational attainment, income, socioeconomic recourse, cultural similarities/differences, or gender expectations, are all portrayed as part of the trait the disadvantaged party can provide in exchange for residency without much crystallise (Piper 2003; Yang and Lu 2010; Williams 2010; Quan 2012). Some of the research has highlighted the macro-structure features, such as the imbalance of marriageable population in the local marriage market, gender disparities, or global economic-political power, but on the individual level, what can be considered as a desirable compensation for advanced residency is unclear. In China's case, much of the research faces

the same problem. International marriage is believed to be based on the exchange of the physical attractiveness of women from less developed regions and below-average socioeconomic status of men from more developed regions. According to the existing research (Quan 2012), a typical characteristic of individuals who married foreigners is the below average human capital and/or social status of themselves compared to their domestic counterpart, and vice versa. It is commonly believed that the differences between international married spouses come from the premium put on foreign residency rights. If this association exists, then the status exchange marriage in a transnational context should be categorised as $\pi_{3,1}$, while the husband-advantaged marriage of $\pi_{1,1}$ and wife-advantaged marriage of $\pi_{3,3}$ is highly unlikely to happen. In addition, the $\pi_{1,3}$ type of international marriage should also be considered as a status exchange marriage, in which a wife with a relatively higher country of origin and lower educational attainment marries a husband with a relatively lower country of origin and higher educational attainment. However, according to the Bureau's online database (Table 4-2), the distribution of husband's and wife's relative advantages in international marriage is obviously not consistent with the assumption of status exchange, as the majority of the marriages are hypergamous or homogamous.

Table 4-2 Classification of Marriages by the Relative Advantage between Spouses in International Marriage

		Spouse's relative origin		
		Husband>Wife	Husband=Wife	Husband<Wife
Spouse's relative education	Husband>Wife	31.84	5.12	1.52
	Husband=Wife	25.76	13.25	8.05
	Husband<Wife	6.35	5.42	2.71

NOTE: See Table 4-1. Calculated based on the Bureau's database (%).

SOURCE: BCA provincial *Marriage-Divorce Registration Record Database*, 2005 to 2016.

Take the tabulation of educational attainment and country of origin in international marriage for example; the connection between two relative advantages on traits is obvious. A basic test of a wife's education in exchange for the husband's origin should be $F_{3,1}/F_{1,1} > 1$, while the wife's origin exchange for the husband's education should be $F_{1,3}/F_{3,3} > 1$. The numerators denote the status-exchange marriage, while the denominators represent the marriages where one party holds a relative advantage in both educational attainment and country of origin. Since these two expressions examined mixed-origin couples only, it does not provide any information on the endogamous couples. Based on the provincial data, the basic test of international marriage yields a $F_{3,1}/F_{1,1}$ ratio of $6.35/31.84 \approx 0.19 < 1$ and a $F_{1,3}/F_{3,3}$ ratio of $1.52/2.71 \approx$

0.56 < 1, which shows that the results are inconsistent with the exchange of the wife's education for the husband's origin, and the husband's education for the wife's origin. However, as the general tendency of marriage matching is that females are more likely to marry-up, the ratios here may indicate the tendency of females (or males) to marry males (or females) with higher (or lower) education than themselves, which cannot exclude the possibility of status exchange.

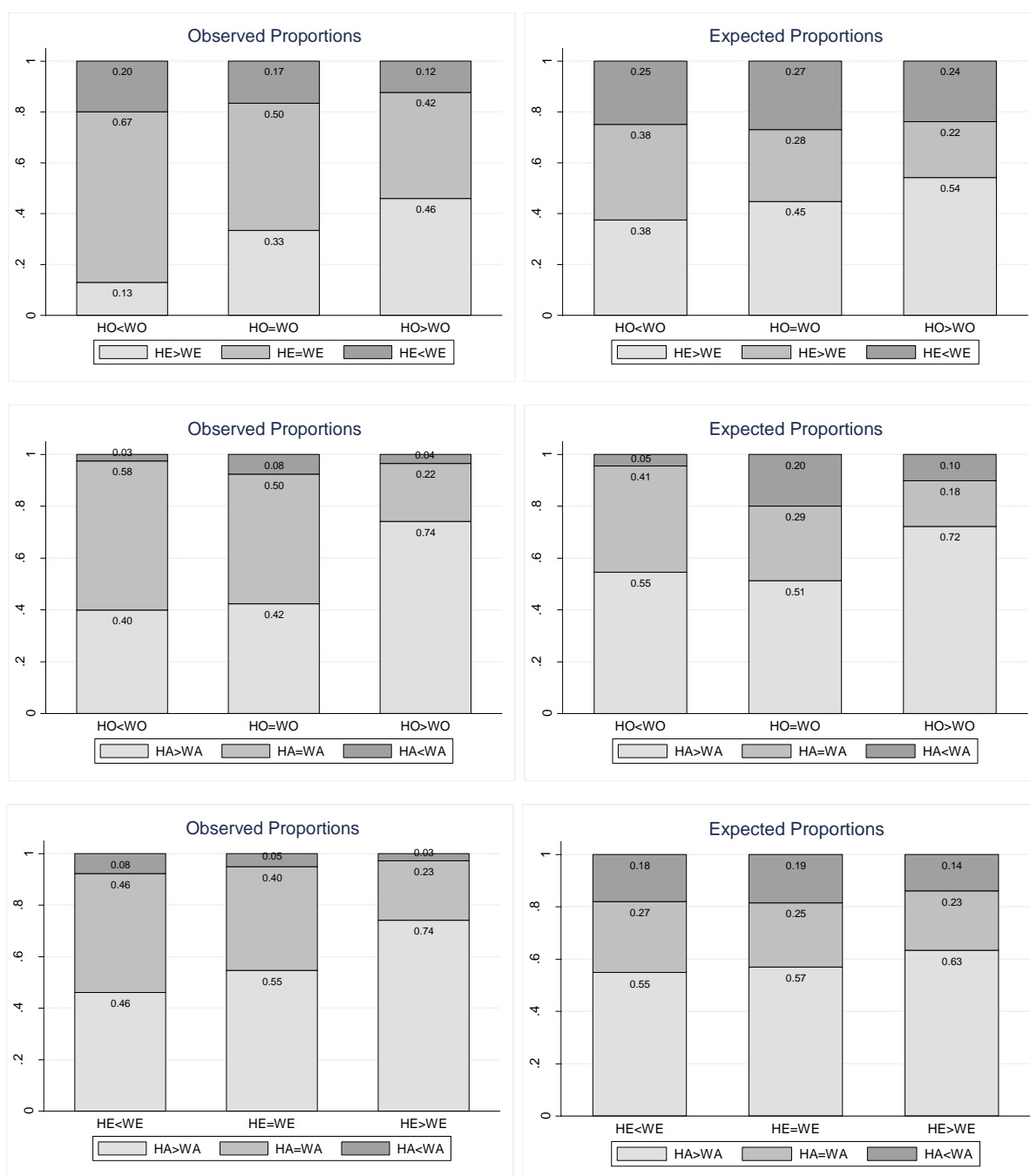
Then the next question is to control the tendency of hypergamous and homogamous matching. Couples sharing similar traits can be applied as the reference group. Then to test if the wife's education is in exchange for the husband's origin, the expression should be $(F_{3,1}/F_{1,1})/(F_{3,2}/F_{1,2}) > 1$; and the wife's origin in exchange for the husband's education should be $(F_{1,3}/F_{3,3})/(F_{1,2}/F_{3,2}) > 1$. The basic test of the status exchange marriage is the numerators, and the general tendency to hypergamy among couples who are homogamously matched on origin is the denominator. According to Schwartz et al. (2016), this comparison can be viewed as the odds ratio measure of exchange marriage. If the educational hypergamy is controlled, then higher the ratio is, greater the possibility of exchange. The test of wife's education in exchange for husband's origin is $(6.35/31.84)/(5.42/5.12) \approx 0.19$, and for wife's origin in exchange for husband's education is $(1.52/2.71)/(5.12/5.42) \approx 0.60$. Hence, following the above results, although controlled for the general tendency of hypergamy this test still provides no support for status exchange in international marriage. However, this test might overlook the possible correlation between educational attainment and country of origin. Given that the individual with higher education tends to come from a higher social status and a more developed region, and people with less education tend to come from modest backgrounds, it is natural that a high percentage of the pairings should be in the husband-advantaged or wife-advantaged categories ($\pi_{1,1}$ and $\pi_{3,3}$). A status exchange marriage means the individuals are generally advanced in their educational background, but lower in origin, or advanced in origin, but lower in educational background. It is also the widely accepted pattern of status exchange marriage in the research field of international marriage. Among domestic marriage couples, it is expected that the number of this type of individuals and their exchange marriages will be relatively small compared to the large number of homogenous pairs; in international marriages, even though status exchange marriage is believed to be the majority type, the number of exchange marriages is much smaller than that of hypergamous marriages in the dataset applied to this research. Since this test used husband-advantaged marriages and wife-advantaged marriages that are

biased due to the positive correlation between traits, the next test needs to take this association under control (Kalmjin 2010; Schwartz et al. 2016).

The next test has to control for both the general tendency of hypergamy and the tendency of husband-advantaged marriage, as well as wife-advantaged marriage. To conduct this analysis, the test can be specified as $((F_{3,1}/F_{1,1})/(F_{3,2}/F_{1,2}))/((f_{3,1}/f_{1,1})/(f_{3,2}/f_{1,2})) > 1$, which represent the wife's education in exchange for the husband's origin, and $((F_{1,3}/F_{3,3})/(F_{1,2}/F_{3,2}))/((f_{1,3}/f_{3,3})/(f_{1,2}/f_{3,2})) > 1$, which indicates the wife's origin in exchange for the husband's education. The f_{ij} is the expected distribution of each type of marriage under the assumption of random matching, given the observed distribution of each party's educational attainment and country of origin, the tendency of hypergamy and homogamy, and the joint distribution of inter-traits, while F_{ij} is the observed distribution. However, this test is assuming that the match between spouse are random if the correlations are controlled, which is highly unlikely due to people's strong tendency of educational homogamous matching. To depict the effect of status exchange, this strong tendency of homogamy within traits must be controlled. To test the assumption of exchange, further control of homogamy will convert the wife's education in exchange for husband's origin into $((F_{3,1}/F_{1,1})/(F_{3,2}/F_{1,2}))/((f'_{3,1}/f'_{1,1})/(f'_{3,2}/f'_{1,2})) > 1$, and the wife's origin in exchange for the husband's education into $((F_{1,3}/F_{3,3})/(F_{1,2}/F_{3,2}))/((f'_{1,3}/f'_{3,3})/(f'_{1,2}/f'_{3,2})) > 1$, where the f'_{ij} also denotes the expected distribution in the (i,j) cell; but this expected proportion or frequency is decided by a series of assumptions on the joint distribution of correlated traits, and the tendency of homogamy and hypergamy. The individual characteristics and their positive correlation must be controlled; namely, educational attainment and country of origin, and the interaction between these two needs to be controlled for both parties.

Figure 4-1 provides a clear indication of the spousal matching pattern in the international marriage database. The observed jointed distributions of husband's and wife's relative advantages on education, origin, and age are on the left-hand side, while on the right-hand side are the expected proportion under random matching. The data (4-1a) indicated that considering the relative advantage of educational attainment and country of origin, there are more husband-advantaged (46%) and wife-advantaged (13%) marriages than exchange marriages.

This gives $((0.12/0.46)/(0.17/0.33))/((0.24/0.54)/(0.27/0.48)) \approx 0.64 < 1$ evidence that the wife does not exchange their education for the husband's origin; the exchange between husband's education and wife's origin can be calculated as $((0.13/0.20)/(0.33/0.17))/((0.38/0.25)/(0.45/0.27)) \approx 0.36 < 1$, in which is also evidence that no exchange has happened. The comparison between observed and expected spousal matching of relative advantages in educational attainment, age at marriage, and country of origin exhibits no exchanges, while the observed distribution of relative advantage in all types of matching shows a higher



NOTE: Calculated based on the Bureau's database, two-group test. Expected proportions calculated under random matching. HE is husband's education; WE is wife's education; HO is husband's origin; WO is wife's origin; HA is husband's age; WA is wife's age. a) Top-left, observed distribution of spouse's relative educational attainment by relative origin; b) top-right, expected distribution of spouse's relative educational attainment by relative origin; c) middle-left, observed distribution of spouse's relative age by relative origin; d) middle-right, expected distribution of spouse's relative age by relative origin; e) bottom-left, observed

distribution of spouse's relative age by relative educational attainment; f) bottom-right, distribution of spouse's relative age by relative educational attainment.

SOURCE: BCA provincial *Marriage-Divorce Registration Record Database*, 2005 to 2016.

Figure 4-1 Spouse's Relative Advantage, Observed Matching and Expected Matching

percentage of homogenous matches than expected. In sum, by controlling the tendency of assortative matching, this test still provides no evidence for exchange among couples in international marriage.

For a tabulation method, if the individuals' characteristics need to be controlled to detect the net effect of exchange, it cannot provide an efficient way to calculate the expected distribution for a higher-way table; hence the log-linear method is a suitable option to further explore the relative advantage between spouses and the patterns of spousal matching. The complicated method provides a pathway to control the joint distribution of related SES advantages, as the expected distribution is no longer assumed to follow a random pattern. In practice, assortative matching and homogamous couples are the main patterns of matches in the marriage market, which must be controlled to estimate the net effect of status exchange (Kalmijn 1993; Rosenfeld 2005; Gullickson 2006; Schwartz 2016).

Table 4-3 Log-linear Estimation Test for Spousal Status Exchange

	Wife's education for Husband's origin	Wife's origin for Husband's education
Model 1: Diagonal homogamy with off-diagonal heterogamy	0.73*** (0.04)	0.19*** (0.02)
Model 2: Model1 + traits vary by levels of education, origin, and age	0.83*** (0.04)	0.12*** (0.01)
Model 3: Model2 + traits vary by within-couple differences	0.91*** (0.05)	0.17*** (0.02)
Model 4: Quasi-symmetry (with <i>lowest BIC</i>)	0.86*** (0.05)	0.15*** (0.02)
Model 5: With saturated interaction of education, origin, and age	0.86*** (0.05)	0.15*** (0.02)

NOTE: Calculated based on the Bureau's database. ** denotes significance at 5% level; *** denotes significance at 1% level. The table reports odds ratios and standard errors (in brackets).

SOURCE: BCA provincial *Marriage-Divorce Registration Record Database*, 2005 to 2016.

Table 4-3 shows the test results of status exchange between couples in international marriage. Since the key of this test is the control of homogamy and tendency to assortative matching, a series of log-linear models were applied to test status exchange based on specified types of correlation between traits. The dependent variable is the expected frequency of marriage between husbands and wives in terms of each type of category—educational attainment, age at marriage, and country of origin, respectively. Marginal distributions of these three traits between genders are also controlled for each model; interactions between personal relative advantages in educational attainment, origin, and age, as well as patterns of homogamous matching, are also controlled by each model. Husband-advantaged marriage and wife-advantaged marriage are applied as reference groups to calculate the ratio of status exchange marriage to one party-advantaged

marriages. From model 1 to model 5, all parameters for status exchange are statistically significant, and the range is below 1. Based on the specifications for correlation of relative advantages and traits, the possibilities of status exchange marriage fall short of one party-advantaged marriages. While the results between genders are also different, it is obvious that women are more likely to follow the hypergamous rule and “marry-up”. This is to say that the premium on advanced country of origin has further enhanced hypergamous marriages, especially for women. In sum, no matter how the tendency to homogamy or correlation of parameters is controlled, the results shows that the test of status exchange for couples in international marriage is rather weak, which is consistent with the findings from simple tests, as well as with the patterns depicted by random matching (Figure 4-1).

4.7 Discussion and Conclusion

The status exchange theory is commonly used to explain the mechanisms and motivations for international marriage. This study finds that this theoretical framework is not clearly defined, it is also weak in explaining the patterns of international marriage using the registration data in mainland China during the past decade. Although the existing research emphasises that the pattern for international marriage is that females from socioeconomically disadvantaged countries marry males from socioeconomically advantaged countries in exchange for the lawful rights of foreign residency and/or employment, in practice the nature of the marriage is either following highly homogamous pattern, or determined by one’s advanced individual traits. This is to say that couples in international marriage follow the same hypergamous pairing and assortative matching patterns as couples in domestic marriage, or even go further in their spousal selection standards. In the international marriage market, compared to the husband-advantaged and wife-advantaged marriage pattern, status exchange marriage is much less likely to happen for both genders. The majority of such marriages are either homogamous or one-party advantaged matches, in which, if one party possesses a higher social origin, the other will possess a similar or lower educational level. If the wife has a high educational level but is of low origin, the possibility of her marrying internationally to a husband with a low level of human capital in exchange for his higher origin is significantly lower than for a husband-advantaged marriage. For a wife of high origin but with a relatively lower educational level, the possibility of exchange marriage is even lower than it is for a wife-advantaged marriage.

Findings from this study challenge conventional understandings of spousal selection behaviour in the international marriage market. Although existing studies argue that international marriage is the typical case of exchange marriage to compensate for disadvantages, in fact, the pattern of matches in relative advantage between couples in this study follow the patterns of hypergamous matches for *both genders*. International marriage provides a channel for upward mobility for the underprivileged party, but it polarises such marriage by further strengthening hypergamous matches within couples. The existing research provides similar results for socially stratified homogamous matches and individual trait-hypergamous matches in mainland China's domestic marriage market (Li 2011; Qi and Niu 2012; Mu and Xie 2014; Ma 2017). In addition, the patterns of spousal matching in international marriage is similar but not identical with China's inter-hukou marriages, even though status exchange marriages do exist in both international marriage market and inter-hukou marriage market. According to Wang and Schwartz (2018), China's inter-hukou marriages is positively associated with the increase of urban-rural economic inequality since the 1990s, especially for rural origin females. Similar as international marriage, it is possible that the inter-hukou marriage has offered women a pathway to achieve economic stability and upward social mobility when facing high disparities, while further strengthened disadvantages for rural origin men. However, couples in international marriage are more likely to be polarised by the homogamous and assortative matching of their socioeconomic status, while couples in inter-hukou marriages are showing high possibilities of heterogenous matches which built on the exchange between one party-advanced socioeconomic status or hukou status (Lui 2016, 2017).

The hypotheses of the existing research framework assume that residency and working rights are so important that women in international marriages willingly marry below-average foreign men in exchange for these benefits. But in practice in international marriages, women, privileged or not, are more interested in men with higher socioeconomic status than themselves. For underprivileged men, their higher status of country of origin might provide them with advantages, but the premium of such advantage is limited to the requirements of hypergamy. Individuals who have a premium in their social economic status and origin will be in a better position in international marriages, but for the individual who has a modest status, the marriage might further solidify their disadvantage. In the contemporary Chinese marriage market, international marriage has reinforced marriage barriers.

The limitation of this research is that, although the effects of age structure and its matching between spouses are controlled in the analysis, the method itself cannot provide further interpretation of the premium of such characteristics as youthfulness, as the pair of a youthful wife and privileged husband is a hypergamous marriage. Yet, this limitation does not weaken the overall results, which show weak patterns of exchange, and strong patterns of hypergamy and homogamy among couples in international marriage. From the distributions of spouses' relative advantages between age at marriage and country of origin, it is clear that husband-advantaged marriage is more likely to happen, but age-homogenous matching also has a high possibility of occurrence. Another limitation is that the *hukou* status of domestic married couples cannot be identified in the database, and their occupation information is incomplete for this analysis. This limits the comparison of the two types of marriage. It is possible that international marriage can be a pathway for migrant rural workers to overcome their precarious life situation, but further tests would be needed to explore such a relationship.

Notes

Draft version of this article was presented at the *Western Economic Association International 93rd Annual Conference*, Vancouver, BC, June 27, 2018. The authors acknowledge the support of the Bureau of Civil Affairs, the Higher Degree Research Office at Macquarie University and Centre for Population and Development Studies at Renmin University of China. Thanks are due to Professor Zheng Wu for his helpful advice on this chapter. Address correspondence to Shenghan Cai at shenghan.cai@mq.edu.au

1 During the early Communist era of PRC, along with the new freedom of mate selection, the conventional matching patterns of marriage was suppressed by the homogamous matching on political castes. The CCP has emphasized the righteousness of political homogamy between spouses, as a result, intermarriage with political compatibility between spouses were encouraged by the regime. Most of this intermarriage exists between female with high educational attainment and/or high social origin/status and male with low socioeconomic status (See Huang 1962). Historically, marriage of convenience also exists during the Second Sino-Japanese War in in Central Soviet Area as marriage became a political task of women; from 1950 to 1952, aiming to consolidate border defence, the regime political mobilized large number of females to migrated to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps and married to local military personals. In both cases, the marriages also share hypergamous features: female marry-down to male with relatively low status/origins but compatible political castes (See Xu 2011). The political system, though enforced a marriage revolution long before the formation of this regime, also backed up by the traditional family norms: individuals' love and happiness are secondary compares to the solidarity and reproduction of family and the stability of society/political order (See Stacey 1983). This type of institutional-cultural biopolitical logic (and interference) on interpersonal relationships also can be observed throughout the state's establishment and revoke of its family planning policy, and the decriminalization of international marriage.

References

- Atkinson, Maxine P. and Becky L. Glass. 1985. "Marital age heterogamy and homogamy, 1900 to 1980," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 47(3): 685-691.
- Beck, Ulrich and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim. 2014. *Distant Love, Personal Life in the Global Age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Becker, Gary S. 1991. *A Treatise on the Family, enlarged edition*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Becker, Gary S. 1993. *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with Special Reference to Education, 3rd Edition*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Bertrand, Marianne, Patricia Cortes, Claudia Olivetti, and Jessica Pan. 2018. "Social norms, labour market opportunities, and the marriage gap for skilled women," *IZA Discussion Paper* No. 11382.
- Blackwell, Debra L. and Daniel T. Lichter. 2004. "Homogamy among dating, cohabiting, and married couples," *The Sociological Quarterly* 45(4): 719-737.
- Blau, Peter M. and Otis Dudley Duncan. 1967. *The American Occupational Structure*. New York: Free Press.
- Breger, Rosemary and Rosanna Hill. 1998. *Cross-Cultural Marriage: Identity and Choice*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

- Burgess, Ernest W. and Paul Wallin. 1943. "Homogamy in social characteristics," *American Journal of Sociology* 49(2): 109-124.
- Buss, David M.. 1998. "Sexual strategies theory: Historical origins and current status," *The Journal of Sex Research* 35(1): 19-31.
- Buzan, Barry, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde. 1998. *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*. Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Castles, Stephen and Alastair Davidson. 2001. *Citizenship and Migration: Globalization and the Politics of Belonging*. New York: Routledge.
- Castles, Stephen. 2010. "Understanding global migration: A social transformation perspective," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36(10): 1565-1586.
- Charsley, Katharine. 2005. "Unhappy husbands: Masculinity and migration in transnational Pakistani marriages," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 11(1): 85-105.
- China Daily. 2012. "The marry-by date outlives its usefulness," http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/weekly/2012-11/30/content_15972982.htm (accessed 21 September 2018).
- Collins, Marcus. 2006. *Morden Love: Personal Relationships in Twentieth-Century Britain*. Newark: University of Delaware Press.
- Constable, Nicole. 2003. *Romance on a Global Stage: Pen Pals, Virtual Ethnography, and "Mail Order" Marriages*. London: University of California Press.
- Constable, Nicole. 2004. *Cross-Border Marriages: Gender and Mobility in Transnational Asia*. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- D'Aoust, Anne-Marie. 2013. "In the name of love: Marriage migration, governmentality, and technologies of love," *International Political Sociology* 7: 258-274.
- Davis, Kingsley. 1941. "Intermarriage in caste society," *American Anthropologist* 43: 376-395.
- Ding, Jinhong, Hongyan Yang, Shaoyun Zhou, Jixiang Zhou, Kewu Lin, and Yuzhi Zhang. 2004. "Characteristics and trends of cross-nation marriage in modern Shanghai," *Chinese Journal of Population Science* 3: 66-70.
- Durkheim, Emile. 2002. *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*. London: Routledge.
- Elder, Glen H. Jr.. 1970. "Marriage mobility, life patterns, and personality," *Sociological Symposium* 4: 31-54.
- Enss, Chris. 2005. *Hearts West: The True Stories of Mail-Order Brides on the Frontier*. Connecticut: Globe Pequot Press.
- Farrer, James. 2013. "Good stories: Chinese women's international love stories as cosmopolitan sexual politics," *Sexualities* 16(1/2): 12-29.
- Fei, Xiaotong. 1992. *From the Soil, The Foundations of Chinese Society, A Translation of Fei Xiaotong's Xiangtu Zhongguo*. London: University of California Press.
- Fortes, Meyer. 1969. *Kinship and the Social Order: The Legacy of Lewis Henry Morgan*. London : Routledge and K. Paul.
- Foucault, Michel. 2003. *"Society Must Be Defended", Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*. New York: Picador.
- Fu, Xuanning. 2008. "Interracial marriage and family socioeconomic well-being: Equal status exchange or caste status exchange?," *Social Science Journal* 45: 132-155.

