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**The Becoming of Immigrants from
Outsiders to In-Betweens:
The National Identity of
Immigrant Women in Taiwan**

by

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Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD in Political Science

August 2012

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DECLARATION FOR PHD THESIS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to explore the shift of national identity of marriage immigrant women in Taiwan. With regards to the citizenship legislation being used as the state's integration scheme, it aims to answer the following questions: how is the citizenship legislation shaped to integrate immigrant women? How do immigrant women react to the legislation? How does this interaction affect their national identity? Taking a temporal perspective and viewing their transition to mothers and citizens as their *rite of passage*, this thesis argues that immigrant women from China, the Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia develop an in-between identity towards Taiwan and their country of origin. The in-betweenness is brought about by their perception of the citizenship legislation, their adoption of the Chinese language, and their fulfilment of motherhood duties. Along the *rite of passage*, immigrant women experience the in-betweenness whilst simultaneously playing the roles of daughter, mother and citizen. In these roles, they experience the infusion and tension of the two senses of belonging.

On the other hand, their self-identification with Taiwan is contested by the host society and the contestation reinforces the in-betweenness. The contestation results from the categorisations of Chinese, Southeast Asian and Overseas Chinese from Indonesia by the host society. Incorporated into the citizenship legislation, these categorisations are integral to the nation-building project. They are instrumental to consolidate the proclaimed statehood of Taiwan and to safeguard its self-identity as that of a multicultural nation that upholds democracy, prosperity and human rights protection. Being differently affected by the three variables, immigrant women follow different paths to the in-betweenness. Whilst democracy and prosperity are positive inducements for generating identification, the discourses of multiculturalism and human rights

protection are insufficient for integrating the immigrant outsiders. This inadequacy may be a driving force for the political participation of immigrant-turned citizens. These findings enrich the understanding of the relationship between women and the state, and facilitate an ‘outside-in’ perspective with which to examine the conduct and impact of the Taiwan’s nation-building.

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Note on Romanisation of Chinese Sources

This thesis uses both the Wade-Giles system and Hanyu Pinyin for the Romanisation of Chinese sources. Names of places in Taiwan and names of Taiwanese individuals, including interviewees' husbands, are spelled in accordance with the Wade-Giles system. Hanyu Pinyin is used for names of places in China, names of Chinese interviewees, and Chinese words and phrases. The pseudonyms of Indonesian Chinese interviewees are spelled in accordance with the pronunciation of the Hokkien (Fujian), Hakka, Cantonese and Teowchew (Chaozhou) dialects.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION: MARRIAGE IMMIGRANT WOMEN'S SPATIAL AND TEMPORAL JOURNEY

From being an island where population flows across the border were tightly controlled by the authoritarian regime during the Cold War era (Selya 2004: 307), Taiwan, together with Japan, South Korea, and Hong Kong, has now become one of the major destinations for female marriage migration in East Asia (Jones and Shen 2008). Up to the end of 2010, the number of Chinese and Southeast Asian women who marry men in Taiwan and then adopt Taiwan as their home has amounted to nearly 400,000 (NIA 2011a, MoI 2011a), and more than 290,000 children have been born to these transnational families (MoI 2011c). The numbers of the nuclear transnational families occupies at least 4.9 percent of the total population of the island, twice the size of the Indigenous Peoples population (see Chapter 3.1). As more than 40 percent of the marriage immigrant women have acquired citizenship