- Geary, David C. 1998. *Male, Female: The Evolution of Human Sex Differences*. Washington: American Psychological Association.
- Giddens, Anthony. 1992. *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love, and Eroticism in Modern Societies*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Glass, D. V.. 1954. *Social Mobility in Britain*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Goode, William J.. 1963. *World Revolution and Family Patterns*. New York: Free Press of Glencoe.
- Goody, Jack. 1971. *Kinship: Selected Readings*. Harmondsworth : Penguin.
- Gordon, Milton M.. 1964. *Assimilation in American Life: Role of Race, Religion, and National Origins*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Gould, Roger V.. 2003. *Collison of Wills: How Ambiguity About Social Rank Breeds Conflict*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Greenhalgh, Susan. 1985. "Sexual stratification: The other side of "growth with equity" in East Asia," *Population and Development Review* 11(2): 265-314.
- Gullickson, Aaron. 2006. "Education and Black-White marriage in the United States, 1960 and 1970," *Demography* 43(4): 673-689.
- Gullickson, Aaron and Vincent Kang Fu. 2010. "Comment: An endorsement of exchange theory in mate selection," *American Journal of Sociology* 115(4): 1243-1251.
- Gullickson, Aaron. 2017. "Comments on conceptualizing and measuring the exchange of beauty and status," *American Sociological Review* 82(5): 1093-1099.
- Hershatter, Gail. 2007. *Women in China's Long Twentieth Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Hershatter, Gail. 2014. *The Gender of Memory: Rural Women and China's Collective Past*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Huang, Lucy Jen. 1962. "The communist Chinese attitude towards inter-class marriage," *The China Quarterly* 12: 183-190.
- Kalmijn, Matthijs. 1991. "Status homogamy in the United States," *American Journal of Sociology* 97(2): 496-523.
- Kalmijn, Matthijs. 1993. "Trends in Black/White intermarriage," *Social Forces* 72(1): 119-146.
- Kalmijn, Matthijs. 1998. "Intermarriage and homogamy: Causes, patterns, trends," *Annual Review of Sociology* 24: 395-421.
- Kalmijn, Matthijs. 2010. "Consequences of racial intermarriage for children's social integration," *Sociological Perspectives* 53(2): 271-286.
- Kalmijn, Matthijs. 2010. "Educational inequality, homogamy and status exchange in Black-White intermarriage: A comment on Rosenfeld's critique," *American Journal of Sociology* 115(4): 1252-1263.
- Kawaguchi, Daiji and Soohyung Lee. 2017. "Brides for sale: Cross-border marriages and female immigration," *Economic Inquiry* 55: 633-654.
- Kim, Doo-Sub. 2013. "Recent trend in cross-national marriage in South Korea: A focus on spousal dissimilarity, marital stability and fertility," *Journal of Guizhou University (Social Sciences)* 31(5): 1-8.
- Kojima, Yu. 2001. "In the business of cultural reproduction: The theoretical implications of the mail-order bride phenomenon," *Women's Studies International Forum* 24(2): 199-210.
- Lan, Pei-Chia. 2006. *Global Cinderellas: Migrant Domesticity and Newly Rich Employers in Taiwan*. Durham:

Duke University Press.

- Lavelly, William. 1991. "Marriage and mobility under rural collectivism," in Rubie S. Watson and Patricia B. Ebrey (eds.), *Marriage and Inequality in Chinese Society*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. 286-312.
- Lee, Jiyoung. 2010. "Amendment to the naturalization examination and its social impact on international marriage immigrants in South Korea," *TESOL Quarterly* 44(3): 575-585.
- Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1969. *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Li, Yinhe. 1989. "Standard of mate selection in contemporary China," *Social Sciences in China* 4: 1-14.
- Li, Yu. 2011. "Trends of status homogamy in China: A dual-trait analysis," *Sociological Studies* 4: 122-136.
- Li, Yutong and Zhu Yang. 2011. "A study of characteristics and reasons of crude divorce rate in northeast China," *Population Journal* 3: 47-52.
- Liaw, Kao-Lee, Emiko Ochiai, and Yoshitaka Ishikawa. 2010. "Feminization of immigration in Japan: Marital and job opportunities," in Yang Wen-Shan and Lu Melody Chia-Wen (eds.), *Asian Cross-Border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press. 49-86.
- Lim, Timothy. 2010. "Rethinking belongingness in Korea: Transnational migration, "migrant marriages" and the politics of multiculturalism," *Pacific Affairs* 83(1): 51-71.
- Lin, Mingxian and Shunfen Shen. 2006. "Resource and exchange in marriage, case study on Chinese-Korean females' international marriages in Yanbian city," *Population Research* 30(3) :50-55.
- Liu, Shuang and Shenghan Cai. 2015. "Who has been "left"? A study on the unwed youth in China," *Youth Studies* 4: 76-84.
- Lu, Melody Chia-Wen. 2005. "Commercially arranged marriage migration: Case studies of cross-border marriages in Taiwan," *Indian Journal of Gender Studies* 12(2|3): 275-303.
- Lui, Lake. 2016. "Gender, rural-urban inequality, and intermarriage in China," *Social Forces* 95(2): 639-662.
- Lui, Lake. 2017. "Hukou intermarriage in China: Patterns and trends," *Chinese Sociological Review* 49(2): 110-137.
- Ma, Lei. 2017. "Homogamy, heterogamy, and marital barriers in current Chinese society," *Population Research* 41(6): 16-32.
- Ma, Zhongdong, Ge Lin, and Frank Zhang. 2010. "Examining cross-border marriage in Hong Kong: 1998-2005," in Yang Wen-Shan and Lu Melody Chia-Wen (eds.), *Asian Cross-Border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press. 87-102.
- Malinowski, Bronislaw. 1961. *A Scientific Theory of Culture and Other Essays*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Merali, Noorfarah, Jasmine Bajwa, and Taoof Yousaf. 2015. "Partner inequities related to immigration fraud in South Asian international arranged marriages," *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 16(4): 1157-1175.
- Merton, Robert K. 1941. "Intermarriage and the social structure," *Psychiatry* 4: 361-374.
- McClintock, Elizabeth Aura. 2014. "Beauty and status: The illusion of exchange in partner selection?," *American Sociological Review* 79(4): 575-604.
- Miller, Michelle Ann. 2011. "Introduction, ethnic minorities in Asia: Inclusion or exclusion?," *Ethnic and Racial*

- Mu, Zheng and Yu Xie. 2014. "Marital age homogamy in China: A reversal of trend in the reform era?," *Social Science Research* 44: 141-157.
- Nakamatsu, Tomoko. 2005. "Faces of "Asian brides": Gender, race, and class in the representations of immigrant women in Japan," *Women's Studies International Forum* 28(5): 405-417.
- Parsons, Talcott. 1949. *The Structure of Social Action: A Study in Social Theory with Special Reference to a Group of Recent European Writers*. New York: Free Press.
- People's Daily Online. 2013. "Adhere to the basic national policy of equality between men and women, fully develop the great role of women in China," <http://politics.people.com.cn/n/2013/1101/c1024-23394735.html> (accessed 21 September 2018)
- Piper, Nicola and Nina Roces. 2003. *Wife or Worker? Asian Women and Migration*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- Piper, Nicola and Sohoon Lee. 2016. "Marriage migration, migrant precarity, and social reproduction in Asia: An overview," *Critical Asian Studies* 48(4): 473-493.
- Preffer, George Anthony. 1986. "Forbidden families: Emigration experiences of Chinese women under the Page Law, 1875-1882," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 6(1): 28-46.
- Qi, Yaqiang and Jianlin Niu. 2012. "The evolution of assortative mating patterns in the process of China's modernization," *Sociological Studies* 1: 106-129.
- Qian, Zhenchao and Lichter Dainel T.. 2011. "Changing patterns of interracial marriage in a multiracial society," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 73(5): 1065-1084.
- Qian, Zhenchao and Lichter Dainel T.. 2018. "Marriage market and intermarriage: Exchange in first marriages and remarriages," *Demography* 55: 849-875.
- Quan, Xinzi. 2012. *Analysis of Chinese-Korean females' International Marriage Migration between China and South Korea*. Beijing: Xueyuan Press.
- Roger, Daniels. 1988. *Asian America: Chinese and Japanese in the United States since 1850*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Rosenfeld, Michael J.. 2005. "A critique of exchange theory in mate selection," *American Journal of Sociology* 110(5): 1284-1325.
- Rosenfeld, Michael J.. 2008. "Racial, educational and religious endogamy in the United States: A comparative historical perspective," *Social Forces* 87(1): 1-31.
- Rosenthal, Gil G.. 2017. *Mate Choice: The Evolution of Sexual Decision Making from Microbes to Humans*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Schwartz, Christine R., Zhen Zeng, and Yu Xie. 2016. "Marrying up by marrying down: Statues exchange between social origin and education in the United States," *Sociological Science* 3: 1003-1027.
- Sinke, Suzanne. 1999. "Migration for labour, migration for love: Marriage and family formation across borders," *OAH Magazine of History* 14(1): 17-21.
- Skinner, George William. 1964. *Marketing and Social Structure in Rural China*. Ann Arbor: Association for Asian Studies.
- Stacey, Judith. 1983. *Patriarchy and Socialist Revolution in China*. Berkeley : University of California Press.
- Stark, Oded. 1988. "On marriage and migration," *European Journal of Population* 4: 23-37.

- Suzuki, Nobue. 2000. "Between two shores: Transnational projects and Filipina wives in/from Japan," *Women's Studies International Forum* 23(4): 431-444.
- Takeshita, Shuko. 2016. "Intermarriage and Japanese identity," in Ernest Healy, Dharma Arunachalam, and Tetsuo Mizukami (eds.), *Creating Social Cohesion in an Interdependent World: Experiences of Australia and Japan*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Thai, Hung Cam. 2008. *For Better or For Worse: Vietnamese International Marriages in the New Global Economy*. Piscataway: Rutgers University Press.
- Tseng, Ye-Fen. 2010 "Marriage migration to East Asia: Current issues and propositions in making comparisons," in Yang, Wenshan and Melody Chiawen Lu. 2010. *Asian Cross-Border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press.
- United Nations. 2018. "Human development report," <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data> (accessed 23 March 2018).
- Wang, Yu and Christine R. Schwartz. 2018. "Hukou intermarriage and social exclusion in China," *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility* 56: 28-39.
- Watson, Rubie S. and Patricia Buckley Ebrey. 1991. *Marriage and Inequality in Chinese Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Williams, Lucy. 2010. *Global Marriage: Cross-Border Marriage Migration in Global Context*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Wu, Jiaping. 2012. "The rise of ethnicity under China's market reforms," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 38(3): 967-984.
- Wu, Jiaping and Mark Wang. 2012. "Ethnic migrant workers and emerging ethnic division in China's urban labour market," *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 21(4): 483-507.
- Xing, Chunbing and Haifeng Nie. 2010. "When an urban boy falls in love with a country girl: Baby's hukou, hukou reform and intermarriage," *World Economic Papers* 4: 1-18.
- Xu, Wei. 2011. *From Marriage Revolution to Revolutionary Marriage: Marriage Practice of the Chinese Communist Party in Modern Era, 1910s-1950s*. Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository. 232.
- Yang, Wenshan and Melody Chiawen Lu. 2010. *Asian Cross-Border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press.
- Ye, Wenzhen and Qingguo Lin. 1996. "Chinese-foreign marriage in Fujian province," *Population and economics* 95(2): 21-29.
- Ye, Yuqing. 2010. *Sociology of the Family: The Promotion and Practice of Human Right for Marriage Migrants*. Taipei: Chuliu Publisher.
- Yu, Jia and Yu Xie. 2015. "Cohabitation in China: Trends and determinants," *Population and development review* 41(4): 607-628.
- Zhang, Jie. 2010. "Marriage and suicide among Chinese rural young women," *Social Forces* 89(1): 311-326.

Chapter 5: Motivations and Choices of International Marriages, Reflections from Case Studies

Abstract

International marriage is a topic that has drawn a lot of attention and debates over the decades. China's profound socioeconomic, cultural, and political changes in recent decades have resulted remarkable changes in people's attitude and behaviour toward marriage and relationship. With a low level of fertility, increasing rates of divorce, and the regional marriage squeeze, a better understanding of the dynamics of international marriage in China is needed. Since international marriage relates to international migration and socioeconomic disparities, it is commonly believed that the motivation for transnational relationship is economic exchange rather than true romantic love and affection. Using ethnographic data through intensive interview of couples in international and domestic marriages, including those who have experienced divorce, this chapter finds that the motivations for marriages and divorces turn out to be much more complicated than the economic exchange or romantic love alone. The insights into the couples' life experience shed some new lights onto the motivations and choices they made in response to the wider social and economic conditions they situated. The results from this chapter could also provide some explanations to the analysis in the previous chapters.

Keywords: International marriage, International divorce, Social transformation, Marriage behaviour, Family values, Individualism

5.1 Introduction

International marriage in China is not a new phenomenon, considering the country's diverse combination of ethnicities and its far-reaching cultural and political impact on Asia and global history. During ancient times, intermarriage was more likely to happen between the first families of different empires in negotiation for peace or trade, while exogamous marriage was more likely to happen between different ethnic communities. From the tenth to the eighteenth century, Chinese sailors, merchants, fishermen, and soldiers, travelled and settled across South and East Asia, which resulted in overseas Chinese communities and new types of intermarriage.¹ Although, historically speaking, the country is no stranger to intermarriage and exogamy, especially with neighbouring ethnic communities and countries, the newly emerged international marriage in post-socialist years has brought more arguments and doubts about this type of interpersonal relationship, ranging from the social norms of genders, marriage, and family to the essence of what defines the Chinese nationality. Despite the fact that nowadays, research and governmentality on international marriage have attributed the marriage to personal interests, the discourse surrounding this type of marriage is undeniably connected with the country's collective memory and history from the past (Croll 1981; Davis and Harrell 1993; Xu 2011; Hershatter 2014; Poston and Wong 2016).

The historical cross-empire intermarriage transformed during the colonialist and imperialist era, when the modern nation states and global political order were established. As China is underprivileged in the newly emerging global economic and political structure, international marriage in the modern stage emerged with the colonial period in the nineteenth century. For the lower class of Chinese society, male workers were forced to migrate as cheap labour, while females were trafficked as brides or prostitutes to another continent. The exclusion acts enforced by the foreign governments in the receiving countries not only obstructed the family reunification of Chinese labour migrants, but also resulted in inter-racial marriages in these hosting countries (Roger 1988). Transnational marriages between well-educated or privileged Chinese and foreigners from economically advanced countries have been portrayed as an advanced and westernised practice of freedom and modern love,² especially during the 1920s to 1940s. Meanwhile, in CCP's Soviet Area, international marriage was depicted as the revolutionary fruit of the international Communist movement and cooperation. However, in the following socialist regime, although several cases of international marriage were officially recognised by the party, in general, this type of marriage was not

publicly acknowledged, and often treated as a criminal offence or condemned as treason. Due to China's ideological and geopolitical situation in the mid-twentieth century, international relationships were not only forbidden and politically incorrect, but might also lead to severe consequences. Historically speaking, almost all international marriages in modern Chinese history has been between Chinese men and foreign women. Since China's traditional gender norms demanded women scrupulously comply with "the wife's doctrine" (*fudao*, literally the womanly way), and forbade public and social activities for women, it is no surprise that Chinese males encountered more international experiences and relationships than their female counterparts (Min 1999; Bailey 2007).

China's opening-up to the world in the late 1970s has engulfed the country in dramatic ideological and socioeconomic changes. Since 1979, the State Council and the Ministry of Civil Affairs have started to publicly recognise and provide marriage registration services for "Chinese-foreign" marriages. Still, most of this type of marriage happened between mainland Chinese citizens and residents from Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan; the situation has changed only in recent years. In 1983, regulations of Chinese-foreign marriages were promulgated which further decriminalised international marriage, yet marriage between mainland Chinese citizens and foreigners without Chinese linkage were still beset with difficulties. With the end of the global bipolar structure, relaxation of geopolitical conflicts, and economic success in East Asia, together with lenient laws and regulations for marriage and migration, the number of international marriages between mainland Chinese citizens and foreigners from other Asian countries began to increase in the mid-1980s and the 1990s. International marriage in mainland China has experienced a significant increase throughout the 1990s and the 2000s, and has attracted some scholarly attention and public concern. Much of the existing research focuses on and attributes the motivation for this type of marriage to global socioeconomic disparities and individual materialist values in marriage and life, while the public treat the phenomenon as exotic and westernised relationships. With the country's patrilocal tradition and its general trend of emigration, Chinese citizens who marry foreigners are treated as permanent emigrants by the state, which rarely raises political or legal concerns.

In the following decades, the annual number of registered international marriages in mainland China has decreased, but the features of this type of marriage have diversified. With its industrialisation and modernisation, as well as the profound transitions in population structure, the country has become a

receiving country for international migrants and international marriage in recent years (Pieke 2012). Conventionally, under the country's movement of reviving traditional Confucian-Han culture and rectifying endemic socialist ideology (Cao 2017), the possibility that international marriage and mixed race offspring might lead to long term sociocultural changes has drawn heated debates on social media. In the meantime, the sudden increase in international marriages between Chinese men and foreign women from Vietnam and Laos in less developed rural communities has also aroused major concerns among scholars and local officials over political and legal outcomes, human trafficking, public health, national security, and human rights.

Although international marriage in mainland China has been increasingly diverse in recent years, the research on this type of marriage is fragmented. Since 1979, the increase in international marriages in mainland China has led to significant population and sociocultural changes among other Asian communities, yet the basic characteristics and motivation of this type of marriage still lack efficient research. Research into international marriage in mainland China rarely depicts the overall characteristic and changes of this type of marriage; the research is also policy- and problem-oriented, and treats international married couples as victim of their own incompetent or greedy (Quan 2012). Most of the research either follows the routine research scheme to treat international marriage as a covert method of migration, or focuses on individual cases to interpret the practice as a last resort for underprivileged men. Although these researches present the possible connections between cultural linkages, geopolitical relationship, socioeconomic disparities, individual values, and international marriage, more comprehensive analysis of the motivations and choices of international marriage over the recent decades is still needed.

In contrast to existing literature, this study focuses on internationally married individuals' personal lived experiences rather than an inductive analysis. This study aims to obtain a deep understanding about marriage-related choices and values, in order to provide more insights into the complexity and dynamics of international marriages during the past decade.

5.2 Marriage Evolution in Mainland China

During the past three decades, China's market socialist system has not only reformed the macro-level social structure, but also reconstructed the micro-level identity and social network. Structural disparities and social status were radically altered under the early socialist regime, yet with market reformation, the imbalanced

development among different regions and social stratifications has been reconstructed and reinforced (Davis and Wang 2009). The collectivist and state-controlled social structure has been replaced by individualism and market-oriented economic activities. While in the sphere of individual private life, the state-enforced revolutionary (or anarchic freedom like Engels advocated) and sexually repressed order of marriage and family (Stacey 1983) has been transformed into a mixture of both conventional and liberal ideals and practices in the following post-socialist era (Poston, Yang, and Farris 2014).

The traditional rural patriarchal system experienced drastic changes in the decades after the founding of the people's republic (Stacey 1983; Zhao, 2017). During the 1960s and 1970s, the collectivising movement destroyed the material foundation of the traditional patriarchal order in rural area; however, the state transformed and extended the patriarchal system into its macro-discourse of national construction, collective identity, and charismatic power (Stacey 1983; Zhao 2017). The socialist order was reinterpreted based on the new system of social caste, which it not only labelled individuals with paternal and maternal inheritable "red (revolutionary)" or "black (counterrevolutionary)" class designations, embedding and segregating individuals into categories of communism and clientelism, but also connected the redistribution of social and political resources with such designations (Kraus 1981; Oi 1985). In marriage and family practice, traditional patriarchal power was replaced by party and local communist organizations. Traditional ideals, values, and practices surrounding marriage and family were considered as a residual system from the backward feudal past, which needed socialist transformation; mercenary, arranged, and *shim-pua*³ marriages were outlawed, while political righteousness became the new romance. The political and ideological ideals of a socialist revolutionary relationship were praised and highlighted, with political comradeship and moral companionship within the marriage and family life desirable to contribute to the stabilisation and flourishing of the new socialist regime (Watson and Ebrey 1991; Hershatter 2007); for instance, marriage with "black" classes would result in severe consequences (Croll 1981). Conventional standards of spousal matching, the assortative matching between families (*mendang hudui*, literally matching doors and windows) and hypergamous pairs between genders (*nangao nvdi*, male superiority and female inferiority), were accused of being feudal and unethical mercenary marriages, while politically homogamous matching marriages were praised and encouraged. Consequently, well-educated youth from high social castes married downward to peasantry or working-class people to put their communist beliefs into practice (Watson and Ebrey 1991).

Meanwhile, the policy of eliminating illiteracy and the women's movement have provided freedom for females to leave their houses and participate in social life and the labour force, but without reducing their heavy burden of family reproductive work. Female social status was improved by de-gendering women into revolutionary comrades and a potential labour force, rather than confronting the conventional gender disparities. Although the 1950 marriage law aimed to improve female family status, providing them with freedom of marriage and divorce, their family related powers and rights were still largely restricted in practice (Stacey 1983; Hershatter 2014). During this time, the improvement of female status, though profound, still yielded to the state's political interests as the party exercised its control over the standards and practices of individual's marital behaviour, especially regarding socialist political righteousness (Stacey 1983; Spence 1990; Xu 2011; Hershatter 2014). Despite the country embracing socialist ideals, the patriarchal structure remains intact and embedded in state structure and authority.

China's opening-up and reformation in the 1980s gradually reduced collective control over individual socioeconomic activities. The de-collectivisation process in rural communities has boosted China's productivity in agriculture, while loosening control over the hukou system has released the surplus rural labour force and increased internal migration. With the removal of state and local government controls in private life, this structural vacuum in rural society was filled by its conventional clan system again, while the nuclear and stem families became the core unit of private life. Traditional spousal selection standards replaced political homogamy, and dowry and brideprice reappeared in rural communities (Davis and Harrell 1993). It is no surprise that with family planning policy in full swing in the following decades, gender oppression and son preference revived, as well as the worship of fertility and chastity, oppression of sexuality and premarital sex, universal marriage, early marriage, and discrimination against spinsters and divorcee (Wolf 1985; Croll 2002; Yan 2003). Even the institutional design of family policy reinforced the son preference, as the 1.5-child policy only allowed rural couples whose first born was a girl to have another child; this not only signalled male preference and superiority, but also intensified the imbalanced sex-ratio among those policy-affected regions (Zeng and Hesketh 2016). During the 1980s to early 2000s, the abnormally high risk of suicide of rural females was also closely connected with domestic violence and abuse, social isolation, and conflicts within marriage and family. Under patriarchal power, suicide became the last resort for rebellion against male superiority and female inferiority in women's private lives (Wolf 1985; Liu 2002). In urban areas, reformation of state-owned enterprises and the government system started

in the early 1990s; then privatisation occurred nationwide in 1998 and 1999, which resulted in massive laying-off of workers in state-owned enterprises. This privatisation and reformation not only cancelled and marketized the cradle-to-grave benefits (such as free education, housing, medical care, child care, and elderly care) that the working class used to enjoy, but also dramatically altered their social status from the “owners of the country” to an unemployed, underprivileged, and cheap labour force (Gold, Hurst, Won, and Li 2009). According to Cai (2006), the suddenly deteriorating economic situation among laid-off workers has led to increased social problems and criminal activities, such as suicide, divorce, and prostitution. Female workers are more likely to be laid-off, especially in regions with a high percentage of heavy industry; compared to male workers, females experienced a higher risk of unemployment; child bearing and caring, combined with gender discrimination, have decreased females’ chance of reemployment (Hu and Zhang 2004; Wu 2009).

Despite the slow and postponed changes on China’s patriarchal order, under the state policy of modernisations (Hsü 2000), certain regulations and laws have further empowered women. Implementation of family planning policies has gradually reduced women’s burden of child bearing and caring. The 1980 marriage law has aimed to reduce fertility, reaffirm gender equality, and the equal rights for both paternal and maternal parties in a marriage (Palmer 2007). The 1986 compulsory education law has ensured girls’ equal rights in education. The party committed to gender equality as a basic state policy in the 1995 UN World Conferences on Women. For females, the discourse, policy, and movement of equality and empowerment during these decades have enriched their subjective social status, especially for the younger generations.

Follow the privatisation period, China has further experienced booming economic growth in the 2000s after two decades of rapid economic growth. The demographic dividend and increase in internal migration have contributed to the nation’s economic growth. In addition to the opening-up policy, the country has further participated in global economic systems. Beginning with the economic reformation, the modernisation and globalisation process has also occurred in social, cultural, and ideological areas. Changes of values and ideas are obvious; concepts such as individualism, independence, autonomy, subjective values, personal desire, consumerism, emotionality, and sexuality, have replaced the collectivist consensus, particularly among the younger generation (Yan 2003). Ideals of marriage and family have changed after the state

withdrew from most parts of private family life. Compared to the “marry first, then fall in love” (*xian jiehun, zai lian'ai*) type of marriage, since the socialist period, companionate marriage, romantic love, intimacy, sexual revolution, and depletion of state and parental authority have gradually become the new normal in China’s marriage and family life (Yan 2003; Wang, Cai, and Gu 2013; Poston et al. 2014). It is only in the present age that what the socialist regime promised individual revolutionary equality in all matters legal, political, and socioeconomic, which was postponed for decades—began to develop. Marriage, as the central strategy for family construction and lineage continuity, always possesses great importance in both private and public life, which need to meet the expectations and requirements of paternal and maternal extended families (Fei 1992). The transformation of private life and choice in the post-socialist era has provided individuals with new autonomy in their personal life, yet conventional values and standards still exist as social norms, and parents’ opinions on mate selection still affect the outcome of the children’s relationship, especially in rural communities (Watson 1984; Yan 2003; Liu 2006).

In addition to the revival of conventional values and practices of spouse selection and marriage, such as dowry, brideprice, assortative matching, and hypergamous pairing, the state’s control over individual interpersonal relationships still exists. Marriage is the conventional strategy for individuals and their family to achieve upward mobility or disembarass their precarious status (Croll 1981); with the return of hypergamous pairing of spouses, the increase in women’s educational attainment and socioeconomic status has also elevated the overall standard of suitable husbands. The state also loosened its control over hukou and internal migration in the 1980s, but it was the revocation of the custody and repatriation system in 2003 that further promoted the free flow of internal migration, which in turn provided more opportunities for individuals to seek a suitable spouse. Up till 2003, premarital medical examination was mandatory for marriage registration, while references or permission from both parties’ working units or resident committees were also required for marriage and divorce registration; up till 1998, children’s hukou status followed the maternal inheritance rule. Both medical and permission requirements were revoked by the 2003 marriage regulation, and the matrilineal principle was changed after 1998. Since the new-born child’s hukou status could now be inherited from either the mother or the father, inter-hukou marriages increased from that time (Xing and Nie 2010). With the family planning policy as a basic state policy, birth quota, forced abortion, and compulsory sterilisation affected individual marriage and family life profoundly. Following the traditional taboo over premarital sex, the state’s family planning policy denied the out-of-

wedlock child's civil rights over hukou registration, unless the parent accepted penalties by paying a fine. The state cancelled this regulation in 2016, but general criticism over such situations remain. The "late marriage, long birth interval and fewer births" policy in the 1970s resulted in a rapid increase in age at first marriage, but the decrease in age at marriage during the 1980s was related to the 1980 marriage law, as it raised the legal marriage age. After 1990, age at first marriage has been postponed gradually, even though there are no significant policy changes. It is believed that China's demographic transition and socioeconomic development have led to changes in marital behaviour. Although the one-child policy was changed to a two-child policy in 2016, with the country's patriarchal nature, preference for male children and female oppression, together with convenient foetus sex identification and abortion, the imbalanced sex ratio at birth⁴ since the 1980s is likely to have an extensive impact on the marriage market (Zhao and Guo 2007; Poston, Conde, and DeSalvo 2011; Zhao 2015; Wang, Gu, and Cai 2016).

Currently, most of China's younger generations, those born during the 1980s and the 1990s, have reached their legal marriage age. These generations are "the best educated in Chinese history" (Wang et al. 2013: 126) and have flourished with China's globalisation, modernisation, and urbanisation, attaching great importance to their individual rights and welfare. Their marriage, fertility, divorce, and rights over their private lives are increasingly regarded as their own choice, rather than constrained by responsibility or obligation to the greater good of family and state. Even though the one-child policy was revoked in 2016, the overall fertility rate in China in recent years is still less than satisfactory for the government. Although the state's biopolitical design is grounded on performance legitimacy, in which the importance of elevated economic development is above everything else (Wang et al. 2013; Zhao 2017), the young generations are still more likely to postpone their marriage and childbearing based on their own choice. Nevertheless, the recent amendment of marriage laws and regulations have caused concerns over women's property preservation rights after divorce. Further, the criminal justice system's gendered sentencing disparity in cases of family-related injury and death has led to extensive discussion in social media. The 2003 marriage regulation also simplified the divorce registration procedure, which has led to a continuous increase in divorce rates over the decade; it has also stirred uneasiness in state representatives, which in turn has led to a recent trail of new draft article in Civil Code – a "cooling-off" period and divorce test, to control individual's decisions over divorce (*South China Morning Post*, 2018).

5.3 International Marriage in Mainland China

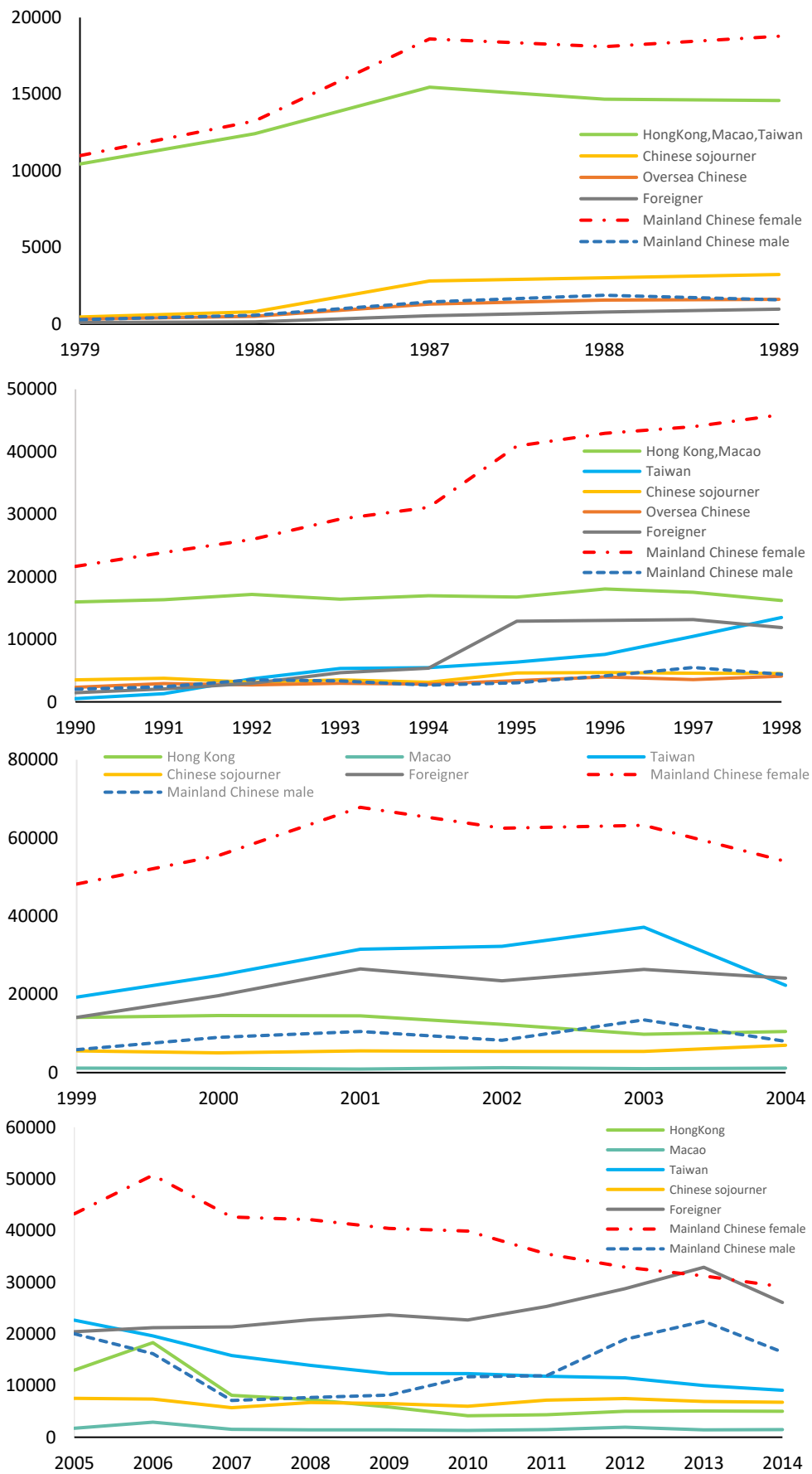
Along with decades of twists and turns in China's marital values, features and behaviours, the development of international marriage during the reformation era has demonstrated its own complexity. The phenomenon of international marriage developed with China's modernisation and globalisation process; it has also diversified with the macro-changes in the state's biopolitical power (Foucault 2003) and institutional design, geopolitical interests and conflicts, global migration flow and personnel exchange, technology development, and cultural exchanges. The development and transformations of international marriage in recent decades is also deeply connected with the revolutionary changes in individual values and autonomy over private life. China's international marriage is embedded in its modern and contemporary socioeconomic context, as well as in the narrative of the colonial past. Before the foundation of the socialist regime, international marriage included both romantic love and forced human trafficking; during the socialist period, it was viewed as either companionate marriage between international Communists or an act of treason towards one's motherland. With China's opening-up and reformation since the 1980s, the discourse surrounding international marriage has evolved to mixed views reflecting praise and censure. Meanwhile, in other Asian countries and areas, international marriage with mainland Chinese citizens has generated profound social and cultural effects.

Since the 1980s, socioeconomic exchanges between mainland China and Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan have increased, especially in eastern seaboard provinces with special economic zones. As economic success and rapid industrialisation in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, and South Korea have elevated the socioeconomic gaps among different Asian regions, these areas and countries have become the new destination of international migration and marriage. In mainland China, with the growth in foreign direct investment, the reduction of tensions and improvement in international relationships have led to increasing flow in capital and personnel exchange. Still, during this decade, the majority of international marriages have been between mainland Chinese and residents from Hong Kong,⁵ which are registered in Guangdong province. Although the 1989 protests have brought tensions between the PRC government and other foreign entities, during the follow decade the process of normalisation of diplomatic relationships between mainland China and the rest of the world continued, especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Marriages between mainland Chinese citizens and residents from Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan have

significantly increased, especially as the opening-up policy has affected eastern seaboard regions, such as Fujian province (Ye and Lin 1996); while marriage between mainland Chinese and foreigners from other countries has gradually increased from the mid-1990s thus far

During the 1980s and the 1990s, with the economic success and labour shortage in advanced Asian countries and areas, opportunities were created for international migration. China's opening-up policy has further increased economic and personnel exchange as foreign investments, companies, and personnel, have entered mainland China, particularly in special economic zones (Wang and Tang 1992; Zhang 1994). In contrast to previous years, according to the Ministry of Civil Affairs' yearbooks, since 1990, there has been a gradual increase in mainland Chinese marrying residents from Taiwan, as well as a sudden increase in mainland Chinese marry foreigner after 1995, while the annual number of marriages between mainland Chinese and residents from Hong Kong is relatively steady. In the following decade, international marriage in mainland China reached its peak in 2001 and 2003, then gradually decreasing thereafter. During the 2000s, marriages between mainland Chinese and Hong Kong residents dropped continuously, except for a sudden increase in 2006, while marriages between mainland Chinese and Taiwanese residents first increased then decreased after 2003; however, the annual number of marriages between mainland Chinese and foreigners continuously increased throughout the decade. According to the yearbooks, another significant change in international marriages in mainland China is the transition of its gendered pattern: before the 2010s, most of such marriages were between mainland Chinese females and residents from SARs or foreign countries and regions. During the late stage of the 2000s, the annual number of mainland Chinese female international marriages continuously decreased, as well as the number of marriages with residents from SARs, while the number of international marriages of mainland Chinese males and foreigners increased.

After 1979, cross-border marriages first happened between mainland Chinese citizens and Hong Kong residents; almost all these cross-border marriages happened between Hong Kong males and mainland Chinese females during the following two decades (Figure 5-1). According to the Ministry of Civil Affairs' yearbook, most of these females came from Guangdong or Fujian province. From the 1980s to the 2000s, according to the Census and Statistics Department in Hong Kong, the proportion of cross-border marriages between mainland Chinese citizens and Hong Kong residents among all marriages registered in Hong Kong



SOURCE: *China Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbooks*, 1979 to 2016

Figure 5-1 Chinese-foreign Marriage by Residency, 1979 to 2014

increased from one-fifth to one-half. The 2011 data from Hong Kong shows that this type of marriage has gradually decreased in recent years, while marriages between Hong Kong females and mainland Chinese males have increased. Historically speaking, Guangdong province and Hong Kong SAR share undeniable connections and similarities in both language and cultural practices; such connections, combined with the socioeconomic gaps between the two regions, have fuelled cross-border marriages. Recent research reveals that one-third of Hong Kong's population was born in mainland China, especially in Guangdong province (Pong, Post, Ou, and Fok 2014). Empirical findings also depict the connection between the local marriage market and cross-border marriages in Hong Kong (Ma, Lin, and Zhang 2010; Pong et al. 2014). Since the 1950s, there were two waves of significant population inflow from mainland China to Hong Kong (aka *taogang*, escape to Hong Kong); this pattern led to an imbalanced sex-ratio and marriage squeeze in the marriage market in Hong Kong, as most of the refugees/migrants are single young males without legal residency rights, who became underprivileged cheap labour. After 1974, the colonial government of Hong Kong ultimately granted them residency rights. Following the opening-up of mainland China, these new Hongkongers turned to mainland China in hope of finding a wife and starting a family in the 1980s. However, under the strict immigration policy of the British government of Hong Kong, spousal residency rights for their wives in Hong Kong were not easy to obtain, leading to long time spousal separation until the policy was changed in the following decade. Meanwhile, the Hong Kong government's efforts to empower women has led to an imbalanced marriage market. At the beginning of the 1990s, women's educational attainment started to exceed their counterparts across all levels of schooling, and their financial independence increased remarkably (Post 2004; Ma, Lin, and Zhang 2010); with the conventional hypergamous pattern of spousal pairing, local males with a low level of educational attainment were less desirable in the marriage market, as females tend to marry-up to husbands with higher educational attainment than themselves, while higher levels of educational attainment and labour force participation are likely to postpone or reduce women's marriage formation. As a result, cross-border marriages became a preferable solution for those "left behind" Hong Kong males. Existing research argues that during the 2000s, the sex-ratio in the local marriage market has gradually balanced out (Ma, Lin, and Zhang 2010); yet the need of Hong Kong males to marry mainland Chinese females has not changed accordingly, collaborating the connection between female empowerment, marriage squeeze, and cross-border marriage. It is noted in the existing literature that after the Handover in 1997, with the increase in socioeconomic exchanges,

mainland China provided abundant opportunities and positions for Hongkongers, which created a new wave of cross-border marriages (Pong, Post, Ou, and Fok 2014). However, according to the Ministry, this wave of cross-border marriages mainly happened in inland provinces, and the numbers of this type of marriage decreased in Guangdong province.

International marriages with mainland Chinese citizens are observed in much of the research, which focuses on transactional marriages across Asia. During the 1990s, the striking increase in marriages between mainland Chinese and Korean/Japanese has attracted intensive research (Nakazawa 1996; Piper 2000; Nakamatsu 2005; Morgan and Hoffmann 2007; Kim 2010, 2013; Kim 2015). Similar to the research into cross-border marriage between mainland China and Hong Kong, it is commonly believed that industrialisation, urbanisation, and economic development, have reshaped domestic economic structures and labour markets, as well as impacting on local women's marriage preferences, hence generating regional shortages of marriageable Korean/Japanese women among rural regions (Nakamatsu 2005; Morgan and Hoffmann 2007; Lee 2008). However, in contrast to Hong Kong's experience, both the Japanese and South Korean governments have taken an active part in the international marriage market, by recruiting foreign women for Japanese and South Korean rural men (Sato 1988; Nakamatsu 2005; Morgan and Hoffmann 2007). The existing literature also emphasises the cultural similarities and historical conflicts and connections between these three countries, for they served as the foundation of these international marriages (Morgan and Hoffmann 2007; Mayumi 2010). This is particularly true for the cross-national ethnic groups, such as Korean-Chinese (Korean ethnic with Chinese nationality, aka *Chaoxianzu*, *Chosŏnjok*, or *Josunjok*) and Japanese war orphans and women (Japanese children and females who were left behind by their families in Manchuria after the Second World War, aka *yihua riqiao/riben yigu*, *zanryu koji* and *zanryu fujin*) who historically bonded between two shores (Lin and Shen 2006; Lee 2008; Yamaura 2015). According to the Ministry's yearbooks, the noticeable increase in international marriage with foreigners during the 1990s happened in China's north-eastern provinces, such as Liaoning, Jilin and Heilongjiang, which contain most of these cross-national ethnic groups, due to historical wars and exchanges. Meanwhile, the increase in marriage between mainland Chinese and foreigners is obvious in economically advanced regions, such as Shanghai.

In Taiwan, empirical research argues that the increase in marriages between mainland Chinese and Taiwanese residents since 1990 is connected with the imbalanced sex-ratio and marriage squeeze in the local marriage market, especially in rural areas (Yang and Liu 2014). But in contrast to Hong Kong, in Taiwan society, women experience strong social and peer pressure to enter marriage before reaching a certain age, and traditional gender norms have not changed much (Yang and Yen 2014). The surplus of marriageable males in Taiwan from 1980 to 2000 is related to a fertility decline dating back to the 1960s; but after 2000, the marriage squeeze started to affect women, and international marriage has further limited local women's formation of marriage. In 2004, the government of Taiwan implemented stronger restrictions over international marriage, which resulted in a decline in this type of marriage, especially for Filipino and Vietnamese women. Although the latest changes to marriage permit and regulation in Taiwan have created more obstacles to mainland Chinese and Taiwanese marriages, the relative proportion of this type of marriage has increased after 2004, according to the Department of Statistics in Taiwan. However, based on the Ministry's yearbooks, compared to the peak of mainland Chinese marrying residents from Taiwan in 2003, the annual numbers of this type of marriage have decreased at least 70 percent since 2010.

With the steady increase in international marriages between mainland Chinese and foreigners, and the focus of social media, this kind of marriage drew more attention in the 2000s, especially those that involved the celebrities (Farrer 2008; Pan 2014). Metropolitan cities like Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen became the main centres of interests. During this period, the general pattern of international marriage in China remained relatively steady: most of international marriages in mainland China are of mainland Chinese women; marriages between mainland Chinese and residents from Hong Kong or Taiwan are decreasing; the steady flow of marriages between mainland Chinese and overseas Chinese or residents from Macao remains stable; and overall, marriages between mainland Chinese and foreigners from foreign countries have gradually increased (MCA yearbooks 2001 to 2011). In addition, the average age of foreign husbands is ten years older than their mainland Chinese wives, which is significantly higher than for domestic marriage couples; while international married individuals are more likely to have been previously married (Ding, Yang, Zhou, Lin, and Zhang 2004; Farrer 2008; Gao, Zhang, and Zhu 2013). Studies from receiving countries focus on international marriage brokers (Clark 2001; Constable 2003), some research also centres on marriage as a method for international migration (Constable 2004; Piper and Roces 2003); but few studies look at the existence of cross-border polygyny (Lang and Smart 2002). Although the empirical data reveals

interpersonal attraction and romance among transnational couples (Constable 2003), most of the research, both in China and from foreign regions, concludes that to mainland Chinese women, international marriage is just a vehicle for emigration and foreign residency, which follows the same track as early studies in the 1990s. However, in increasingly globalised cities like Beijing and Shanghai, the immigration of foreigners also creates opportunities for international marriage (Farrer 2008).

In 2007, one of the major changes in mainland China's international marriage patterns occurred in Yunnan province. The gender pattern of international marriage was reversed, although the number of mainland Chinese women's international marriages remained considerable, but more mainland Chinese males married with females from foreign countries. Meanwhile, the increase in emigration from mainland China marked another change in international marriages. Although marriage is believed to be the passport for mainland Chinese women to emigrate to Western countries, more international married couples, who married in China or foreign countries, were moving to and settling in mainland China (Farrer 2008). The increase in African people and communities living in Guangzhou, Ningbo, and Shanghai also led to increases in intermarriage. However, in 2009, conflicts between African migrants, residents, and local police led to riots in Guangzhou and strict enforcement of immigration policy (Huang 2018). Public media carried multiple reports about African migrants, and the increase in intermarriage of local Chinese women and African men became the central focus of the social media (*South China Morning Post*, July 2014), while general society was divided on accepting their off spring⁶ as Chinese or not (Zhou and Li 2016).

It is only in the 2010s that the sudden increase of foreign wives in China's less-developed rural communities of Yunnan and Guangxi province has become the new focus of anthropological and epidemiological research (Yang and Shi 2015). The increase in undocumented de facto marriages between mainland Chinese men and Vietnamese, Laotian, and Burmese women in the southwest border villages has attracted the concern of local governments and scholars. With China's multiethnic⁷ features, the increase in marriages between cross-national ethnic groups is commonly believed to relate to the combined effect of local marriage squeeze, the economic gap, and similar cultural practices (Zhang and Bao 2013; Wang 2014; Wu and Chen 2017). Although this type of international marriage is believed to be traditional endogamy among cross-national ethnic groups, few researchers depict the fact that women from Vietnam and Myanmar are also marrying mainland Chinese men who share no cultural similarities and come from inland rural

communities rather than border villages (Zheng 2015; Wang and Cao 2016; Guan and Feng 2017; Sun and Zheng 2017; Fang 2018). In addition, the Ministry and Bureaus of Civil Affairs have controlled and regulated commercial international marriage brokers since the 1990s (China Civil Affairs 1996; China Social Work 1996), but the study of marriage agents and their participation in international marriages is just beginning to unfold (Jin 2013; Guan and Feng 2017).

Research on international marriages in mainland China has provided fruitful results and interpretations of this phenomenon throughout the decades, yet international marriage continues to be viewed unfavourably by the state and by scholars, as well as by foreign entities. A major gap in existing literature is research framed by inductive reasoning; although many of the studies emphasise the importance of macro-level socioeconomic influences over individual choice of international marriage, the mechanism and interaction of macro-factors and micro-level personal choices is rather vague. Although most of the scholars interpret the motivation of international marriage as “marriage for emigration,” “marriage for sale,” or “marriage for exchange,” the empirical evidence for such claims is still insufficient. This is because most studies search for an overall paradigm for the motivation for international marriage, but neglect the vivid lives and experiences of individuals. In China, the rural and socialist past must be considered to fully understand the modernised, industrialised, and diversified present, and it is important to focus on the actual lives of international marriage couples. To achieve a comprehensive analysis of motivation for international marriages in mainland China, it is necessary to take the whole socioeconomic, cultural, and political context into consideration, as well as the self-perception of international and domestic married couples.

This study aims to explore the life experiences of couples related to their choices in both international and domestic marriage market, using data from ethnographic observations and intensive interviews in the provincial marriage registration office. It aims to shed new lights and provide nuanced understanding of the motivations, choices, and personal values in international marriage and divorce. It also aims to provide new perspectives on the connections between co-ethnic lineage and international marriage. It is hoped that this study will contribute to enhancing our understanding in the motivations and choices in the international and domestic marriage market, as well as the diverse individual marriage experiences and behaviours in contemporary China.

5.4 Data and Methodology

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the motivations and choices of international married mainland Chinese and foreign spouses, an ethnographic method is applied in this analysis. The field was conducted in July and August 2017 and the data includes 50 intensive semi-structured interviews with 35 international married couples, 5 international separated or divorced couples, and 10 domestic married couples; these interviews have been recorded and transcribed, supplemented by observations and conversation that were written up before and after the interviews in the field. Data analysis is based on the transcriptions, with the consent of interviewees under ethnic approval guidelines. Information collected during the interviews includes but is not limited to the couples' basic demographic characteristics; background information related to their life before and after they got to know each other; the formation of relationships with each other; knowledge about the partner's culture and language and their families; plans for future life; and family-related values. All internationally married or divorced couples are heterosexual partners, and the data also includes several international same-sex couples. Interviews and conversations with local officials from Civil Affairs, as well as marriage brokers in China and foreign countries are also included in the data. The second round of data collection includes interviews, conversations, and observations of a series of blind dates between mainland Chinese women and foreign men. Key informants were contacted through Chinese and foreign friends and colleagues, with referral sampling; international married couples were also contacted outside marriage registration offices before or after they achieved their registration. Most of the interviews with Chinese were conducted in Chinese; several were in English for the convenience of the foreign spouse. Interviews with foreign spouses were conducted in English, except for several couples where either the foreign spouses (residents from SARs or Taiwan, overseas Chinese, or foreigners) were fluent in Chinese, or the foreigners did not understand either English or Chinese. In this case, help from a professional translator was requested. To protect confidentiality, all names of the interviewees and key informants were changed, and details with potentially identifiable background information were changed or removed. In some cases, the citizenship/nationality of foreign spouses was redacted. The majority of the discussions focused on the experiences and lives of international and domestic married/divorced couples in the recent decade. Since China's immigration/emigration policies, as well as individual values and general cultural and socioeconomic conditions, have changed considerably throughout the decades, this study does not seek an conclusive explanation for China's international marriage patterns across modern history.

It is inevitable that the presence of an ethnographer/field worker would influence the interviewees, as well as the data collection and analysis process. Being a Chinese female meant that I might hear more of women's experiences and stories, and perhaps less of men's thoughts about sexuality and intimacy. Further, my shared cultural background with my Chinese interviewees might facilitate comprehension through mutual understanding, whereas the differences between me and my foreign interviewees might limit the depth of the interpretation.

However, it is impossible to depict the full variety of interpersonal relationships in a transnational field (Breger and Hill 1998; Constable 2003). Individual choice over marriage and divorce can be affected by the combined effects of physical, psychological, socioeconomic, cultural, and interpersonal factors, which cannot be observed or interpreted easily. Still, some of the common "ideals" of marriage and divorce, both international and domestic, are presented to show different patterns of individual's perspectives in their marital behaviour. It is my hope that by presenting individual cases, this will help to cast some light on motivation and choices in international marriages in the Chinese context over the last decade.

5.5 Chances, Choices, and Conflicts

5.5.1 Love, Intimacy, and Better Life

I can't understand why those (Chinese) women marry foreigners. All they want is foreign residency.

They do everything in exchange for a foreign passport. But is it really worth everything? (Chinese local male official, 2017)

This interpretation from a male employee in local government sums up the mainstream point of view on international marriage in mainland China since 1979. As I spent months observing and talking with international couples in the public hall near the registration office in 2017, employees and officials from local government also tried to initiate conversations with me about my research and the phenomenon of international marriage. To most of them, international marriage is something out of their professional field and has never drawn their attention. The practice attracts curiosity and imaginings that cannot be confirmed or denied. Compared to the vast number of China's population and the annual numbers of domestic marriage, international marriage is indeed a rare phenomenon that might not be observed in people's daily lives.

Still, these assumptions about the motivation for international marriage not only represent the public idea of this type of marriage in modern China's context, but also reflect the perspective of the state and government, and also, surprisingly, correspond to the approach of most academic research. There is no denying that the majority of existing research and governmentality in mainland China tends to treat international marriage as a troublesome special phenomenon. Such marriages are viewed as a covert method of emigration that Chinese women invest in, in order to gain foreign residency or citizenship. It is no surprise that interpersonal connection and intimacy within international romantic relationships are regarded as non-existent, following this line of assumption.

From a macro-level historical perspective, the connection between gender-specific labour migration indeed has triggered a secondary family reunification which is dominated by women, both internally and internationally. This pattern is documented in the establishment and continuity of new colonies, as well as in associated global slave trading and indentured labourer trafficking during the colonisation era. In post-colonial ages, the global chain of socioeconomic hierarchies has contributed to a vast flow of sexually-selected labour migration across countries and continents that has altered the geo-spatial population distribution profoundly. In addition, geopolitical conflicts and wars have led to localised "war brides" and their migration. According to UN research (2006), it was only in the late twentieth century that women started to show autonomy over their long distance movements inside or outside their countries. Domestic caring and service industries, and their demand for a female labour force, have created new opportunities of employment and international flow of women migrants; but marriage and family reunion remain as important drivers of their movements. In contemporary society, the relationship between women's migration and marriage has become more complicated, while domestic and international migration are closely connected to each other. Low levels of fertility, urbanisation, and income gaps, have reshaped the domestic labour and marriage market, which may lead to an inflow of foreign workers and wives. The changes can be observed in cross-border marriages between mainland China and Hong Kong, and the same pattern has appeared in Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore (Piper 2003; Yang and Lu 2010).

However, causality is complicated by correlations between international migration and international marriage. Macro-level interactions between the domestic and international labour-marriage markets can provide a structural functionalist mechanism for international marriage; but this does not necessarily mean

that this frame will apply to each case of international marriage. That would only be so if we deny the emotional nature of marriage and focus only on its economic essence. To simplify individual marital choice and motivation in a transnational context is to deny both the communicative reasons and actions of the agents and the generalised symmetry between actor and their network (Habermas 1984; Latour 1993). International marriage and migration can be the joint effect of globalisation and glocalization, both the universalising and particularising of the labour-marriage network. The conventional argument of “international marriage for international migration” may reverse the direction of cause and effect, as much research already provides evidence for “international migration for international marriage” (Breger and Hill 1998; Williams 2010). In addition, some international marriages do not necessary connect with women’s emigration (Farrer 2012). The logical fallacy of the current research approach is that it assumes that since some international marriages are women’s pathway for emigration, it is therefore the universal truth in all international marriages.

I understand that people suspect [international] marriage, all those differences – culture, habitus, food, language, and the painful bureaucracy process...But to me and my wife, we love each other, that’s what matters. Yes, we come from different countries and backgrounds, but I don’t think the differences are so big. I think the most important thing for a relationship is honesty. If either of us is not loving each other, deceiving each other, that will lead us to the end of our marriage, right at the beginning. (John, foreign husband, late fifties, college education, owner of a trading company, 2017)

I like him. He’s handsome and sweet, very gentle. He treats me like a lady and every time I’m with him or talking with him, it makes me feel happy. The part of him I most like is his honesty and passion. I also love his cultural traditions, and his family. I like the traditional idea of family, love, respect, and companionship. He’s a religious people and I believe that makes him a better person. In the future I would love to assist him and raise our children, learn the language and then continue my job as a designer. (Jing, Chinese wife, early fifties, vocational education, designer, 2017)

John is in his fifties and has his own business in a European country. He met Jing in a harbour city in Eastern China. John was there as a tourist while Jing worked as a designer. They came across each other at one of the tourist attractions. After John went back to Europe, the two of them kept in contact through

online video chat. Then, Jing took an English class in local college so she could better communicate with him. She went to that European country after a year apart, and travelled around with John, getting to know his work and life. They got married there, visited his family in another country, and she returned to China. John hoped they could live together and tried to apply for a long-term visa for Jing, but then the couple realised that there were some issues with their registration process, which related to their previous marriage history. They had to go back and forth between China and all the European countries that John possessed citizenship in to obtain all the legal documents. They spent a lot of money and the best part of their second year of marriage, even getting a divorce then remarrying to get the proper paper work done. They came back to China to finalise their marriage, and eventually they got all the official recognition they needed. They decided to spend some time in China for a long overdue honeymoon, then they will move to Europe for a while. As a European, John has a multinational background that contains a lot of cultural, language, and religious differences. He think the most precious characteristic of Jing is her honest, tender, nature, and her outspoken love. This is something he misses in the country he currently lives in, as he feels that most of his friends, colleagues, and neighbours are “only minding their own business.” John grow up in a traditional religious family, and his family members share close bonds, which he cannot feel in his current life. Jing had had an unfortunate divorce and had lived by herself for a while. She tried to find a new partner in China, but felt exhausted during the process. Jing felt trapped, as she wanted a child and a serious relationship that would last for life, but as a divorcee, most men she met did not share her dream of life. Jing thinks that nowadays Chinese people are too *suiyi* (after their pleasure) in relationships and lack *zeren* (responsibility). She wanted a passionate relationship and a traditional family life, which she believes the majority of the men do not care about. In sum, in John and Jing’s case, even though they have quite different backgrounds, the mutual goal of their relationship is a compassionate and traditional family life. They had to overcome a lot of difficulties to get proper registration, even had to get a divorce after their marriage, then marry again, and almost had to divorce again due to legal problems. As John emphasised, if it were not for the personal attraction, the prolonged paperwork would lead to an end of their relationship when they divorced. Both John and Jing are aware of and admire of their differences, and their life is rich in multicultural elements. Jing speaks highly of John’s sense of responsibility to marriage and family, and John loves Jing’s romanticism.

Like John and Jing, several other Western-Chinese couples also emphasised the importance of love in their relationship. For the young generation of Chinese females, the common reaction when they met their husbands for the first time was to treat the foreigners as outsiders. According to these girls, they might be friend with foreigners, but never considered the possibility of getting married to them. To quote one of the interviewees,

I know these Western white men came to China, work here and pretend they fall in love with Chinese girls, then after they have sex, the foreign man will abandon the girl; so when my husband tried to ask me to be his girlfriend, I refused and called him a cheap liar who only want to sneak under a girl's dress. It's good he's honest and kept trying or otherwise we wouldn't be here. (Alice, Chinese wife, early twenties, university education, student, 2017)

Most of these couples spent time building their relationships in their daily life; they could list all the details of their first date, the most important date, or how and when the other half proposed; they detailed things like their hobbies, each other's strengths and weakness in the relationship; their families and friends were frequently highlighted as the attraction or even at first a separating influence in their relationship. Both parties stressed the important of their personal feelings for each other, such as their intimate connection, the shared loves and distastes, and their affection and fondness for each other. One of the foreign males said that his wife is the most wonderful thing that has happened in his life, and her presence makes him want to be a better self. Another foreign husband said that he thinks marriage is nothing but a formality to legalise the relationship, but he loves his wife so much that he decided to marry her so she can share his life in things like property, welfare, medical decisions, and so on:

I think we are not family-centred like the Chinese; most of the guys I know might enjoy a relationship but never want to take a step further; before I starts dating my wife, she told me: 'look, I know you people might not feel it is important to get married, I'm not going to force you or something, but you need to know this is what I want if we are going to have a serious relationship. If you just want somebody to have fun, then maybe we shouldn't be together at all.' For us, we can separate the idea of having a relationship and marriage, but Chinese people, especially girls, are quite serious about relationship and marriage. I respect that, and I know from my heart this is the

woman I want to spend my life with, so ‘of course,’ I said, ‘I will marry you.’ (Jackson, foreign husband, late twenties, university education, language teacher, 2017)

Almost all of these couples met each other in China, and both parties were migrants to the place where they met; the majority of them decided they would stay in China after their wedding. In the future it is possible they might leave the country, but not necessarily settle down in one country forever. Most of them don’t have plans about children and housing; to quote one of the husbands, “when it comes, whatever it will be, it will be, and we will face it together”.

I went to the south part of China and found a job. I met her there, through online chatting. People can use their phone to contact strangers near their location, and that is how I met her, a foreigner working in China, and she can speak Chinese! That’s interesting. So first we were just like friends, shared our culture and life, hung out, then we started to like each other. I was all alone there, life was dull, but she was always there for me, caring for me. So we moved in together, and she got pregnant. I was so happy and asked her to marry me, and she gave birth to our son, so now we came back and *lingzheng* [get a marriage certification], and here we are. (Wang, Chinese husband, late twenties, high school education, service industry, 2017)

I like Chinese people. Back in my country, we think China is a good and a wealthy country. I used to sell goods in fairs near the border and there were a lot of Chinese people. I was married once, also to a Chinese man. I met him at the fair and fell in love with him. We lived in a southwest province in China. I don’t think my ex-husband loved me that much. He just asked me to do all the work and he never communicated with me. My ex’s mother, she abused me. She would curse me if I ate too much or didn’t fit in with her ways. So I divorced with him and moved away. I like my Wang. He’s a good man. He’s gentle, he knows my past, but he still likes me and wants to spend his life with me. I wanted to marry him, and now we have a son together, I feel good and happy. Wang is good for me. (Fang, foreign wife, early thirties, secondary school education, small business, 2017)

Wang and Fang were lit up with happiness, and shared *xitang* (wedding candies, literally, happiness candies, believed to bring good luck to people) with everybody they met, and offered to share their story with me. Wang is a farm boy from North China who migrated to the rich southern part of the country to

make a better living. The majority of his friends and colleagues also came from less-developed rural villages. Wang is in his twenties and never married before; to him life in the city was a routine life. Every day he would arrive at his post at the same time, and spend hours sitting behind a desk while cross-checking personnel information with records. Every now and then he could have a chat with colleagues and visitors. Wang felt bored and quickly developed a routine with his friends and colleagues; after work they would go out and hang around, dine together, *hejiu chuiniu* (drinking and bragging). Wang is a moderate drinker, and saved money in order to start his own business. He spent most of the night in his dorm, and chatted with family or random strangers online, and that was how he found Fang. Wang was curious about the life of a foreigner, then gradually felt attracted by Fang, and spent most of the time staying with her. Then he passionately pursued her; “I still feel unbelievable, I am so lucky and now I have a wonderful wife and son.” Wang admires Fang’s gentle kindness, and her ability to make a living, as well as take care of the family, which makes him believe that she will be a great wife and partner.

Fang shares some similarities with Wang; she also came from a small rural village, with a big family and several siblings. Fang finished her primary school education and worked with her mother to support her family, and spent years working on the farm and at local fairs. Her village is not too far from the border between her country and China, and Fang used to see lots of Chinese people at the border fair during the years. Fang experiences Chinese people as quite different; to her, the women are always pretty and happy and the men are polite and nice. When she was old enough to handle the business by herself, Fang took over her mother’s handicraft booth at the border fair. Fang learnt Chinese by herself through the years, and eventually met her ex-husband, who at the time was a simple and honest man, but lacked affection. Fang liked Chinese men more than the local men of her country, since the majority of the local guys left all the work to their wives and children while they drank, smoked, gambled, or kept their hands in their pockets. She felt amazed the first time she saw a Chinese man helping and caring for his wife and children at the fair: “I felt right then, when I was a little girl, I like Chinese people and I want to live with them.” Fang married the man without telling her parents; she left the booth to her sister and went to China with him. They got married and registered in the registration office in a capital city. However, married life with her ex-husband was not what she had dreamed of. Fang’s Chinese is fluent but she still had a lot to learn and adapt to, such as the village accent, social rules, and food. Most of the time she felt lonely, because her ex-husband couldn’t respond to her feelings and wasn’t able to help her and support her. She felt that her ex-

husband wanted her to follow the womanly rule and do womanly things, which he considered he had no part in. The situation got worse when Fang failed to comply with the mother-in-law's orders over cooking, cleaning, and farm work, and Fang realised that her ex-husband would never take a stand with her. Fang decided she had had enough, and got a divorce. After the divorce, she remained in China and found a job in a factory. After their marriage, Wang and Fang decided they would stay in North China; Wang is looking for a permanent job, and Fang will open a small shop or restaurant to sell foreign food, which Fang is good at cooking.

In sum, Fang believes that she has the right and ability to make the best choices for herself. She will take action to protect herself, and she also values the companionship between spouses, rather than traditional patriarchal family relationships, which are the conventional practice in her own country. Fang is very fond of the Chinese way of living and relationships; she has decided that her son will learn to be Chinese and grow up Chinese. After her son was born, she reconnected with her family, and they are happy for her, but she doesn't want to take her family back for a visit to her own country yet. She emphasised that she will not deny the boy's right to meet her family and learn about the country, but she's afraid that her son might adapt to some bad male habits there. Fang thinks being Chinese will be the best life she can provide for her son.

Fang's divorce and remarriage are clearly different from the stereotyped commercial international marriages in rural China. Although Fang comes from a less-developed country, her marriages and divorce were her own choice, as she believes that she is entitled with a better life and the rights to live one. Comparing to Fang, one of the interviewee who has experienced marriage of convenience, shared her thoughts on her marriages and divorces.

I once married to a foreigner then moved to his country [B]. I divorced him, and stayed there for years. I believe women who marry a foreigner at an older age [than the average age at marriage in China] are most likely aiming for emigration, not for love and happiness. From my experience, some of them live a happy life, but most of them do not. I think most of the Chinese people [women] want to marry out and get a chance to live abroad. This is part of what I wanted back then [when I married a foreigner]. I think foreign countries can provide us [women] with more opportunities.

I think there are big differences between China and [country B]. [Country B] has a different life style, lots of rules, and daily life is so busy you can't even take a rest; and people always give each other the cold shoulder, even between friends and family members. Their society is not like ours, there's a lack of hospitality; other than that I think it is fine. I don't really know about the locals' idea of love and family. To me love is between two people who have chemistry with each other, are fond of each other, and always care for each other. It's hard to say what is marriage, but I think the most important thing between spouses is harmony. I think getting [your relationship] registered is reassuring, a protection for women. I want him [current husband] to move to country B with me, where I have a house and the weather is good, but he doesn't like that; I will try to talk with him. (Mei, overseas Chinese with foreign residency, late forties, vocational high school education, owner of small business, married to mainland Chinese husband in 2017)

Mei got first married to a Chinese husband years ago. When the marriage broke up, she was in her early thirties, divorced with a son, and living in a small city. Mei points out that being a divorcee with no permanent job and a young child meant they had to live a straitened life, and this is not what she wanted for her son and herself. She had heard how women can get foreign residency easily by marrying a foreigner, and decided to give it a try. With the mediation of a marriage agency she met a man who was ten years older than her and got married right away. Her foreign husband was a divorcee, but he lived a single life. They returned to country B and lived together for several years until she got her permanent residency; she then decided she would also apply for her son's residency; he was then staying in China with his grandparents. Then a few years later she divorced her foreign husband amicably, and her son came from China to live with her. He didn't like the country and refused to stay there for college. Most of the time Mei worked and lived in the local Chinese community. A year ago, when she went back to China visit her parents, she met her current husband, Yong, at their secondary school class reunion. Mei used to like Yong when they were still students, and Yong also had a crush on her. During the class reunion they finally told each other about their feelings, and began to date each other. Mei was still working and living in country B, but they always contacted each other by phone and online chat. Mei decided to marry Yong when he went to visit her.

Mei said that even before she asked for the marriage broker's service, she was clear about what price she would pay for her decision. She had to leave her son with her parents, learn a different language and *guiju* (social rules), and she was not in love with her newly wedded husband, only felt obligated to be a care taker and wife. She was certain that the marriage would not bring her happiness, but more likely, give her a stable life. Mei is not good at learning foreign languages; she spent years trying to do that, but still struggles with it. She knows that marrying a foreigner is very different from marrying a Chinese man; the differences between the two cultures, in things like language, habitus, and values, are not easy to deal with.

Based on her experience, Mei described the common feature of Chinese women (who marry a foreigner for a passport) is that "they are more conservative about marriage than most Chinese and foreigners." Although they use marriage as a passage for international migration, she commented, most of them will fulfil their duty as a wife, then get residential status and/or divorce. Mei observed that most of the Chinese women she knows in her community would eventually divorce their foreign husband. But once they are divorced, few of them will marry another foreigner or a local Chinese man. Mei's sister and her family also moved to country B with Mei's help. Like Mei's son, her sister's husband doesn't like the country, and spends more time in China rather than stay with his marital family. Mei said that almost all the Chinese men she knows don't like country B, but all the Chinese women she knows are satisfied with their life and the environment there.

Even though Mei has experienced a lot, she is still not quite sure what the true meaning of marriage is. She maintains a conventional attitude towards marriage and family. Her son will go to another country for his postgraduate education and try to become a citizen. Mei supports his decision but doesn't want him to marry a foreign girl there; she wants him to marry a Chinese girl. Mei also believes that people of the younger generation can have a trial marriage before they make up their mind to marry: "It's good to understand each other before marriage rather than get divorced and regret the marriage"; she adds, *nanhai buchikui* [boys don't suffer loss in cohabitation, but girls could suffer loss in chastity].

5.5.2 Marriage, Divorce, and More

Much of the existing research into international marriages between mainland China, Japan, and South Korea argues that this type of marriage is likely to be built on calculations of cost-benefit without much

interpersonal affection, hence baring with a higher risk of dissolution. However, according to the interviewees, the quality of their marriages are depended on a series of complex factors.

Everybody know it's not easy to find a wife in villages. People like me, with primary school education, a farmer, almost 30, with no money ... [Chinese] girls don't even want to see your face. Girls always expect more: you must have a car and apartment, and your parents should not expect you to look after them, better if they are both dead. The women are realistic and do not *xiaoshun* [filial piety]. People need to marry, settle down, have a wife and children, everybody needs to do this. It's the Chinese way. Some guy in our village went to Vietnam and found a woman. His family saved a lot of money [on bridewealth], so several guys from my village and I went on a trip to Vietnam with the help of an agency. Two guys and I found our wives. Mine is very young. She can speak a little Chinese; I gave her parents some money and we got married in her village. Her parents really like me; they're simple people, farmers, a lot like my parents. She followed me back here with a tourist visa. She asked me to buy a smart phone, a gold ring and a necklace for her, and I did. We got registered, and a year later she ran away from my village. I can't find her. I even went to the police and they can't help me. Last time I heard, she was working somewhere with other Vietnamese women. I want a divorce, but I can't find her, so now I need to go to the courthouse and file a law suit against her. (Gao, Chinese husband, late twenties, primary school education, farmer, married a foreign wife in 2015, seeking divorce in 2017)

Gao's marriage is known as a "commercial marriage" in China's mainstream media. According to Gao, a foreign wife is not what he wanted at the beginning. But faced with expectations of a high amount of bridewealth, he did not have a chance in their local marriage market:

when *shuomeide* [a local matchmaker] introduces you to girls, all they want to know is how much money you can make, whether you have a *tizhinei de* job [in-institutional occupation position connected with the party or government] or *zuoshengyi* [have your own business], what type of house and car you own, do you have a lot siblings, any old or sick parents to look after.

Gao failed with all his blind dates:

Sometimes I can't even meet the girl because once they heard I'm nothing but a *zhongdide* [literally, people who cultivate the soil, farmers and peasants], they just say no and don't even want to see me. My *meiren* [matchmaker] tried for a long time, and she started to avoid me and my parents, because she could not find a girl who was interested in me.

The problem is, as Gao explained, marriage and a family life is the conventional way of living in China, especially in a rural community:

if I can't get married, I can't have children, my parents won't have grandchildren, and there won't be anybody [wife] to take care of *jia* [family, members and livelihood of the family]. People will talk behind our backs. I don't want my family to be *chou jilianggu* [their shortcomings discussed behind their backs].

Gao said he can't understand "what happened to women." He thinks that an honest guy like him who is trying to make a living by his own hands should be respected, not rejected as he has been. Gao's family have been peasants for generations, and most of the family members are still living in the village, including his older sister who married to a local farmer. He didn't finish his secondary school education, as his family was *kunnan* (with financial difficulties) and they believed that modern education would cost a lot of money but wouldn't help him with farming. With his family's financial difficulties, they do not have resources to extend their landholding or mechanise their production. Gao told me that nowadays in his village, when a guy tries to marry a woman who has not been married before, they are expected to pay at least 100 thousand yuan (around 15 thousand US dollars) as bridewealth, which does not even include the costs of house, car, and wedding ceremony. Whereas when Gao contacted the marriage broker, they only asked for half of the bridewealth, and his wife's parents asked even less. Gao's wife never came to China before their marriage, and is ten years younger than him; Gao's trip to meet her was the first time Gao had been abroad, and the first time they met each other. Gao contributed the divorce to his poverty, he thinks his wife ran away from him because he is not rich and powerful, and she just want a rich guy to be her husband.

Several other interviewees who married with foreign wives from less-developed countries had different experiences than Gao had. Jun is a farmer from a local village; with the help of a marriage broker, he also married a foreign wife who is much younger than him. Jun's wife came and stayed in China, and they got married at the end of the busy season. Jun joked that their marriage was *baoban hunyin* (an arranged

marriage) and his wife was “kind of sold to him” by her parents. Jun graduated from secondary school and worked as a farmer, while he also picked up part-time jobs around his village. Although Jun had never met any foreigners before his marriage, some of his extended family members are living outside China, and some of his neighbours had married foreign wives from Southeast Asia. Jun thinks their reasons for marrying foreign women are identical to his: because it is hard for rural men to find a suitable Chinese wife, and the cost is too high. He shared similar experiences to the ones Gao described. The woman he dated for marriage asked for a house, car, and money; he thinks Chinese girls are *jiaoqing* (hypocritical and unreasonable). Jun also told me that at first it was only one or two men in the village who married foreign brides; but when other families saw the foreign brides and the life they were living, more local men began to seek a foreign wife. Most of his peers went abroad and were living in other countries, while others migrated across China to make a living; “the people who can all moved out, only those who can’t stay behind.”

Jun and his wife have been married for almost a year-and-a-half. He is happy with his wife and their life, as his wife is tall and beautiful. From the beginning she was like a hard-working rural female, and she gave birth to a boy. Jun does not want his children to go back to his wife’s country.

I think we can go there *guangguang* [literally, to stroll around or make a visit, to take a tour]. I would like to take my parents there, but I don’t think we need to visit her family or take our children to visit them. (Jun, Chinese husband, late twenties, secondary school education, farmer, 2017)

When being asked whether he would like to visit his parents-in-law in the future, Jun said it is *meibiyao* (not necessary to do so). Jun said that his wife’s parents, the teachers of local primary school, feel proud of their daughters’ international marriages, as the local communities believe that the bridges will live a much better life here in China. Jun’s wife had to go back and forth between the two countries as the duration of her visa was limited to a short time. Jun knows nothing about his wife’s country; to him, the most important thing is not the country or its culture, but to understand his wife. However, the couple both only speak their mother language, and they need translation software to help them understand each other. Sometimes when the translation software cannot express his wife’s thoughts and ideas, they need to seek help from her friend, an international student at a university in China. She doesn’t have any friends in the local village due to the

language barrier, so she keeps in contact with her friends through online chatting. Jun has never considered learning his wife's language:

my brain is dull, I'm not *youwenhua* [well-educated] and I can't learn that ... she tried to teach me some sentences, but I just keep forgetting them.

His wife is trying to learn Chinese from scratch. Jun highlights his wife's *xiaoshun* (filial piety) and *xianhui* (womanly virtues), as she take care of his parents and has taken over all the housework and caring work. According to Jun, his wife never complains and has adapted well to rural life. Jun sometimes tries to buy some food from her homeland for her.

Jun wants a married life with love and companionship, but he considers that he is "not a boy" anymore. In his late twenties, he doesn't think he can wait any longer, and he does not believe that love can bring him a suitable wife; whereas the traditional way of *xian jiehun*, *zai lian'ai* (marry first, then fall in love) has helped him to start a family as soon as possible. Jun believes that marriage is never all about love, it's more about *guorizi* (getting along and living a life): "we farmers are simple people and all we want is a wife, kids, and family life." According to Jun, his wife is happy to marry him, as currently she not only has better economic conditions, but also can provide her extant family in her own country. She likes his hardworking and caring for her, as "men in her village are too lazy to do anything for the household".

Comparing with the rural Chinese males who engaged in cross-border commercial marriages, Chinese females tended to share complex and diverse experiences on their international marriages and divorces.

I wanted to get divorce right after I finally arrived in Taiwan. I only saw my husband once before our marriage, and when everything was settled, he started to show me the real him. He's the youngest son and already over 30, and he had never been married. I think he had some mental issues, and that is why he couldn't find a wife in Taiwan. I had no idea what was waiting for me when I got married. I was young, and me and my family, we had just lost our jobs because we were laid-off. I had no way to make a living; a woman worker can never find a decent job. Other people told me that marriage to a foreigner, a Hongkonger, or a Taiwanese would give me a better life. So I found a marriage broker, paid them and got married. I regretted this from the first day. He's crazy, his mother is a mean lady. She is like the worst mother-in-law and she treated me badly... I can't

get a job in Taiwan, because they (Taiwan employers) don't accept our diploma. I couldn't bear this type of life so I just ran. I came back to the mainland after several years, settled down, built up my own business and made a life in a new place. All these years I didn't dare to get a divorce; he tried so many times to track me down and take me back to Taiwan. This time I've just had enough, I want to solve this problem once and for all. I've got the documents I need, and I will sue him to get my divorce. If you ask me now whether I feel any remorse, I will tell you no. It's my *ming* [fate], and it's my own choice, and back then it seemed to be the only option. (Lan, Chinese female, early fifties, vocational high school education, owner of small business, 2017)

Lan was in the registration office for her divorce. She offered to share her story with me. She got married with her husband at the end of the 1990s. Back then she used to be a worker in a state-owned factory, and her life is a typical working class life. She was born in the factory's hospital, received education in the factory-owned school, and found a job in the factory. The factory was almost all her life was about, and she expected to find a husband among her factory peers, have children and work in the factory, then retire, her children would take over their jobs, and the couple would enjoy life in the state-owned factory. To quote Lan, she was "outraged" when her entire family were laid-off. Lan didn't get the chance to marry a fellow worker as she "was too picky and had high expectation", and all of sudden every benefit she used to enjoy was gone; to make things even worse, her family had no saving, and when they lost their jobs, life became too hard. Lan remembers every job she tried to take; most of the time the employers refused to hire her either because she is a woman and hadn't married yet, or she was not suitable for the job. Some of her peers became street vendors and tried to make a living; some left the region and became cheap labour in the southern provinces. Lan told me that even migrating there could not guarantee a stable living. Some of the female workers became prostitutes or *ernai* (mistress) in southern China:

too many people divorced or even suicided, and my family was scattered because everybody was trying to make a living, and nobody had any extra money to help others.

Lan considered that marrying abroad was a shortcut to a stable and wealthy life, so she asked the local marriage broker for the service. Like Mei, she never met her husband before the registration, due to the tension between the two governments. Her husband came to China first and they got registration; then she had to wait for months before she could move to Taiwan. Lan didn't want to share much about her life in

Taiwan, beside of the bad tempers of her husband and mother-in-law. She struggled with the fact that she used to have a job and make her own money, whereas in Taiwan, she could not find a job, but had to depend on her husband. Lan believed that this is what caused the tension between the two generations. Also, the Taiwanese in-laws not only despised her because she was *dalumei* (a discriminatory name for mainland Chinese women who marry or work in Taiwan), but also because they hold a very traditional attitude towards women and family life, which is not what Lan had learnt and became on the mainland. She has a strong personality and always argued with them because she *renbuliao* (could not tolerate the insults).

Juan is another mainland Chinese female who married a Taiwanese husband. Juan and her husband Qiu went to register for a divorce. Qiu was not happy with the decision, and continuously banged his head with his hands, but signed the agreement eventually. Juan was very calm, and explained to me what happened with their marriage. Unlike Lan, Juan met Qiu when she visited his university during her senior year; they fell in love with each other and began a long-distance relationship. They kept in touch via email, phone calls, and online chatting; two years later Qiu came to the mainland visit Juan and asked her to marry him. They had a big wedding in her hometown, and her family liked him. Later, Juan quitted her job and moved to Taiwan. They had another wedding ceremony in Taiwan. Since Qiu is the youngest son in his family, his mother moved in with them. Juan gave birth to a girl a year after their marriage, and became a housewife, “and everything got worse than ever.” Juan’s first-born is a girl, which caused a lot of mockery from the mother-in-law and Qiu’s sisters. Most of the times Juan put up with the mocking, and sometimes she would cry, but never talk back to them, as Qiu didn’t dare to argue with his mother. They tried to have another baby, preferably a boy, to satisfy his mother. Eventually Juan decided to get a divorce during the spring festival; their daughter, who turned four that year, had just been humiliated by her grandmother in front of the whole family. When the mother-in-law distributed *hongbao* (a red envelope with money given to children as a wish for good luck) to all the grandchildren, that year she refused to give it to their daughter:

She denied my girl as her family. That was the last straw ... I could bear everything they threw at me, but not this, and not at my baby. (Juan, Chinese female, early thirties, university education, ex-accountant, married in 2011, divorced in 2017)

Right after the family dinner, Juan calmly told Qiu she wants divorce him, and it is her final decision.

Another divorced international couple was quite different from most of the divorcees interviewed. Nathan and his wife Hua, in their thirties, got married a year before I interviewed them, and Hua had asked for divorce. Nathan came from a developed European country, his parents were both professors in a world-renowned university, and he had an old sister. Nathan met Hua in Thailand; Nathan was there for a business conference, and Hua was there as a business owner. Nathan was attracted to Hua, who is a beautiful woman, bright, and capable in her financial business. Nathan stayed with Hua as long as possible, and invited her to visit his family in Europe. Hua's family were different from Nathan's; her mother had abandoned her and her father when Hua was still a young girl. Hua thinks it is because that her father was not rich and was too busy at work to care her mother. Hua grew up with her father, learnt independence and self-confidence from him, and how to manage a business. Hua visited Nathan's family and loved the family, and Nathan's parents and sister were also fond of Hua. Nathan and Hua dated for half a year, and eventually got married in China, because Hua was too busy with her own business to go to Europe. They had a good ceremony in Hua's hometown; Nathan's family and friends came to the wedding. After the wedding they spent some time in China and took a honeymoon trip in Asia. To Hua, Nathan is a handsome young man, "so gentle and warm," and he loved to take care of her. At the beginning of their marriage, everything went smoothly, but after a living together for a while, Hua grew weary of Nathan. To quote Hua:

I know Nathan is kind, warm, and gentle, he's a good person, but I'm also angry with that. Because I feel he's like a girl! Every time when we have a discussion about certain things, if I insist on my opinion, he just starts to feel hurt and moody, sometimes even cried! I mean, I know this is how his parent raised him, he is emotional, but this is too much! I don't want my husband to be a *niangniangqiang* [sissy]! I want him to be a *yemen'er* [manly man]! (Hua, Chinese female, early thirties, college education, small financial company owner, married in 2016, divorced in 2017)

Hua said she wanted the divorce for months, but Nathan refused to come to China and sign the agreement:

he's so *moji* [reluctant], he's like a girl! I have to book everything for him, pick him up in Beijing, and almost force him to come here.

Hua decide to divorce without notifying her father, who likes Nathan a lot, but she had to ask her father to send her household registration book in the morning, and her father, instead of using the express delivery service, drove more than 500 kilometres and arrived in the office in the afternoon in the hope of stopping

them from divorcing. Hua and Nathan sat in the hall the whole time; Nathan was sad, but Hua never tried to comfort him.

When Hua's father arrived with the *hukou bu* (household registration book), Hua asked Nathan to go into the office and sign the divorce agreement. Nathan's reluctance was so obvious that the officers asked for my help to talk with Nathan, to make sure that divorce was what he really wanted. Hua asked Nathan for a short conversation outside the office, then sent him back. Hua is fluent with English, and when I asked Nathan whether the divorce was his own choice, not what Hua pushed him to do, Hua kept staring at him outside the office without a word. Nathan looked at Hua and eventually said "I want it," then signed the agreement and started to quietly cry. Hua came into the office and signed the agreement, while speaking in Chinese "you are such a girl and a baby" to Nathan. Hua's father tried to talk to his daughter before she signed the agreement, but said he knew that "Hua's too stubborn to listen." He believes that it was due to the unhappy ending of his own marriage that Hua got a divorce:

she grew up around me, I'm a man, I know nothing about how to be a mother and all the womanly things. Hua learnt from me and became a tough girl. Sometimes I wonder whether she realises that woman are supposed to have their own way of being, not too strong, and not the masculine way. I think this is what make her so successful in her financial business, but I don't think she will be happy in her future marital life ... Nathan is a wonderful fella, this is such a shame, but Hua will never change her mind, and Nathan knows that. (Hua's father, 2017)

5.5.3 Strange Land: Beyond Marginalization and Assimilation

China's economic success in recent years has seen an increase in foreigners migrating to China for various purposes. They have become a part of inbound migration to China, which generated more complexity in international marriage in terms of residential arrangements, adaptation and integration into the communities and societies as the destinations of settlement have become more fluid and situational.

We met in Shanghai. He's a foreigner. I have my own business and he has his own. We both have trading partners across East Asia, and we met each other through our mutual friends. We both live in Shanghai and we are both single. So why not? We like each other, understand each other, we can help each other with our business, he can help me extend my overseas market, and I can help him build more connections in China. We are both divorced, and at our age there won't be any issue of

children or family. I think we are good companions. I don't want to migrate to his country, not a good market for our business. Why bother? (Shu, Chinese female, early fifties, vocational education, international trading company owner, 2017)

Shu and her husband Lee have the same type of job, they both live in Shanghai and have international trading businesses. Shu got divorced years ago from her Chinese husband and moved to Shanghai, taking her business with her. China is the largest market for Lee's business, and he always spends a lot of time stay in China. Lee became fluent in Chinese as an undergraduate student; he gradually became the head of the Chinese market in his company, and eventually started his own business. They met each other through a mutual friend, and Shu thinks they are suitable for each other, as they have similar interests, jobs, and life style: "I just want a guy who I can share a life with." Lee thinks when he's with Shu, "it feels like we know each other, it feels comfortable." Neither Shu nor Lee want to move to Lee's country, since their markets and businesses are centred in China.

Yan and her husband Sato are another cross-national couple who live in Shanghai. Yan works as a translator in a cross-national company, and Sato is a foreign expert who has lived in China for decades. Yan majored in Japanese during her college year. Yan likes Shanghai, but as a *waidi ren* (migrant, not born in Shanghai), it is not easy for her to find a suitable husband. Most of the male migrants wouldn't be able to purchase an apartment in Shanghai, and local males with Shanghai hukou tend to look for a wife with better conditions than their own. They worked together for a while, as Sato is not fluent in Chinese. At first they were just co-workers who worked together and went to office parties together. Gradually Sato felt interested in Yan and started to date with her. Yan is in her thirties and still single; Sato has been divorced once and is in his late forties. Sato loves Yan's gentle and soft character, thinks she's almost "like a Japanese woman." Yan thinks Sato is kind, and can provide her with emotional security. They plan to start a family and have children, but Sato said that both of them agreed that they would not move back to Japan:

I like China, like its food and people, I don't want to go back because the life is so busy and everybody is serious. I feel free in China and I won't go back. Even if my company want me to go back, I think I will refuse that decision and find a job here. (Sato, foreign husband, late forties, university education, head of engineer, 2017)

Marriages between overseas Chinese and mainland Chinese citizens are not something new in China; the annual numbers of this type of marriage have maintained a steady flow over the decades. The older generations tend to emphasise their cultural lineage and connection with China, while the younger generations are more concerned about their individual feelings. Comparing to other types of couples in international marriages in mainland China, the overseas Chinese group has showed a strong sense in their self-identities.

I moved abroad twenty years ago and became a citizen of [country C]. I practise in traditional Chinese medicine and have a good income and life. After my last marriage I tried to date with local white men, but they are not like Chinese. They don't have a sense of obligation towards family. They're romantic but too *ziyou* (free, in the context meaning to follow one's will). They can date with you, but when you give them a hint about marriage, they just freak out and run away. I'm nearly seventy now, I want a husband as a life companion. All my children are married and have their own children, and they are successful in their career. I'm living all by myself now; my house is big and beautiful but it's cheerless. My children support me in finding a suitable partner, and I think it is good to have somebody who can look after you. I never met Kai before; he's a school teacher in China. My sister and her family live in China. They heard from my son that I hadn't found a suitable husband, so they introduced Kai to me. He's younger than me, he lost his wife years ago, and has a daughter who is already married. He's that traditional kind of Chinese man, honest, straight and narrow, a good father and teacher. We talk to each other through the Internet. He is handsome, a little shy but with a good heart. After we get to know each other, I know this is the guy I want to spend the rest of my life with. We will move to [country C] after our registration; I have everything back there, the environment is better, and we will have a great life. (Amy, overseas Chinese with foreign citizenship, late sixties, college education, Chinese medicine clinic owner, 2017)

Amy thinks she has found a good *laoban* (old age companion), like an old pot and pan, and even though Kai knows no English, she is confident that he will adapt to life overseas with her help. It is important that she now has someone who really understands her "from the bottom of his heart." She and Kai share a similar background compared to local white men. Amy said she raised her children in the western way; as the

second generation of migrants, all of her children are “bad at Chinese,” and their ideas and behaviours are more like the white people in her community. As a mother, Amy never intervened in their choices of spouse and marriage, but she thinks the power of *xuetong* (linkage) is amazing. All her children dated with white people or people from other racial backgrounds, but eventually they got married with someone of Chinese or Asian descent. Amy said that, with similar cultural backgrounds, values, and habitus

we have our way of living, they can date white people, but when they start to think about marriage, a life in harmony is more important than passion. They grew up in a foreign country, but their cultural and habitus are closer to Chinese than white people. Marriage is more about the daily life, and peoples’ similar background could help them to create a better marriage. I’m not sure what will happen to my grandchildren, but it will be their life to live.

Amy stresses that most of her Chinese friends and their children in country C are like this; they have decent jobs and good financial circumstance; they have good connections with white people and contribute to the community, but a lot of them still prefer to marry a Chinese person. Occasionally, a Chinese girl will marry a white man; sometimes people marry fellow Chinese migrants or second/third generation Chinese, sometimes international Chinese students. According to Amy, she does not believe that marry white people could provide a migrant the access of the mainstream society, or co-ethnic marriages could lead to an enclosed Chinese community. Amy compared overseas Chinese communities with ethnic minority groups in mainland China to explain the relationship between Chinese communities and majority group in western society:

because you are Asian, you are not white, you are different from them [white], and you don’t belong to them, no matter how long you’ve been there or where you were born. We [Chinese and white] can be good friends, but deep down we are different, especially for our generation [first generation migrants]. It is their society, and we are the minority.

In practice, the circumstances of overseas Chinese international marriages are more complicated than Amy’s picture. William, for example, was born in Hong Kong and migrated to another country with his parents before the Handover. He grew up in a foreign country and became an accountant. At the expense of the company he worked for, he was sent to an international branch of the company in Guangdong, and he met his mainland Chinese wife Jenny there. Jenny is an only child in her family. She graduated from a

famous university in China and found a job in Guangdong, while the rest of her family stayed up north. Jenny met William at a party that her friend held, and they became friends. Neither of them thought about the other as a potential partner for years, until one day, William realised that he was used to share every bit of his life with Jenny and was afraid of losing her. To his surprise, Jenny said no when he asked her to become his girlfriend, as Jenny thought he was just teasing her and wasn't sure he would treat her seriously. Jenny was also worried about William's background; she had heard everything about William's family from him, but was not quite sure if it was authentic, or if she could get along with them. The couple spent a lot of time developing their relationship. Jenny visited William's family, and William went back home with Jenny to meet her parents. They spent three years as a couple and eventually got married. Jenny is not willing to move to a foreign country yet, because they both have jobs, friends, and a life in China. William said they are not going to have a baby right away, so he's not quite sure what it will be like in the future, but currently they will stay in China.

According to William, he did not observe significant differences between local Chinese community and White community. William dated with girls from other racial background during his high school and college years, but does not think they are different from girls of Chinese community. William thinks that he and his peers, as the second generation of migrant who grew up in Western societies, are "identical with" the local young peoples, especially on their ideal of life, family, and love. His friends come from different cultural and racial backgrounds, while some of them also have cross-cultural or interethnic relationships. William thinks that his parents' generation are more similar to people in China. But as China has become more and more internationalised in recent decades, it's younger generations are more similar to the young overseas Chinese in Western societies. To him, racial or cultural backgrounds are never his major concern of marriage, while personal affection is the foundation of love and happiness.

In the case of cross-border ethnic groups and international marriage, Gong's and Cui's marriages provide another angle on co-ethnic intermarriage. Gong is a descendant of Japanese war orphans, who moved back to Japan with his family. Gong was married to a Japanese wife for years and eventually divorced her. Although he is of Japanese descent, Gong grew up as Chinese and spent most of his childhood in China; thus it was not easy for him to learn the language and the culture of Japan. Gong is a diligent man; he learnt Japanese and finished a degree in Japan, found a job in a local company and married a Japanese wife,

but deep down I'm Chinese you know? Japanese women are family-centred, they will take care of everything in the home. But I'm not used to it, as back in China everybody will take care of each other and do the housework, because we are family. But with my ex-wife, when I tried to give her a hand, she asked me if I thought she was an incompetent wife. (Gong, overseas Chinese, Japanese descendant, forties, college education, industry company employee, 2017)

Gong felt he had too many differences in culture, value, and habitus compared to his Japanese wife. What made him most uncomfortable was he thought she was too "tender, polite, quiet, and humble," to the extent that he started to feel he was living with a stranger: "I wasn't quite sure what she was thinking, how did she feel about me, it was a struggle to understand her." Gong believes the marriage was a torture for both of them and asked for a divorce: "she didn't even say no or start a fight with me, she just apologised." Gong says that he embraced his Japanese lineage and worked hard to "become Japanese," even marrying a Japanese woman, but after years of family life, he realised that deep down, he was still more comfortable with his Chinese roots:

now I know I want a Chinese wife, we have more similarities, and she can learn to become a new Japanese [person] just like me.

Cui is a Korean-Chinese who migrated to South Korea in the early 1990s. Cui and his family have relatives in South Korea; with their help, Cui's parents moved to South Korea to work. Cui arrived in South Korea when he was a teenager; years later, when his entire family give up their Chinese citizenship and became South Korean citizens, Cui refused to do so and went back to China. Cui married a foreign woman, Meg, from another East Asian country, whom he met in China. He spends most of his time running his own business in the north; sometimes he goes back to South Korea for business and family matters. But Cui has a bad relationship with his family:

I don't understand them; we are Korean-Chinese, but when I went to South Korea, the South Korean people looked down on us. They call us *josunjok* [offensive name of Korean-Chinese] and mock us. Those Korean people, because they were born in that country, they think they are the noble Koreans and *chaoxianzu* [Korean-Chinese] are just low imposters. (Cui, Korean-Chinese, mid-thirties, high school education, employee of family trading company, 2017)

Cui got into a fight with his parents about their decision to relinquish Chinese citizenship:

to them it feels like, with [SK] passports they [South Koreans] will respect us and treat us like fellow citizens, but they know nothing. Those [South] Koreans will always treat us as aliens; and besides, I won't become a part of those bullies, I have my pride.

Cui stayed in China with his friends, and met Meg during a trip to Russia. Meg was a bold girl who had freshly graduated from college and could hold her liquor, which caught Cui's attention. Both Meg and Cui were not quite sure what attracted them to each other, but according to Meg, "I just like him, want to be with him, there's no other reason."

Although based on China's marriage related laws and regulations, only heterosexual couples could register their marriage in mainland China, international marriage and relationships also exists among same sex couples⁸.

I don't want to get married, because I resist the idea of marriage, especially when we're not allowed to marry. I liked Lucy when I saw her, so I got in touch with her and we became partners. She's more feminine than me, I'm kind of a rebel. Now she's not in China and I'm still in university, so we keep in touch but we don't know what will be like in the future. We need to discuss a lot of things if we really want to be together. My family hated me for being lesbian. Her family love her but they are religious people. Both our countries don't accept LGBTQ's equality rights over marriage, and I'm still a student and not quite sure what the future will be like. I don't want to worry her over the future, so we will let nature take its course. (Stacy, Chinese female, early twenties, postgraduate education, student, 2017)

Stacy met her partner Lucy during her second year of university life. At that time Stacy, as a Chinese girl and an only child who grew up in Shanghai, had already figured out her sexual orientation. She used to like girls in her high school, but was scared of some of her ideas, and her family holds conservative ideas about relationships and marriage. Stacy got into heated arguments with her parents when she came out in her freshman year; the situation became worse when they heard she had a foreign girlfriend. Lucy is an international student who comes from Europe, and she has a close emotional connection with her mother. Lucy's family might know about her relationship with Stacy, but they never pushed their ideas on the girls.

Lucy and Stacy met each other at their university. Stacy felt interested in Lucy when she saw her walking in the street, and she got her friends' help and found out Lucy's name and her major. Stacy recalled she was nervous and wanted to be friends with Lucy, but still hesitated as to whether or not to contact Lucy, or if she should write her a letter first. They bumped into each other in the library, spent the whole day together and skipped all their classes to chat with each other. After that, they became best friends, and enjoyed each other's company for a short time, before Lucy had to return to her own country. Stacy believes that their cultural differences provided them with plentiful ideas and fuelled their love, and she was gradually drawn into Lucy's "intelligence, honesty, bravery, compassion, and beauty."

When Lucy left China, Stacy kept in touch with her for several months, then they broke up. The long distance relationship had "burned them out," and they stopped contacting each other. Half year later, Lucy returned to the university for graduation and contacted Stacy; they did things together, and reconnected again. Stacy said this time they started their relationship from scratch. After graduation she stayed on for postgraduate study, while Lucy returned home and started to work in local hospital. They still keep in touch with each other, and Stacy has met Lucy's mother and sister through video chat, but the long distance between them is causing problems again. Yet, Stacy believes that things will go as they are supposed to. Stacy thinks there is no specific reason for her to choose a foreign girl as her partner, but she does enjoy their relationship because it is quite different. Compared to Chinese people, Stacy thinks that Lucy, as a foreigner is never too "realistic" about their future. They can enjoy the relationship without continuously worrying about money, house, and children; and Lucy's family, even though they're religious people, respect her choice over her own life, whereas, "for Chinese parents, this is unthinkable and outrageous; my parents are trying to disown me." To Stacy, Lucy has changed her, as she used to be the girl who only wanted to have fun, but now she's seriously considering their relationship and their future.

Different from Stacy, Kevin found his foreign boyfriend Danny with the help of social media. Kevin developed a long-distance relationship with Danny for years, based on their mutual love of photography; the couple rely on the internet to keep in touch with each other. Since the Chinese government tighten its internet censorship, it created troubles for the couple to maintain their daily contacts and routines. Kevin said it eventually led to a heated quarrel between them, and Danny got injured on his way to work in the following days because of the distraction. Kevin went to Danny's country to take care of him and decided

to quit his job (in China) and stay there. Kevin wanted to stay with Danny, but he refused to register their civil relationship before he find a job in Danny's country. According to Kevin, he does not want to receive a reside right or citizenship through their marriage, because he is capable to achieve a citizenship through his own effort. Kevin stressed that he want equality, respect, and independence in their relationship, and he does not want to rely on Danny to help him.

5.5.4 Marriage Broker: Relationship for Service

Some of the existing research has provided a understanding of how marriage brokers work and have changed international marriage patterns. Back in the colonisation era, imperial powers and colonising governments played important roles in international marriage. Nowadays governments like Japan and South Korean utilise this type of marriage as a tool to ease the pressure over regional marriage squeezes. In South Korea, the church also participates in the international marriage market. The international marriage broker (IMB) industry of matchmaking has become an important intermediary for transnational intimacy. International marriage in both old world and modern societies is created and reshaped by those agencies and organisers.

Although the existing research argues that international marriage is closely connected with international labour migration, to an extent that sometimes, international marriage is indeed a method for labour migration (Piper and Roces 2003), studies of marriage brokerage have revealed that the IMB industry is distinct from labour recruitment, and aims for a different target population (Yang and Lu 2010). The IMB industry became visible with the emergence of "mail-order" brides during the 1980s, and it evolved and changed in the following decades, as countries such as America, Philippine, Vietnam, and China, began to implement strong control over brokerage. In countries such as Japan and South Korea, advertisements for IMB services can be found in daily newspapers, public transport notice boards, lamp post commercials, television advertisements, and internet websites. In receiving countries, such advertisements not only provide a clear "price" for a foreign wife, but also portray women as stereotyped ideals of eastern/western females; the former are promoted as traditional, family-centred, and obedient, while the latter are depicted as exotic, romantic, and fervent. The IMB service works as a chain which advertises women to males from economically advanced countries, recruiting females from countries like Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, the

Philippines, and China. Matchmaking brokers will provide both parties with information about potential spouses, arrangements and training for international dating, and documents needed for marriage.

With the changes in socioeconomic conditions and international marriage patterns in mainland China, the country has not only changed from a migrant-sending country to a sending and receiving country, but has also become the new destination for international marriages. The changes in the practices of international marriage brokers are also obvious. IMB services in China follow a common pattern of matching making; rural Chinese males pay for the service, and the marriage broker will recruit foreign females, arrange international travel, then help them to get the documents they need for marriage (Guan and Feng 2017; Wu 2017). In the case of the infamous “CU Love,” a “club” which is dedicated to introducing young white, beautiful, Ukrainian girls to middle-aged Chinese rich merchants, the service follows the same pattern, but is more extravagant.

Some IMB services are dedicated to Chinese and Vietnamese international migrants across both countries. Marriage brokers between China and Japan and China and South Korea follow the same patterns. Generally speaking, the pattern for the network of international marriage brokerage is that two IMB companies from separate countries will cooperate with each other to exchange information and services across nations; the companies will also have connections with individual/small-scale local matchmaking brokers to identify potential customs, organise blind dates, and provide translation or legal services from both sides. IMBs which provide cross-continental services tend to rely on the networks on both side of the borders.

Another side of the story about IMB in mainland China is largely overlooked in the existing research. Most of the scholars focus on how IMB recruits Chinese or foreign women as brides for foreign or domestic men, but few have noticed the services for women to find a suitable husband; according to IMB agencies, this type of service has existed for at least a decade. With China’s universal marriage and spousal selection standards, that is, assortative matching of family and heterogenous pairing of spouse, the marriage squeeze is not only experienced by Chinese men, but also by Chinese women; while in the marriage market, female divorcees experience more disadvantage, as female divorcees are less likely to find a husband who has never married before, compared to male divorcees (Gao and Zhang 2012).

Yu, for example, is a mainland Chinese female who purchased an IBM’s service. I met her during her trip which had been arranged for international blind dating. Yu is in her thirties, working as a teacher in a small

city. She has never married and is worried about her biological clock. Yu considers herself to be a beautiful and traditional Chinese woman with a westernised romantic nature. She describes herself as “gentle and graceful, knowledgeable, and honest and sincere.” As a schoolteacher, Yu loves working with children, and always dreams about having children of her own. But what stops her from having a baby is that she cannot find a suitable husband. She dated with some local men in her city when she was still “a young girl,” but found them too realistic and not passionate enough for her taste:

women always want to be treated right, women want to be loved, but those [Chinese] men always think about job, house, car, and money. They are so boring. I want to have a romantic and passionate love, and to have beautiful babies. I don’t want a boring man who knows nothing about love, who only knows working and drinking. (Yu, Chinese female, late thirties, vocational school education, teacher, 2017)

After years of searching and dating, Yu became what the state called “left-over” or “older [than average age at marriage] and unmarried” female. With China’s universal marriage patterns, as well as age and gender discrimination towards women in the marriage market, the possibility of Yu finding her “Prince Charming” is getting smaller, yet she never considered giving in to the reality. To quote Yu,

I want to get married, but [because] what I most want is my own children, and I want to give them all the best of the world. So I will find a great man as their father.

Yu says that her talent and beauty are well-known in her city, and as she becomes older, there is no way she’s going to set a lower standard and find an ordinary man; that would be a disgrace, as “people would mock me.”

Prior to her international travel, Yu needed to provide her detailed personal information to the IMB in order to build up a beautiful and attractive file—her hobbies and interests in a detailed portrait with digital records and videos. The online profile is made available to foreign men who purchase foreign IMB services from abroad. In addition to the online profile, Yu and her peers have to take training in international relationships. According to Yu and her IMB, each woman receives one-on-one teaching from experienced IMB personal instructors. Yu said that most of the classes were about how to be an attractive woman, how to present oneself as a romantic womanly figure, and also about how to interact with potential “gentlemen.” Yu’s

English is not good, but with the translation software, she did not think it necessary to learn the language first:

I believe in feelings, if one person is really attracted to another, then they will fall in love no matter what.

When being asked whether she feels insecure when she arrives in a foreign country, knowing she can't speak the language, and has no idea of its law, history, culture, society, and so on, Yu said:

No I'm not. I have my translation software, and they (IMB personnel) are also there to serve us. I love the weather [in X country], it's beautiful and I feel happy, free, and beautiful.

She can't recall the content of most of the course she took, as

when we travel to foreign countries, my personal instructor will be there to help me with my dating, so I don't really remember [the course]; and besides, most of what they taught is about how to be a lady, and I'm already a lady.

Yu loves the white children she saw on the street:

I want mixed-blood children, they are so beautiful, this is what I want.

Yu had indeed forgotten what her instructor taught her over the difference between Chinese and foreign cultures, as when she was chatting with one of the potential dates, who she felt was the one she most liked, she talked about her idea of mixed-blood children and the white race a lot. She forgot to go to her instructor and check if the translation she was going to send to the man was correct. She made a mistake in her message. Yu tried to tell the man she was lonely because her roommate (another Chinese woman) wasn't there, but she used the wrong pronoun which indicate that her roommate is a man. As a result, the person bailed out on her next day.

Yu was not happy when she finished her first date with one of the "gentlemen." With the help of their profile and a personal instructor, women like Yu will successfully attract several men's attention, and then these women will group together and take a trip to foreign countries to meet those foreign men. In Yu's case, she was so nervous and got panicked for her first date; one of the IMB agents answered her phone to

arrange a date, and accompanied her to meet the man. When Yu returned, she was not happy with what happened.

He said he's a contractor, that is true, but he's huge! I think he's three times bigger than me. Originally, we said we would meet in the city centre and have lunch, but he decided we should go to his home and he drove us there. I had no idea where he was taking us. His house was not in the city, and it wasn't his house, just a house he rented; and the guy was so messy, he didn't change his working clothes, and his home was also a mess. There was nothing in the refrigerator, only some instant noodles, and I couldn't stand it, so I started to cook and clean all the dishes and his house. After that he decided he would not drive us back because he had to double back and it would take too much time, so he gave us 20 dollars to take a train back. I felt so disappointed. He is not a gentleman and that's definitely not the right way to treat a lady... But I think he is honest. He told me everything about him, his job, income, property, family and so on. But I'm still disappointed. If the next guy is like this, then I won't go out with him.

At their first day of arrival, the matchmaking agents took them into a local blind date party. Yu met a man there, and they changed their phone numbers, Yu told this to the instructor, but she started to contact the man by herself through translation software. Yu did not say what happened with their conversation, but eventually the man stopped return her phone calls and messages. To my surprise, since her blind dates were going not well, she retraced her steps in her memory and found the place where that party was held, then every night she would go there by herself without fear, in the hope of meeting new people.

Li is another woman who joined this international dating trip. Li's story is quite different to Yu's. Li said that she had been divorced once and currently lived by herself. Li's financial circumstances were good; she lived in one of the most developed metropolitan cities in China, she had a local hukou, as well as an apartment in the city centre. Li doesn't speak much English, but she is well-educated, and she can carry on some simple conversations in English. From the second day of arriving in country X, Li found that she couldn't feel the enthusiasm that everyone else felt. Li told me she felt uncertain and frustrated:

when I came here, I realised that maybe this was not what I wanted. The party was good, but after that we had to do everything by their (IMB's) book. The potential dates they found for me were not what I wanted. (Li, Chinese female, mid-fifties, college education, retired, 2017)

The clash between Li's wishes and the IMB instructor's plans led to a fall-out of her emotions during the day trip, and the head of IMB agent had to talk with her and comfort her.

I just feel it's not right. Like this is not what I thought it would be. They helped me build my file, then helped me chat and make contact with my dates. But I don't think they told me everything, because sometimes the instructor was doing the communication for me. I wasn't personally connected with those men. They told me the guy I was supposed to meet was an engineer, but I think from his profile he is a mechanic or a plumber. This is humiliating. I'm not some woman who is willing to throw herself at any man, just because he's a foreigner. I have my own life, income, property, and resources, and as a human being, I don't think I'm less than these foreign men. What's the point of this trip; none of the men are what I want. I'm not saying they have to be rich and powerful, but I think they need to be *ti'mian* [decent] people. I don't want blue collar workers. I want my date to be someone like a professor or a doctor, not a bus driver or a plumber.

I don't want money or residency. I have money to do what I want to and I live in a good place. I don't think it is inferior to any foreign city. I just want a decent guy who is *peideshang* [a match with] me, who really understands me and loves me, who can be my partner for the rest of my life. I want a peaceful life with my husband, where we can understand each other, feel for and support each other. Otherwise why bother? Why spend lots of money and go abroad for dating? I can just find a Chinese guy if I want. I dated with Chinese men, but because I was divorced and in my mid-life, most of the time those men were so realistic that I felt they just wanted a person to take care of them and give them money. I want a foreign man because I think they will be more honest and romantic about life and relationship. What the IMB introduced to me makes me feel like I'm cheap, only here for their money and citizenship.

Li showed me her own efforts at international blind dating. She registered on several websites for international matchmaking, and started to contact the guys she felt interested in via online chatting:

I talk with them, show them part of my life, they do the same. I don't want be too straightforward and tell them everything, you need to make sure they really want you, not your money; and you need to let them know you really don't want their money, just their companionship. You see the

guys I found? They are much better than those men [IMB contacted]—lawyers, professors, businessman and so on.

Li keep her chatting with the guys for years; some of them became her distant friends, but she still hesitated to move ahead:

I don't know, I mean, I saw what they want me to see, but who are they, really? What if they lied to me? I'm not going to take that chance. Besides, women never take initiatives on relationships.

Guys will think you are cheap. If they really want to be with me, they can ask me, right?

For her “unsuccessful” date on the occasion that I met her, she said she decided to come because the broker promised they would see the potential dates face to face, and she had decided to quit dating and enjoy it as a tour and a chance for sightseeing.

According to the head of the IMB agency whom I interviewed, their company has operated for decades, and most of their clients are women. The common features of their clients are that they are divorcees, aged from thirty to sixty, with good jobs and socioeconomic circumstances. Many of the foreign males are also middle-aged and divorced middle-class men. The central request of their female clients is to find a good man who is honest, romantic, intimate, and trustworthy. In practice, because of the language barrier and cultural differences, each case may not exactly fit the client's own ideals of love and marriage:

Those women who want to show their charm, beauty, and talent will have more chance through dating. You can't be too self-conscious and strong-willed, it will intimidate men and scare them away. You need to let them think you are gentle and full of mystery, let them feel your gentle and womanly features.

Based on the agency's experience, after the international blind dating tour, some of the women will keep in touch with the men they met to develop their relationship; eventually they will get married—“it's just a matter of time.” The agent says she never thinks of relationship and marriage through IMB as “commercial” and an “exchange”:

The facts are simple here; if women can find what they want in China, why spend all that time and money to do this? It makes no sense. I consider the IMB a pathway for fellow women to find what they want—they deserve better.

5.6 Discussion and Conclusion

The intensive interviews in this study reveal that international marriage as a social phenomenon has changed considerably during the last decade in China. With China's modernisation and globalisation, international marriage related values and behaviour have been much more diverse than they are portrayed in the existing literature. Individual choice in international marriage is not only connected with their life experiences, but also reflected their personal values and identity. While the macro-level institutional mechanisms regulate people's marriage behaviour both in domestic and international marriage markets, individuals are actively responding to the changes of such mechanism in their daily life and practice. This study validates the notion that international marriage is a passage of hope for those socioeconomically disadvantaged women. More importantly, it also reveals that for those men with below average social economic status, international marriage might have been preferable than domestic marriage. The results challenged the conventional understanding of international marriage as nothing but calculation of cost-benefit or means for migration.

In the media and governance field, the general discourse tends to use local marriage as an ideal model of standard, "non-materialist," genuine interpersonal companionship, while international marriage is often considered as a means of migration rather than marriage, and not only an abuse of love and family, but also likely to create social disintegration (Spickard 1989; Ye and Lin 1996; Liaw, Ochiai, and Ishikawa 2010); it is argued that privatised identity and citizenship through marriage will threaten the welfare of the host society (D'Aoust 2013). According to some research (Ye and Lin 1996; Jiang 1999; Li 2009; Kim 2013; Liaw, Ochiai, and Ishikawa 2010), international marriages are inextricably tainted with negative images, seen as fake or commercial marriages with an abnormal nature and fragile foundation compared to local marriages. It is noted that these extreme contrasts between international marriage and domestic marriage has been softened partially due to increased globalisation and more acceptance of individualism (Zheng 2015). Although from the macro-perspective, the international and domestic migration and marriage markets are key structures behind cross-border marriages, it does not necessarily follow that individual motivations for transnational intimacy can fill the gaps between social systems in order for the general structure to function properly.

It is obvious that macro-socioeconomic, political, and ideological factors will affect international marriage patterns. In China's case, marriage is shaped by the nation's colonised past and socialist era, as well as by the reformation and globalisation period. International marriage is closely connected with international exchange and migration, global economic gaps, and gender norms and disparities, as well as internal migration, population structure, and socio-political ideology. In contrast to existing interpretations of international marriage as abnormal migration-marriage, in practice, it is connected with the domestic marriage market, and individual perspectives on this marriage practice is embedded with individuals' lived experiences. Although some people aim for international migration, some might simply be in search of long-lasting relationships, while others might aim for both; even within a couple, the motivations can be very different. Some cases of international marriage are obviously connected with the global Chinese community's Chinese lineage, and their experiences and choices are connected with their idea of themselves, the foreign other, and the Chinese other. Yet, none of the people I interviewed are naïve enough to believe that marriage is all about love, or marriage is nothing but a ticket to a stable life.

From macro-level perspective, existing research of international marriages in mainland China have focused on three dimensions: the "exchange marriage" due to international disparity, the intracultural endogamy due to cultural similarity, and the heterogamous marriage for unwed males. Although the changes of socioeconomic structure were believed to be the pushing factors behind the changes of China's international marriage, in practice, individuals' international marriage practice and choices are more complex as they might also be motivated by circumstances beyond objective factors. The macro-level interpretations of international marriages might have limitation of oversimplify such phenomenon, especially in mainland China.

In addition to China's economic growth, globalisation, and population structural changes, according to the fieldwork presented in this research, the internationalisation of higher education, the improvement or deterioration of individual income and living standard, the disparities and disadvantages of individuals' ascribed and/or achieved status, and the exchanges and connections between global Chinese communities could all exert an effect on the practice of international marriages. Individual agent in social system is not one-dimensional, in other words, the practice of spousal selection and marriage is not solely determined by macro-level factors. Even though economic approach of family and household research (Becker 1991) has

attributed marital practice to the economic assumption of maximisation behaviour, especially for international marriages, individuals are not always rational and passive executors in relation to spousal selection and intimacy. According to the couples participated in this study, both in international marriage/divorce and in domestic marriage/divorce, they are not act alone as the structural-functionalism believes. Their past experiences, peers, communities, socioeconomic status, self-identities, cultural expectations, socioeconomic restrictions, and various other elements all contributed to their actions, interactions, and outcomes of spousal selection and relationship building. In the research of international marriages, the key question is not why such network exists, but rather on the infrastructure of international marriages, how marriages are formed or dissolved, and how it has been changing. It is the differences, changing nature, and experience of international marriages that need to be explained (Sontag 1966).

Generally speaking, the younger generation in mainland China is more open to the idea of international relationships; they value interpersonal intimacy and affection more than the physical or socioeconomic circumstances of the foreign other. Some of the young couples interviewed got pregnant before they got married, while others might never have had a sexual relationship. For these people, international marriage is treated as a marital choice which has no significant differences to domestic ones. For the older generation, the choice of international marriage does not necessarily mean that they are more liberal or westernised than others. It can be a choice of a better life, companionship, and romantic love; it can also be an exchange and a commercial transaction, as well as a response to discrimination and the marriage squeeze. For some people, international marriage can provide them with more resources and networks, which might help both parties to integrate into the global society.

For the rural underprivileged male, as observed in existing research, the regional vacuum of marriageable females has affected their marital choice. It is not easy for them to find a wife, as the overall standard of suitable husbands has surpassed them. Most of the rural men's motivation for international marriage is their need to marry and have children, the need for a son to carry their family line, rather than being love, intimacy or a better life. But some of their foreign wives have married into China to avoid war and poverty, while others still hope they can find a life-long companion. The problem with this type of marriage is not only the lack of communication, but also the human rights of the foreign spouse and their children. Currently, under the regulations of marriage and the hukou system, the local public security department will register

children of international marriage as long as the couple is lawfully married; but in practice, a lot of the marriages in border areas are *de facto* marriages, and the foreign mother might never be able to get Chinese citizenship or hukou. Since China's institutional design excludes people who do not have a hukou registration, it means that the foreign wives cannot enjoy the benefits of social welfare, find a job, or even buy a train or plane ticket. Moreover, China's visa regulations are not friendly to them, which leads to high expenses in obtaining a visa and increases their risk of being expatriated. To make thing worse, a lot of the newly wedded couples have no idea about these problems that they will encounter. It is also clear that the commercial basis of such relationships is unstable and risky, as some of the divorces are related to domestic violence and forced marriage, even human trafficking.

According to most of the interviewees who engaged in exchange marriages, they understood that their choice of "marriage for migration" was not likely to bring them good lives; but they still maintained the hope of getting a better chance in life. Moreover, these females held more conservative ideas towards male-female relationships and marriage. To ethnic minority groups, China's economic growth has led to rural-urban disparities, especially in border and minority regions. Ethnic migration in recent decade has improved ethnic migrants' economic rewards, as well as enhanced their ethnic identity (Wu and Iredale 2015). With China's economic success and globalisation, the international marriage and migration between co-ethnic groups might continuously increase in the future.

Central to all discussions of international marriage and its patterns is the perception of differences and boundaries, from the matching between genders and social status, to the mixing of racial, cultural, and socio-political components. International or not, intermarriage always "call into question the boundaries between Self and Other" (Breger and Hill 1998: 9). International economic and political changes and conflicts in recent decades have revised the understandings and policies around social identity in a globalisation context, with multiculturalism yielding to the paradigm of social cohesion (Gould 2003; Castle 2010). With the globalisation process, the rapid exchange of socioeconomic, cultural, and ideological constructions have touched upon the core question of group identity. Globalization has further internationalised and localised individuals' daily life, which also pushes the similarities and differences into a social and public sphere that can be perceived on a daily basis. The collision of multivariate leads to divergence rather than compromise. To nation states with high ethnic homogeneity, such as Japan and South

Korea, international marriage itself touches upon the latent boundaries and exposes the questions of identity to the public view. Although the government might consider foreign brides as a method to solve the domestic marriage squeeze or a potential scam of citizenship, in practice this union will lead to social, cultural, and political changes. In regions like Taiwan and Hong Kong, cross-border marriages have already drastically changed the local marriage market and its population composition; while in mainland China, the racial differences between Africans and Chinese have led to nationalist debates, especially over Sino-African children. The most important issue with international marriage is not whether or not to accept the foreigners and their children, but to take action to protect their rights.

This study does not intend to reduce the complexity of international marriage to the status exchange or romance. As argued above, all marriages are exchanges to some extent, and the ideals of romantic love or exchange marriage are imprinted with their sociocultural contexts. China's spousal selection expectation make the situation even more complicated. As Wolf (1982) and Duara (1995) emphasised, the story of people outside of the Western world should not be subsumed under the North Atlantic history that has been deemed universal. The important thing is to understand marital behaviour in terms of individual life experiences (Sontag 1966), rather than dissecting it with a set of norms, or what people are supposed to do (Latour 1993). Despite the debates and confusions over international marriage and its motivation, in the end, the most important aspect is how the couples concerned live their life and interact with each other and with the communities and social environments in which they are situated.

Notes

Thanks are due to key informants who introduce the authors with key interviewees and all the interviewees who shared their touching life experiences and reflection on their love and choice. The authors were granted permission to utilize interview materials by the informants and interviewees. Any identifiable information of key informants and interviewees are removed to protect their confidentiality. The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee. The authors acknowledge the support of the Bureau of Civil Affairs, the Higher Degree Research Office at Macquarie University and Centre for Population and Development Studies at Renmin University of China. Address correspondence to Shenghan Cai at shenghan.cai@mq.edu.au

1 One of the famous exogamy couple is the Chinese father and Japanese mother of Koxinga (Zheng Chenggong). Since the sixteenth century, interracial marriage between Chinese and Portuguese has created the Sino-Latin ethnic group (*tusheng puren*) in Macao.

2 Some of the famous international couples during the colonized era are: Aisin Gioro Pujie and Saga Hiro, Zhan Shichai and Catherine Santley, Gu Hongming and Yoshida Sadako, Sun Yat-sen and Ōtsuki Kaoru, Chiang Ching-kuo and Faina Ipat'evna Vakhreva (Chiang Fang-liang), Zhou Zuoren and Nobuko Habuto, Zhou Jianren and Nobuko Yoshiko, Jiang Baili and Satō Yato, Go Seigen (Wu Qingyuan) and Nakahara Kazuko, Su Buqing and Matsumoto Yonago (Su Songben), Xiao San and Eva Sandberg (Ye Hua), Wang Bingnan and Anneliese Martens (Wang Anna), Li Lisan and Lisa Kishkina, Yung Wing and Mary Kellogg, Yang Xianyi and Gladys Margaret Tayler, Yap Sun Uy and Francisca Mercado (Ye Fei's parents), Qiu Fazuo and Loni König (Qiu Luoyi), Huang Kun and Avril Rhys (Li Aifu), Guo Moruo and Satō Tomiko (Guo Anna), Lou Tseng-Tsiang and Berthe Bovy. Majority of the international couples met and married each other in foreign countries when the Chinese spouses learning or engaging in business abroad, some of the foreign spouse changed their nationality and spent their life in China.

3 Also known as *tongyangxi*, it was a traditional pattern of arranged marriage. A family would adopt a pre-adolescent daughter as a future bride for one of their pre-adolescent sons, and the children would be raised together. Although it was outlawed by the state decades ago, the phenomenon still existed in south-eastern provinces, especially in Putian, Fujian. For further references please refer to “thousands of women seek their roots decades after being sold in boy-preferring rural China” <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1111987.shtml> and “Chinese woman forced to wed older man at age 12 files for divorce years later” <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/1955070/chinese-woman-forced-wed-older-man-age-12-files-divorce-years>.

4 It is noted that there has been debates over the relationships between sex-ratio at birth and marriage squeeze in China. Although researchers have researched a consent over the existence of China's large amount of surplus male in recent years, there has been disagreements over the possible outcome of this structural imbalance of marriageable population. Some of the existing literature argues that the phenomenon of “surplus male” also exists during the empire era, such as Ming and Qing Dynasties, without historical records imply severe impact on socioeconomic situation; some scholar also points out that base on past

experiences from economically advanced and industrialized Asian countries and areas who also encountered with similar situation, the structural imbalance can be solved without provoke severe socioeconomic impacts. From an optimistic point of view, some research also emphasizes China's hypergamous spousal matching pattern over the couples' age at marriage and believes that with the conventional and stable pattern of *nanda nvxiao* (husband is older than his wife), the mechanism of female's upward and male's downward pairing will cancel out the structure imbalance of marriageable population.

5 The Ministry of Civil Affairs has changed its statistical definition of international marriage in mainland China across the years. From 1979 to 1981, the marriage is divided into four subclasses, marriage between citizen from mainland China and: (a) Overseas Chinese sojourner; (b) Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan compatriot; (c) Foreigner of Chinese descent; (d) Foreigner. By the year 1982, the Ministry changed these categories into marriage between citizen from mainland China and: (a) Chinese sojourner; (b) Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan compatriot; (c) Chinese of foreign nationality; (d) Foreigner. During 1991 to 1998, the classification contains five subgroups, marriage between citizen from mainland China and: (a) Hong Kong, Macao compatriot; (b) Taiwan compatriot; (c) Chinese sojourner; (d) Chinese of foreign nationality; (e) Foreigner. Since 1999, it is altered to marriage between citizen from mainland China and: (a) Hong Kong resident; (b) Macao resident; (c) Taiwan resident; (d) Chinese sojourner; (e) Foreigner. The Ministry and the Bureaus of Civil Affairs continue to use the 1999 five categories in the following years.

6 The heated debate over the issue of interracial marriage between Chinese women and African men relates to the country's racial perspective of African people. Social media focuses and praises on some of the biracial male athletes of intermarriage, such as Ding Hui (volleyball player), Qiu Tian (Taruike Jianiyou, baseball player), Wang Mu (U14 football player), Zhu Mingzhen (basketball player), Eddy Francis (football player), Su Yuliang (football player), Guo Zhongfei (badminton); while for biracial female such as Lou Jing (actress) it led to severe online racist attack.

7 According to the existing ethnographic research in China, some of the cross-nation minority ethnic groups in mainland China are: Zhuang people (specified as Tày, Nùng, Qabiao as so on in Vietnam), Miao people (Hmong in Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam), Dai people (Tai in Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam), Yao people (also in Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand), Jing people (Kinh in Vietnam), Zang people (Tibetan people, also in India and Nepal), Menggu people (Mongols, also in Mongolia and Russia), Chaoxian people (Korean-Chinese, also in North and South Korea), Wa people (Va in Myanmar and Thailand), Jingpo people (Kachin in Myanmar and India), Eluosi people (Russians), Hasake people (Kazakhs), Keerkezi people (Kyrgyz), Wuzibieke people (Uzbeks), Tajike people (Tajik), Buyi (Bồ Y in Vietnam), Yi people (Lô Lô in Vietnam), Hani people (Người Hà Nhì in Vietnam, also in Myanmar, Laos, and Thailand), Lahu people (La Hủ in Vietnam, Muso in Thailand, also in Laos and Myanmar), Gelao people (Người Cờ Lao in Vietnam).

8 Another type of international same sex marriage in mainland China is known as travel marriage. The same sex couple, most of them are both Chinese citizens, would travel to a foreign country which legally recognise civil relationships and apply for a marriage registration then return to China. Since their marriage

is not legally recognised by the Chinese government, some couples tried to set up a series of notarisation documents to legalise their relationships, responsibilities, and rights.

Reference

- Bailey, Paul J.. 2007. *Gender and Education in China: Gender Discourses and Women's Schooling in the Early Twentieth Century*. New York: Routledge.
- Becker, Gary S. 1991. *A Treatise on the Family, enlarged edition*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Cai, Yongshun. 2006. *State and Laid-off Workers in Reform China: The Silence and Collective Action of the Retrenched*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Cao, Nanlai. 2017. *Wenzhou Christians and the Grassroots Globalization of China*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press.
- Cheng, Shu-Ju Ada. 2003. "Rethinking the globalization of domestic service: Foreign domestics, state control, and the politics of identity in Taiwan," *Gender and Society* 17(2): 166-186.
- Constable, Nicole. 2003. *Romance on a Global Stage: Pen Pals, Virtual Ethnography, and "Mail Order" Marriages*. London: University of California Press.
- Constable, Nicole. 2004. *Cross-Border Marriages: Gender and Mobility in Transnational Asia*. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Croll, Elisabeth. 1981. *The Politics of Marriage in Contemporary China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Croll, Elisabeth. 2002. *Endangered Daughters: Discrimination and Development in Asia*. New York: Routledge.
- Davis, Deborah S. and Stevan Harrell. 1993. *Chinese Families in the Post-Mao Era*. London: University of California Press.
- Davis, Deborah S. and Wang Feng. 2009. *Creating Wealth and Poverty in Post Socialist China*. Stanford University Press.
- Dikötter, Frank. 2015. *The Discourse of Race in Modern China*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Ding, Jinhong, Hongyan Yang, Shaoyun Zhou, Jixiang Zhou, Kewu Lin, and Yuzhi Zhang. 2004. "Characteristics and trends of cross-nation marriage in modern Shanghai," *Chinese Journal of Population Science* 3: 66-70.
- Duara, Prasenjit. 1995. *Rescuing History from the Nation : Questioning Narratives of Modern China*. Chicago : University of Chicago Press
- Fang, Ming. 2018. "Study on the adaptation of transnational marriage immigrants—A case study of Qingyuan County, Zhejiang Province," *Journal of World Peoples Studies* 3:82-89.
- Farrer, James. 2008. "From "passports" to "joint ventures": Intermarriage between Chinese nationals and Western expatriates residing in Shanghai," *Asian Studies Review* 32: 7-29.
- Farrer, James. 2013. "Good stories: Chinese women's international love stories as cosmopolitan sexual politics," *Sexualities* 16(1/2): 12-29.
- Fei, Xiaotong. 1992. *From the Soil, The Foundations of Chinese Society, A Translation of Fei Xiaotong's Xiangtu Zhongguo*. London: University of California Press.
- Gao, Ying, Xiulan Zhang and Weilong Zhu. 2013. "A study on cross-nation marriage of Beijing in recent years,"

- Gold, Thomas B., William J. Hurst, Jaeyoun Won, and Qiang Li. 2009. *Laid-Off Workers in a Workers' State: Unemployment with Chinese Characteristics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Guan, Chengyun and Qiang Feng. 2017. "Marriage risk of commercial marriage of Chinese rural single's touring style blind date, Analysis based on the media content of "Vietnamese bride" from 2010 to 2016," *Modern Communication (Journal of Communication University of China)* 11: 60-66.
- Habermas, Jürgen. 1984. *The Theory of Communicative Action*. Boston : Beacon Press.
- Hao, Guoqiang. 2013. "Laos' transnational marriages during the Hmong New Year, taking Bangyan village of Laos as an example," *Journal of Guangxi University for Nationalities (Philosophy and Social Science Edition)* 35(1): 34-37.
- Hershatter, Gail. 2007. *Women in China's Long Twentieth Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Hershatter, Gail. 2014. *The Gender of Memory: Rural Women and China's Collective Past*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Hu, Ping and Penggang Zhang. 2004. "Enhance competence and decrease fragility: Gender analysis of the reemployment of laid-off workers in the Western region," *Collection of Women's Studies* 4: 35-38.
- Huang, Guangzhi. 2018. "Policing Blacks in Guangzhou: How public security constructs Africans as Sanfei," *Modern China* 1-30.
- Huang, Pengli and Shining He. 2016. "Money buys good daughters: Vietnamese brides' home remittances," *Collection of Women's Studies* 1: 107-114.
- Hsü, Immanuel Chung-Yueh. 2000. *The Rise of Modern China. 6th Edition*. New York : Oxford University Press.
- Jeffreys, Elaine and Wang Pan. 2013. "The rise of Chinese-foreign marriage in mainland China, 1979-2010," *China Information* 27(3): 347-369.
- Jiang, Haishun. 1999. "Discussion on some issues of international marriages between China and South Korea," *Journal of Yanbian University (Social Science)* 32(3): 128-131.
- Jin, Hong. 2013. "Commercial matchmaking and China-Korean transnational marriage: Defective intimacy," *Journal of Guangxi University for Nationalities (Philosophy and Social Science Edition)* 35(5): 51-57.
- Kawaguchi, Daiji and Soohyung Lee. 2017. "Brides for sale: Cross-border marriages and female immigration," *Economic Inquiry* 55: 633-654.
- Kim, Doo-Sub. 2010. "The rise of cross-border marriage and divorce in contemporary Korea," in Yang Wen-Shan and Lu Melody Chia-Wen (eds.), *Asian Cross-border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press. 127-153.
- Kim, Doo-Sub. 2013. "Recent trend in cross-national marriage in South Korea: A focus on spousal dissimilarity, marital stability and fertility," *Journal of Guizhou University (Social Sciences)* 31(5): 1-8.
- Kim, Hyun Mee. 2015. "Intimacies and remittances: The material bases for love and intimate labour between Korean men and their foreign spouses in South Korea," in Sara Friedman and Pardis Mahdavi (eds.), *Migrant Encounters: Intimate Labour, the State, and Mobility Across Asia*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 25-45.
- Kim, Hyun Mee, Shinhye Park, and Ariun Shukhertei. 2017. "Returning home: marriage migrants' legal precarity and the experience of divorce," *Critical Asian Studies* 49(1): 38-53.

- Kraus, Richard Curt. 1981. *Class Conflict in Chinese Socialism*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Kumagai, Fumie. 2015. *Family Issues on Marriage, Divorce, and Older Adults in Japan*. Singapore: Springer.
- Kudo, Masako. 2009. "Pakistani husbands, Japanese wives: A new presence in Tokyo and beyond," *Asian Anthropology* 8(1): 109-123.
- Lang, Graeme and Josephine Smart. 2002. "Migration and the 'second wife' in South China: Toward cross-border polygyny," *The International Migration Review* 36(2): 546-569.
- Latour, Bruno. 1987. *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers Through Society*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Latour, Bruno. 1993. *We Have Never Been Modern*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Lee, Helene K.. 2018. *Between Foreign and Family: Return Migration and Identity Construction among Korean Americans and Korean Chinese*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Lee, Hye-Kyung. 2008. "International marriage and the state in South Korea: focusing on governmental policy," *Citizenship Studies* 12(1): 107-123.
- Lee, Yean-Ju, Dong-Hoon Seol, and Sung-Nam Cho. 2006. "International marriages in South Korea: The significance of nationality and ethnicity," *Journal of Population Research* 23(2): 165-182.
- Li, Meng. 2009. "Yearning for life, A study about North Korean cross-border brides' social adaptation in China," *Legal System and Society* 2: 213.
- Liaw, Kao-Lee, Emiko Ochiai, and Yoshitaka Ishikawa. 2010. "Feminization of immigration in Japan: marital and job opportunities," in Yang Wen-Shan and Lu Melody Chia-Wen (eds.), *Asian Cross-border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press. 49-86.
- Lin, Mingxian and Shunfen Shen. 2006. "Resource and exchange in marriage, case study on Chinese-Korean females' international marriages in Yanbian city," *Population Research* 30(3) :50-55.
- Liu, Meng. 2002. "Rebellion and revenge: the meaning of suicide of women in rural China," *International Social Welfare* 11: 300-309.
- Lu, Changchun. 2014. "Transnational marriage: Under the pressure of imbalanced sex-ration," *Chuan Cheng* 2: 124-125.
- Ma, Zhongdong, Ge Lin, and Frank Zhang. 2010. "Examining cross-border marriage in Hong Kong: 1998-2005," in Yang Wen-Shan and Lu Melody Chia-Wen (eds.), *Asian Cross-border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press. 87-102.
- Mayumi, Itoh. 2010. *Japanese War Orphans in Manchuria: Forgotten Victims of World War II*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Min, Jie. 1999. "The earliest divorce proceedings and transnational marriages in modern China," *Hundred Year Tide* 9: 74-76.
- Ministry of Civil Affairs of People's Republic of China. 1979-2017. *China's Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbook*. Beijing: China Statistics Press.
- Morgan, Charlie V. and John P. Hoffmann. 2007. "International marriages in Japan: A prefecture-level analysis," *International Journal of Sociology of the Family* 33(1): 157-182.
- Nakamatsu, Tomoko. 2005. "Faces of 'Asian brides': Gender, race, and class in the representations of immigrant women in Japan," *Women's Studies International Forum* 28(5): 405-417.

- Nakazawa, Shinnosuke. 1996. "Lives and consciousness of foreign wives from Asia in Japanese rural villages, Chinese/Taiwanese, Korean and Filipina brides in Mogami district, Yamagata prefecture," *Japanese Journal of Family Sociology* 8: 81-96.
- Oi, Jean C. 1985. "Communism and clientelism: Rural politics in China," *World Politics* 37(2): 238-266.
- Pieke, Frank N.. 2012. "Immigrant China," *Modern China, Special Issue: New and Old Diversities in Contemporary China* 38(1): 40-77.
- Piper, Nicola and Nina Roces. 2003. *Wife or Worker? Asian Women and Migration*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- Piper, Nicola and Sohoon Lee. 2016. "Marriage migration, migrant precarity, and social reproduction in Asia: An overview," *Critical Asian Studies* 48(4): 473-493.
- Palmer, Michael. 2007. "Transforming family law in Post-Deng China: Marriage, divorce and reproduction," *The China Quarterly* 191: 675-695.
- Pan, Wang. 2014. *Love and Marriage in Globalizing China*. New York: Routledge.
- Pong, Suet-Ling, David Post, Dongshu Ou, and Maggie S.Y. Fok. 2014. "Blurring boundaries? Immigration and exogamous marriages in Hong Kong," *Population and Development Review* 40(4): 629-652.
- Post, David. 2004. "Family resources, gender, and immigration: Changing sources of Hong Kong educational inequality, 1971–2001," *Social Science Quarterly* 85(5): 1238–1258.
- Poston, Dudley L., Eugenia Conde, and Bethany DeSalvo. 2011. "China's unbalanced sex ratio at birth, millions of excess bachelors and societal implications", *Vulnerable Children and Youth Studies* 6(4): 314-320.
- Poston, Dudley L., Yang Wenshan, and Demetrea Nicole Farris. 2014. *The Family and Social Change in Chinese Societies*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Roger, Daniels. 1988. *Asian America: Chinese and Japanese in the United States since 1850*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Quan, Xinzi. 2012. *Analysis of Chinese–Korean females' International Marriage Migration between China and South Korea*. Beijing: Xueyuan Press.
- Sassen, Saskia. 1999. *Globalization and Its Discontents: Essays on the New Mobility of People and Money*. New York: The New Press.
- Sassen, Saskia. 2003. "Globalization or denationalization?," *Review of International Political Economy* 10(1): 1-22.
- Sato, Kunio. 1988. "Wives for farmers: A critical import," *Japan Quarterly* 28: 253-259.
- Shen, Hsiu-Hua. 2005. "'The first Taiwanese wives' and 'the Chinese mistresses': The international division of labour in familial and intimate relations across the Taiwan Strait," *Global Networks* 5(4): 419–437.
- Sontag, Susan. 1966. *Against Interpretation: And Other Essays*. New York: Dell Publishing.
- South China Morning Post. July, 2014. "Afro-Chinese marriages boom in Guangzhou: but will it be 'til death do us part?," <https://www.scmp.com/magazines/post-magazine/article/1521076/afro-chinese-marriages-boom-guangzhou-will-it-be-til-death> (accessed 7 August 2018)
- South China Morning Post. 2018. "China plans new cooling-off rules to delay divorces as more marriages break down," <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/2161711/getting-divorced-china-not-so-fast-says-new-cooling-law> (accessed 10 September 2018)
- Spence, Jonathan D.. 1990. *The Search for Modern China*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

- Stacey, Judith. 1983. *Patriarchy and Socialist Revolution in China*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Sullivan, Michael J.. 1994. "The 1988–89 Nanjing anti-African protests: Racial nationalism or national racism?," *China Quarterly* 138: 438–457.
- Sun, Qiu-yun and Jin Zheng. 2017. "Insurmountable boundary: Women identity presentation of transnational marriage in the mountainous area of central China—A survey of Vietnamese brides in Hong'an and Dawu counties in North-eastern Hubei Province," *Journal of Guangxi University for Nationalities(Philosophy and Social Science Edition)* 39(1):109-115.
- Tsai, Ming-Chang. 2011. "'Foreign brides' meet ethnic politics in Taiwan: Marriage migrants," *International Migration Review* 45(2): 243-268.
- UNFPA. 2006. *State of World Population 2006: A Passage to Hope: Women and International Migration*. <http://www.unfpa.org/publications/state-world-population-2006>. (accessed 26 March 2018).
- Wang, Feng, Yong Cai, and Baochang Gu. 2013 "Population, policy, and politics: How will history judge China's one-child policy?," *Population and Development Review* 33(1): 115-129.
- Wang, Feng, Baochang Gu, and Yong Cai. 2016. "The end of China's one-child policy," *Studies in Family Planning* 47(1): 83-86.
- Wang, Hong-Zen and Shu-Ming Chang. 2003. "The commodification of international marriages: Cross-border marriage business in Taiwan and Viet Nam," *International Migration* 40(6): 93-116.
- Wang, Xin and Jinqing Cao. 2016. "The social construction and subjective reconstruction of 'The Other': Based on an analysis of the lives of Vietnamese daughters-in-law in Lin Village in Northern Henan," *Collection of Women's Studies* 5: 48-56.
- Wang, Yuqun and Xiaobo Tang. 1992. "Current issues with Chinese-foreign marriages," *Political Science and Law* 4: 53-54.
- Watson, James L. 1984. *Class and Social Stratification in Post-revolution China*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Watson, Rubie S. and Patricia Buckley Ebrey. 1991. *Marriage and Inequality in Chinese Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Williams, Lucy. 2010. *Global Marriage: Cross-Border Marriage Migration in Global Context*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Wolf, Eric R.. 1982. *Europe and the People Without History*. London: University of California Press.
- Wolf, Margery. 1972. *Women and the Family in Rural Taiwan*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Wolf, Margery. 1985. *Revolution Postponed: Women in Contemporary China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Wu, Jiaping and Robyn R. Iredale. 2015. "Minority mobility in Guizhou province, with a focus on planned resettlement and its implications for ethnicity and identity," in Robyn R. Iredale and Fei Guo (eds.), *Handbook of Chinese Migration: Identity and Wellbeing*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Wu, Yanhua and Haiping Chen. 2017. "For sake of profit: Research on the action logic of marriage brokers in the Sino-Vietnam transnational marriages," *Population and Society* 3: 104-114.
- Wu, Zhongzhe. 2009. "Gender inequalities of the labour market during market transition," *Economic Theory and Policy Research* 2: 87-97.
- Xing, Chunbing and Haifeng Nie. 2010. "When an urban boy falls in love with a country girl: Baby's hukou,

- hukou reform and intermarriage,” *World Economic Papers* 4: 1–18.
- Xu, Wei. 2011. *From Marriage Revolution to Revolutionary Marriage: Marriage Practice of the Chinese Communist Party in Modern Era, 1910s-1950s*. Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository. 232.
- Yamaura, Chigusa. 2015. “From Manchukuo to marriage: Localizing contemporary cross-border marriages between Japan and Northeast China,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 74(3): 565-588.
- Yan, Yunxiang. 2003. *Private Life under Socialism: Love, Intimacy, and Family Change in a Chinese Village, 1949-1999*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Yang Wen-Shan and Lu Melody Chia-Wen. 2010. *Asian Cross-border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press.
- Yang Wen-San and Pei Chih Yen. 2014. “Single and happier? A comparative study of marital status, socioeconomic security and wellbeing of women in Hong Kong and Taiwan,” in Poston, Dudley L., Yang Wenshan, and Demetrea Nicole Farris. 2014. *The Family and Social Change in Chinese Societies*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Yang Wen-San and Ying-Ying Tiffany Liu. 2014. “Gender imbalances and the twisted marriage market in Taiwan,” in Poston, Dudley L., Yang Wenshan, and Demetrea Nicole Farris. 2014. *The Family and Social Change in Chinese Societies*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Ye, Wenzhen and Qingguo Lin. 1996. “Chinese–foreign marriage in Fujian Province,” *Population and economics* 95(2): 21-29.
- Yi’En, Cheng. 2012. “Transnational masculinities in Situ: Singaporean husbands and their international marriage experiences,” *Area* 44(1): 76-82.
- Zeng, Yi and Therese Hesketh. 2016. “The effects of China’s universal two-child policy,” *The Lancet* 388(10054): 1930-1938.
- Zhang, Guoqin. 1994. “Current situation, issues, and countermeasure of Chinese-foreign marriages in Gulin,” *Social Scientists* 4: 93, 96.
- Zhao, Dingxin. 2017. *Politics of Legitimacy: The State-Society Relations in Contemporary China*. Taipei: National Taiwan University Press.
- Zhao, Zhongwei and Fei Guo. 2007. *Transition and Challenge: China’s Population at the Beginning of the 21st Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Zhao, Zhongwei. 2015. “Closing a sociodemographic chapter of Chinese history,” *Population and Development Review* 41(4): 681-686.
- Zheng, Jin. 2015. “Disintegration and fragmentation, Vietnamese brides’ social network and its issues, take four villages in north-east Hubei as example,” *Social Sciences in Yunnan* 6: 146-151.
- Zhou, Min, Shabnam Shenasi and Tao Xu. 2016. “Chinese attitudes toward African migrants in Guangzhou, China,” *International Journal of Sociology* 46(2): 141-161.
- Zhou, Muzhi, Xiaogang Wu, and Guangye He. 2017. “Marriage in an immigrant society: Education and the transition to first marriage in Hong Kong,” *Demographic Research* 37(18): 567-598.
- Zhou, Yang and Zhigang Li. 2016. “Integration in segregation: Social and cultural adaptation of Chinese-African partners in Guangzhou,” *Journal of Minzu University of China (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)* 1: 70-79.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Overview of Study

This thesis examines the patterns, changes, mechanisms, and motivations of international marriage in the context of mainland China in the recent decade. It provides an empirical analysis of the macro-level mechanisms, geospatial distributions, and gendered patterns of international marriage. The study analyses the correlations between demographic characteristics and marriage choices, as well as their effects on the solidarity of the two types of marriage. It also examines the premium of relative advantage of couples in international marriages by empirically testing spousal matches. It provides insights into individuals' personal interpretations and experiences of marriage and divorce, as well as their connections to their social and institutional environment. Individual experiences of international matchmaking provide further elaboration and articulation on the perception towards marriage and family life, and their interaction with structural factors in the wider societies and communities.

The thesis began by analysing international marriage in mainland China since 1979, to gain an overall understanding of its patterns and changes over time. From 2000 to 2010, international marriage patterns went through noticeable changes and fluctuations. The annual number of registered international marriages has decreased since 2001. However, this decreasing trend has been slowed down recently as a result of increases in mainland Chinese males' involvement in international marriage in recent years. At the same time, the number of Chinese females involved in international marriage has decreased. This has also resulted in the changes in gendered patterns of international marriage. The results from this study suggest that the increase in male and decrease in female international marriages indicate that there are gender-specific socioeconomic causes for these different changes. Considering the trends of demographic transition process in mainland China, the recent increases in Chinese men's involvement in international marriages coincides with the periods when the two large births cohorts in 1980s entered into marriage market. For mainland Chinese males, the increased number of international marriage could be related to the pressures in the local marriage market caused by the imbalanced sex ratio of the regional marriageable population and the conventional spousal selection practice. The sex ratio imbalance could be intensified by internal migration while the pressure from conventional spousal selection practice excludes underprivileged mainland Chinese males.

In contrast with conventional understandings, Chapter 2 examines gendered geospatial distributions of international marriage in mainland China. The research has developed a new measurement to depict regional incidences of international marriages, which helps to examine the relationships between macro-level factors and international marriages. The results show that geospatial distribution of international marriage in mainland China is not entirely centred on economically advanced regions. The results suggest that ethnicity is not the key push factor for cross-national relationships in the border region as previously suggested. The prevalence international marriage in border-minority areas is related to a combination of a number of factors, including spatial locations, commercial exchanges, and population structure. The geospatial patterns also reveal other aspects of gender differences in international marriages, and the correlation between international marriages, domestic marriage, and internal migration. The results reveal a positive correlation between international marriages and regional economic development; males are more reactive to the changes in economic conditions than females when pursuing international marriage, which is in contrast to the common understanding that females are more responsive. More specifically, the findings suggest that while Chinese women's international marriages are related to socioeconomic conditions within a region, Chinese men's international marriages is more likely to relate to differences in rural consumption between regions. This might imply that future improvement in rural consumption might encourage Chinese males' pursuit for international marriage as the price of bridewealth demanded from domestic spouses would increase. This might challenge the conventional understanding that international marriage is the calculative exchange for Chinese females and the last resort choice for Chinese males from less developed areas, where marriageable Chinese female spouses are not available. The new knowledge from this study has filled some important gaps in international marriage research. The empirical research using multiple approaches has provided a better understanding of the complexity of international marriage and the gendered patterns in the context of mainland China during the recent decade.

Using survival analysis and binary choice mode, Chapter 3 provides a detailed examination of individual socioeconomic status and its correlations with marriage choices and solidarities from 2010 to 2014, both for international marriage and for domestic marriage. The study utilises the vital registration records from one province in the north-eastern China to analyse the correlation between individual characteristics, choices of two types of marriage, and duration of marriages. It is clear that most people who married international spouses are more likely to have a previous marriage history; but the findings differ from

existing research, showing that mainland Chinese females' age at first marriage in international relationships is slightly lower than that of their domestic counterparts. The results also suggest that the initial increase in age at marriage may increase the possibility of international marriage choice, but with further increase in age of marriage, this possibility would decrease. This hump-shaped pattern provides a new explanation of the relationships between age of marriage and propensity of international marriage choices. This is also related to the high sex ratio in later stage of marriageable ages that created "marriage squeeze" in these cohorts in some regions. The age-gap between spouses in the two types of marriages also shows different results compared to the findings in existing studies. Couples in international marriages are likely to be more hypergamous or homogamous, matched on their age at marriage, with the age-gap significantly reduced from what was understood in the existing research. One importantly, the results from this study found that a larger age-gap between couples in international marriage does not necessarily lead to a higher risk of divorce, but the younger the husband is, the higher the risk. However, for domestic marriages, the relationship between age-gap and risk of divorce is reversed, that is, the older the husband is, the greater the risk of divorce is. The gaps between spouses' educational attainment in international marriage are also smaller than results found in previous research. For poorly-educated and well-educated individuals, their possibility of choosing international marriage does not significantly differ to much, but the well-educated hold a lower risk of divorce. The results also indicate that gaps between educational attainment levels have no significant effects on the duration of their marriage. Couples of mainland citizens and residents from SARs and Taiwan experienced a lower probability of divorce than couples of mainland citizens with overseas sojourners. Compared to domestic divorced couples, mainland Chinese husband and their foreign wives have the highest risk of divorce. The couples in other categories show no significant differences in the risk of divorce. In sum, couples in international marriage show a higher level of homogamous pairing in recent years, and the gaps between educational attainment levels do not necessary leads to divorce.

The results presented in Chapter 4 test the longstanding assumption that international marriage is mainly for the purpose of status exchange and economic gains. The empirical findings in this study show that in the recent decade, a status exchange marriage is much less likely to happen in mainland China's international marriage market for both males and females. Most of the couples in international marriage in this study were found either homogenously matched or hypergamously matched; that is, both the husband

and the wife in an international marriage are more likely to share relatively similar educational attainment and status, or the husband may be relatively higher than the wife in these traits. In contrast to the findings in the existing research, women in international marriage, privileged or not, are more likely to marry-up with husbands who hold higher socioeconomic status than themselves. For men, originating from a higher status might provide them with advantages in international marriage market, but the premium of such advantage is limited by the requirement of them to marrying-down to women with lower status. In other words, international marriage provides a channel of social mobility in the context of contemporary China, yet it further reinforces marriage barriers between social strata.

The narratives and living experiences of international marriages are explored in Chapter 5. The ethnographic data show socioeconomic, social-political, and ideological factors affect international marriages. The values and norms of gender, marriage, and family shape individual choices in both domestic and international marriages. This research discovers that for the younger generation, international marriages are experienced as a natural result of interpersonal affection, while for the older generation this type of marriage was pursued as a passage to a better life. The results from this chapter echo the findings of quantitative research in the previous chapters. With the increase of age at marriage, individuals in mainland China's marriage market will face social, cultural, and structural pressure to establish marital relationships, which combined with other macro- or micro- level elements could generate the demand of international marriage. While the above average age at marriage in international marriage market might also indicated that such marriage has provide individuals with previous marriage histories an alternative choice of marital life. The homogamous features of couples' traits in international marriages is evident, especially among the younger generations. The improvement of income, living standards, and internal movement has altered local marriage market and the expectation of "suitable spouse". For mainland Chinese men, regional marriage squeeze and the burden of high bridewealth could be the push factors for them to pursue international marriage instead of finding a domestic spouse with difficulties, especially for rural origin men who aged around 30. For mainland Chinese women, conventional expectation of marrying-up and their precarious socioeconomic status could act as the main drivers for pursuing international relationship. Since the conventional rule of spousal selection in China's context is the hypergamous and assortative matching between the husband and the wife, individuals in international marriage are also following such habitus. Comparing to domestic marriages, the unpredictable and potential gain/risk of international marriage have

further strengthened the practice of homogamous matches. Exchange or commercial marriages do exist, as sometimes female with youth and beauty outspokenly suggested their intention is the better life in developed countries, while male with better socioeconomic status admitted that they seek for obedience wives. However, most of them still search for a spouse that is as “good fit” as possible for themselves. Although couples in international marriage have been seen as active actors in responding to changes in social and economic conditions or as disruptive forces for social structure and cultural cohesion, for those couples in international marriage, the most important aspect for them is how they live their life and interact with the communities and their environment in the same way as any couples in a marriage, international or otherwise.

6.2 Research Implications

This research has theoretical implications in the way that it links international marriage to international migration, domestic marriage and internal migration, which add new dimension to the framework of gendered labour-marriage migration and cost-benefit calculations, which were commonly applied to explain the structural and functional mechanisms and individual motivations of transnational marriage behaviour in the existing literature (Davis 1941; Merton 1941; Stark 1987; Sinke 1999; Piper and Roces 2003; Suzuki 2005; Thai 2008; Williams 2010; Yang and Lu 2010). The structural imbalance of the marriageable population is believed in the existing study to be one major pull factor in international marriage (Nakamatsu 2005; Yang and Lu 2010). The marriage-migration theory emphasises that macro-socioeconomic variations and the chain of sexually-selected migration has created the structural forces of global marriage migration. Based on this macro-proposition, the cost-benefit analysis highlights that international marriage is a calculated procedure to weigh the gain and price of the practice. The results from this study suggest that structural imbalance of marriage population combining with assortative matching practice between spouses and the costs of domestic marriage markets could provide more powerful explanations to the international marriage behaviour. This contributes new dimensions to the theoretical explanation of international marriage resulted from imbalance of marriage population.

Among western, Asian, and Chinese studies of international marriage, much of the research explain transnational marriage choices and behaviour from the perspective of institutional constraints, particularly those of geopolitical and gendered disparities (Constable 2004). Women from less-developed regions and

countries are more likely to participate in the international marriage market, through the collective decision of the family and/or their own choice. The existing literature has applied the assumption of status exchange to international marriages in China, emphasising that individuals with below average social status are more likely to seek a spouse from the transnational marriage market. The implications from this research, however, suggest that females in international marriage are more likely to pursue upward mobility than previously believed, while for males in international marriage still follow the hypergamous practice.

The new knowledge of international marriage produced in this study also has implications to the understanding of some of the important aspects of family changes and social transformation that have been undergoing in China. Two decades after its opening-up and economic reforms, China has become one of the largest global economies, as its implementation of market-oriented economic system has resulted in great economic growth. The remarkable increase in economic growth has also led to profound transformation of its society, such as increase in level of income, improvements in living standards, increase in life expectancy, and improvement of educational attainment (Zhao and Guo 2007). China's dramatic changes during the last three decades have not only made it an economically advanced country within the Asian region, but have also created more disparities within the country. The imbalanced regional development and inequalities in personal income have further exposed large gaps among different social statuses and origins in the country. The wealth gaps between social classes and regions, combined with low level of fertility, rapid population ageing, the imbalanced sex-ratio, gender inequality, and assortative and hypergamous matching have led to dramatic changes in China's marriage and family behaviours. This study offers a fresh perspective to better understand China's social transformation looking through the lens of international marriage.

The practical implication of this study is centred around its better utilisation of a wide range of data that otherwise fragmented. The organisations that regulated marriages and international migration could benefit from the results of this study for an improved understanding of patterns and characteristics of international marriage and its links with internal and international migration, with potential to improve services and policy initiatives. Based on the provincial data of marriage registration records, this study has examined several assumptions about China's international marriage patterns. The study demonstrates that there has been a sudden increase in mainland Chinese men's international marriages since 2010; the sex-ratio of the

marriageable population and regional incidence of international marriages are significantly related. The results of this data have also shown that from 2010 to 2014, there has been a sudden surge of first marriage of mainland Chinese males who married young foreign females. The comparison of these findings with the annual numbers of domestic marriage registrations shows that there have been peaks in both types of marriage since 2010, which coincide with the two large birth cohorts in the 1980s. This may support the connections between the availability of marriageable population and the local-global marriage market. The intensified economic pressures, social precarity, and shrinking gender gap in education, combined with China's spousal selection norms, have increased women's desire to marry economically established men, which has resulted in an increase in age hypergamy and marriage squeeze for men with low socioeconomic status in domestic marriages in recent years. While on a national level, the percentage of hypergamous pairs among domestic married couples has become relatively higher than for international married couples, this percentage may also relate to the patterns of marital age hypergamy. With the increase in age at marriage, the possibility of individuals choosing international marriage over domestic marriage also increases; this might also imply that with the up-ward selection of females, the marriage squeeze not only casts pressure on low socioeconomic status men, but also builds up obstacles for women with above average status. Within China's spousal selection patterns and gender disparities, compared to men, women with higher educational attainment, higher occupational levels, higher income, previous marriage history (and/or children), or marriage at a later age, can be considered as non-preferred as wives in domestic marriage. This might result in their desire to choose a more suitable foreign spouse with higher socioeconomic status or origin. The results from this study provided some solid empirical evidence for policy formulation in dealing with social issues that are resulted from these challenges.

Finally, this study also has implication for understanding political dynamics in the context of China and its impacts on personal choices and personal behaviour. The analysis demonstrated in this study suggest that international marriage in mainland China is impacted by the political climate and environment of the state. In the eyes of the state, for a long time in the past, international marriage was considered as abnormal marriage behaviour, with the sole motivation of emigration. The state, social media, and some scholars have attributed the continuous growth of international marriage to mainland Chinese women's materialism and xenophilic attitudes. With the sudden increase in mainland Chinese men's international marriage in recent years (2005 and 2010), the state and scholars have begun to focus on their effects on national security,

political influences, and population and epidemic control. Concerns about integrating foreign spouses and their offspring into Chinese society have risen. The reaction of the state to the issues associated with international marriage reflects the policy orientation of the state and also the changing social and political landscape at the time. This study provides a timely analysis of the role of the state and other institutions played in managing international marriage.

6.3 Limitations and Future Research

This study has some limitations which need to be addressed. The interactions between the sex ratio of the marriageable population and incidence of international marriages might need further testing, which could not be totally executed in this study, as such information is limited in the census data. A longitudinal study would allow further exploration of the interactions, and enhance our understanding of the changes over time.

It is important to note that even though the analysis in Chapter 2 on geospatial patterns and micro-level determinants analysis of international marriage are based on the data collected in all provinces in China, the more detailed couple-matched registration records from one province were used in Chapters 3 and 4; hence the results from the analysis might not be generalisable to other regions in China. Since different regions in China might have different dominant and preferred values, ideals, and realities related to marriage and family, it is possible that individuals from other provinces might experience different marital choices, spousal matching, and divorce behaviour. For example, the northeast provinces have cultural and historical connections with Japan, Mongolia, and North and South Korea, while the southwest provinces share social and ethnic similarities with Vietnam, Laos, and Myanmar. These specific co-ethnic linkages might affect individual choice over marriage, and the socioeconomic differences between countries might also affect the motivations for marriage. For provinces such as Guangdong and Fujian, their cultural and social connection with Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Macao, as well as overseas Chinese communities, might also lead to variations in the mechanisms and motivations of international marriage. In order to acquire generalisable results for international marriage in mainland China, data should be collected from other major provinces, such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangdong, Sichuan, Yunnan and so on. This will also allow comparisons between different regions with diverse features of international and domestic marriages and families.

It is also important to mention that the marriage registration data came from annual vital registration records, thus it can only provide information based on a period perspective, which means that dates such as age at first marriage and percentage of first marriages might be slightly different from the results generated from census data. But this difference will not affect the analysis of marriage choice and its duration. The dataset based on registration records could not provide sufficient information to identify individual household registration status. The results from Chapter 1 and Chapter 5, as well as existing research on marriage in China, indicate that the differences between rural and urban status would affect marital values, choice, and duration; it is reasonable to assume that rural hukou and underprivileged socioeconomic status might further enhance individual choice in international marriage over domestic ones. If data related to their hukou and social status are available, it would improve our understanding of the interactions among various institutional factors of international marriage.

For future research on this topic, it would be ideal if more detailed data could be gathered, such as family structure, marriage history, fertility history, socioeconomic status, personal experiences and migration history. Future case studies would also benefit from tracking couples over time in international marriage to examine the changes in their relationships and the links between marriage and migration, international or otherwise.

References

- Constable, Nicole. 2004. *Cross-Border Marriages: Gender and Mobility in Transnational Asia*. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Davis, Kingsley. 1941. "Intermarriage in caste society," *American Anthropologist* 43: 376–395.
- Fei, Xiaotong. 1992. *From the Soil, The Foundations of Chinese Society, A translation of Fei Xiaotong's Xiangtu Zhongguo*. London: University of California Press.
- Greenhalgh, Susan. 1985. "Sexual stratification: The other side of "growth with equity" in East Asia," *Population and Development Review* 11(2): 265-314.
- Merton, Robert K.. 1941. "Intermarriage and the social structure," *Psychiatry* 4: 361-374.
- Mu, Zheng and Yu Xie. 2014. "Marital age homogamy in China: A reversal of trend in the reform era?," *Social Science Research* 44: 141-157.
- Nakamatsu, Tomoko. 2005. "Faces of "Asian brides": Gender, race, and class in the representations of immigrant women in Japan," *Women's Studies International Forum* 28(5): 405-417.
- Pieke, Frank N.. 2012. "Immigrant China," *Modern China, Special Issue: New and Old Diversities in Contemporary China* 38(1): 40-77.
- Piper, Nicola and Nina Roces. 2003. *Wife or Worker? Asian Women and Migration*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- Schoen, Robert. 2019. *Analytical Family Demography*. Gewerbestrasse: Springer International Publishing.
- Sinke, Suzanne. 1999. "Migration for labour, migration for love: Marriage and family formation across borders," *OAH Magazine of History* 14(1): 17-21.
- Stark, Oded. 1988. "On marriage and migration," *European Journal of Population* 4: 23-37.
- Suzuki, Nobue. 2000. "Between two shores: Transnational projects and Filipina wives in/from Japan," *Women's Studies International Forum* 23(4): 431-444.
- Thai, Hung Cam. 2008. *For Better or For Worse: Vietnamese International Marriages in the New Global Economy*. Piscataway: Rutgers University Press.
- Wang, Xiaoyan. 2016. "A study on the integration of foreign spouses in China–Myanmar Marriage, the dilemma between politics and legitimacy," *Mnzu Tribune* 3: 28-34.
- Watson, Rubie S. and Patricia Buckley Ebrey. 1991. *Marriage and Inequality in Chinese Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Williams, Lucy. 2010. *Global Marriage: Cross-Border Marriage Migration in Global Context*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Xiong, Wei and Haidong Yang. 2016. "A study of educational problems of the children of transnational marriage in border areas between China and Burma: A case study of C village of De'ang township," *Journal of Research on Education for Ethnic Minorities* 6(27): 23-29.
- Yang Wen-Shan and Lu Melody Chia-Wen. 2010. *Asian Cross-Border Marriage Migration: Demographic Patterns and Social Issues*. Nieuwe Prinsengracht: Amsterdam University Press.
- Zhao, Zhongwei and Fei Guo. 2007. *Transition and Challenge: China's Population at the Beginning of the 21st Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Appendix 1: Ethic Approval

Ethics application approved - 5201700098

AJ

Alex Jackson <alex.jackson@mq.edu.au> on behalf of FBE Ethics <fbe-ethics@mq.edu.au>

👍 🔄 Reply all | ▼

Thu 25/05/2017, 4:05 PM

shenghan.cai@students.mq.edu.au; Fei Guo; Nikola Balnave ✉

Inbox



Action Items



Dear Associate Professor Guo,

RE: 'International Marriage, Migration and Demographic Reality: An Analysis based on Province X in China'
(Ref: 5201700098)

The above application was reviewed by the Faculty of Business & Economics Human Research Ethics Sub Committee. Approval of the above application is granted, effective "25/5/2017". This email constitutes ethical approval only.

This research meets the requirements of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007). The National Statement is available at the following web site:

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/e72.pdf>.

The following personnel are authorised to conduct this research:

Associate Professor Guo
Shenghan Cai
Professor Shuang Liu

NB. STUDENTS: IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP A COPY OF THIS APPROVAL EMAIL TO SUBMIT WITH YOUR THESIS.

Please note the following standard requirements of approval:

1. The approval of this project is conditional upon your continuing compliance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007).
2. Approval will be for a period of five (5) years subject to the provision of annual reports.

Progress Report 1 Due: 5th May 2018
Progress Report 2 Due: 5th May 2019
Progress Report 3 Due: 5th May 2020

NB. If you complete the work earlier than you had planned you must submit a Final Report as soon as the work is completed. If the project has been discontinued or not commenced for any reason, you are also required to submit a Final Report for the project.

Progress reports and Final Reports are available at the following website:
http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/human_research_ethics/forms

3. If the project has run for more than five (5) years you cannot renew approval for the project. You will need to complete and submit a Final Report and submit a new application for the project. (The five year limit on renewal of approvals allows the Committee to fully re-review research in an environment where legislation, guidelines and requirements are continually changing, for example, new child protection and privacy laws).

4. All amendments to the project must be reviewed and approved by the Committee before implementation. Please complete and submit a Request for Amendment Form available at the following website:

http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/human_research_ethics/forms

5. Please notify the Committee immediately in the event of any adverse effects on participants or of any unforeseen events that affect the continued ethical acceptability of the project.

6. At all times you are responsible for the ethical conduct of your research in accordance with the guidelines established by the University. This information is available at the following websites:

<http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/>
http://www.research.mq.edu.au/for/researchers/how_to_obtain_ethics_approval/human_research_ethics/policy

If you will be applying for or have applied for internal or external funding for the above project it is your responsibility to provide the Macquarie University's Research Grants Management Assistant with a copy of this email as soon as possible. Internal and External funding agencies will not be informed that you have approval for your project and funds will not be released until the Research Grants Management Assistant has received a copy of this email.

If you need to provide a hard copy letter of approval to an external organisation as evidence that you have approval, please do not hesitate to contact the FBE Ethics Committee Secretariat, via fbe-ethics@mq.edu.au or 9850 4826.

Please retain a copy of this email as this is your official notification of ethics approval.

Dr. Nikola Balnave
Chair, Faculty of Business and Economics Ethics Sub-Committee
FBE Ethics Secretariat

Faculty of Business and Economics
Level 5, E4A Building
Macquarie University
NSW 2109 Australia
T: +61 2 9850 4826
F: +61 2 9850 6140
www.businessandeconomics.mq.edu.au/



CRICOS Provider Number 00002J. Think before you print.

Please consider the environment before printing this email.

This message is intended for the addressee named and may contain confidential information. If you are not the intended recipient, please delete it and notify the sender. Views expressed in this message are those of the individual sender, and are not necessarily the views of Macquarie University.

Appendix 2: Participant Information and Consent Form

Department of Business and Economic
Faculty of Management
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY NSW 2109



Phone: +61 (0) 2 98508445

Fax: +61 (0) 2 9850 6065

Email: fei.guo@mq.edu.au

Chief Investigator's / Supervisor's Name & Title: Professor Fei Guo

Participant Information and Consent Form

Name of Project: *International Marriage, Migration and Demographic Reality: An Analysis based on Province X in China*

You are invited to participate in a study of international marriage, the cross-culture and transnational marriage in China. This project is to study the shared experience of life, culture and values of people in this type of transnational relationships and to understand the changes and dynamics of cross-cultural marriages in China.

Specifically, this study is to gain a better understanding of how couples with different cultures, languages, religions and ethnic backgrounds negotiate differences and build familial life together.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to take part in an interview, in which we will ask you questions that are related to your life experience, your relationship with your partner and his/her extended family, and your future plan. The interview will last between 1 – 1.5 hours. The interview will be audio-recorded for the purpose of transcription and analysis.

Any information you provided during the interview will be confidential. If we quote your answers in any publications, your name and any details that could identify you as an individual will not be used. Only the researchers directly involved in the project will have access to the data. A summary of the results of the data can be made available to you on request.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You are not obliged to participate and if you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason and without consequence.

The study is being conducted by the following research team at Macquarie University:
Professor Fei Guo (Supervisor and Principal Investigator)
Doctoral Candidate Shenghan Cai
Department of Management

If you would like more information or have any questions about the research project, please contact my adjunct supervisor at Renmin University Professor Shuang Liu on ph: (86) 13621155446 or email: liushuang@ruc.edu.cn

I, _____ have read (or, where appropriate, have had read to me) and understand the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research, knowing that I can withdraw from further participation in the research at any time without consequence. I have been given a copy of this form to keep.

Participant's Name: _____
(Block letters)

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Investigator's Name: _____
(Block letters)

Investigator's Signature: _____ Date: _____

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the Committee through the Director, Research Ethics & Integrity (telephone (02) 9850 7854; email ethics@mq.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome.

(INVESTIGATOR'S [OR PARTICIPANT'S] COPY)

电话: +61 (0) 2 98508445
传真: +61 (0) 2 9850 6065
Email: fei.guo@mq.edu.au
项目负责人: 郭菲 教授

访谈内容告知书及知情同意书

课题名称: 跨国婚姻、国际迁移及其人口学事实, 基于中国某省的调查

您好! 我们是中国人民大学和澳大利亚麦考瑞大学联合课题组。我们的课题组成员有刘爽教授, 郭菲教授和博士生蔡圣晗。我们邀请您加入这项关于跨国婚姻的调查。本调查聚焦在这种跨文化、跨国界的婚姻关系中, 拥有不同生活经历、文化背景和价值观念的夫妻双方是如何沟通交流, 求同存异, 并建立起超越国界的婚姻关系的。通过这项研究, 我们希望能够进一步了解在改革开放三十多年后的当代中国社会, 跨国婚姻的发展和变化, 以及婚姻家庭观念的变迁。

本知情同意书提供给您一些信息以帮助您决定是否参加此项访谈。请您**仔细阅读**下面的内容, 如有不清楚的问题或术语, 可以与调查员进行讨论。您参加本项研究是**完全自愿**的。本次研究已通过澳大利亚麦考瑞大学伦理委员会审查。

如果您同意参与本次调查, 我们将会邀请您接受一次访谈。您会被询问到有关您个人生活经历的问题, 有关您和您配偶之间如何相识相知的问题, 以及您和配偶对于未来生活的愿景。访谈时长约一小时, 我们会通过录音设备来记录访谈内容, 以便访谈后进行整理和分析。

在研究期间, 您在所提供的任何个人信息都将是**保密**的, 您的隐私权会得到很好的保护。研究结果可能会在杂志上发表, 但不会泄露您个人的任何资料。如果我们的研究成果中引用了您所谈及的内容, 我们会进行**匿名**处理, 您的个人信息和任何有可能泄露您个人信息的细节都绝对不会被透露。只有本调查的负责人和调查员能够接触到访谈的录音和文字资料。如果您对我们的调查结果感兴趣, 您可以向我们索取本次研究的总结性材料。

本次调查完全基于自愿原则。您可以选择不参加本项研究, 或者有权在访谈的任何阶段**无需任何理由**退出, 您的权益不会因此而受到任何影响。如果您决定参加本项研究, 请您签署此知情同意书表明同意。

您可随时了解与本研究有关的信息资料和研究进展, 如果您有与本研究有关的问题, 请联系中国人民大学刘爽教授, 联系电话: 13621155446, 邮箱: shuangliu@ruc.edu.cn

如果您在研究过程中, 需要了解关于本项研究参加者权益方面的问题及投诉, 您可以联系澳大利亚麦考瑞大学伦理委员会, 联系电话: 61 9850 7854, 邮箱: ethics@mq.edu.au。任何投诉将得到保密及调查, 并向您通知最终结果。

如果您完全理解了这一研究项目的内容, 并同意参加此项研究, 您将签署此知情同意书, 一式两份, 由被访者和研究者各保留一份。“我已阅读并了解上述内容, 关于调研的问题和疑问已经得到解答。我同意参加本次调研, 并且完全知道我有权随时终止并退出调查。”

受访人签名: _____ 日期: _____

调查员签名: _____ 日期: _____

Appendix 3: Interview Guidelines

International Marriage, Migration and Demographic Reality - Interview Guideline

Date of interview _____

Starting time of the interview _____

Respondent's code _____

Date of Birth of the respondent

Wife: _____ Husband: _____

Nationality:

Wife: _____ Husband: _____

Hukou of Chinese spouse: _____

Education Level: (0=illiterate, 1= Primary school, 2=Middle school, 3=High school, 4=Vocational School, 5=College, 6=Master Degree or above)

Wife: _____ Husband: _____

Marital Status: (0=First marriage, 1=Remarried)

Wife: _____ Husband: _____

Type of major occupation:

Wife:

Husband:

Estimated monthly income:

Wife:

Husband:

Currently resident in:

Wife:

Husband:

1. Could you please tell me about yourself?
 - a. Please introduce about your home and your country. What (how) do you know about your spouse's country during your early life? Have you ever met with foreigners, especially from your spouse's country?
 - b. Please introduce about your life, study and work experience. What is your favourite activity? Have you ever study or work abroad? If yes, then can you share your experience about it? If not, then have you ever considered about study or work abroad in the future?
 - c. Do you have any families/friends/colleagues that are living/working/studying/befriend with foreigners? What do you know about their experience?
 - d. How often do you travel domestically/internationally? (Business or vacation) Have you ever go to your spouse's country? On what occasion? Based on your experience, how do you feel about the country back then?

2. Would you please tell me about your relationship with your spouse?
 - a. How did you know your spouse? (Face to face? Internet? Introduced by family or friends? Colleague or alumnus? Social/cultural/sports activities? Etc.) How long have you known each other? Your first impression of your spouse?
 - b. How did you develop your relationship? What do you love the most of your spouse? What do you love the most of your relationship?
 - c. How (when) did you decide to formalize your relationship? What is your plan for registration and wedding ceremony? (Registration/wedding in both countries?) To go through the registration procedure, how did you prepare for the necessary material and travel? How much time and money did you spend?

3. Would you please tell me about your knowledge about your spouse's country/culture?
 - a. What do you know about your spouse's country, currently? Compares to your early experience.
 - b. How do you cope with each other's difference? (For example, language, food, habitus, custom, hobbies) When you communicate with each other (and the family or friends), which language do you use the most? Have you ever consider learn your spouse's native language? How do your arrange housework?
 - c. What do you like of your spouse's culture/custom? What do you not like?
 - d. Have you ever consider living in your spouse's country after registration?

4. Could you please tell me about your/your spouse's extend family and friends?
 - a. Have you ever meet with your spouse's family and friends? On what occasion? What do you know about them?
 - b. What do you think is the difference of family/friends relationship between your culture and your spouse's? How do you feel about it?

5. Could you please tell me your thoughts of your relationship compares to your experience of domestic one?
6. What is your idea of love, intimacy, marriage and family?
 - a. What is your idea of love? Some people believe that only “true love” can result and sustain marriage and family, what do you think? What is your understanding about your spouse’s culture’s definition and values of love?
 - b. What is your idea of marriage? What do you think is the most important thing in a relationship?
 - c. What is your ideal family? What do you think is the most important thing of your family life?
 - d. What is your great strength? What is the most important thing to you in life?
7. Would you please tell me your future plan?
 - a. Where will you live after your registration? You home country or your spouse’s, or a third one? How well do you know about these countries’ immigration policy? (Like work and residency permit.)
 - b. What is your plan of employment if you/ your spouse move abroad? Which type of employment do you prefer? (Other, income, welfare etc.) What and how do you get related information?
 - c. Have you ever considered about having children in the future? If you have children, what is your plan for their education? (language, culture, choice of school)
 - d. What do you think is the most valuable thing in your relationship? What do you think is the challenge in your relationship?
8. Do you have any other thoughts about international marriage that you’d like to share with me?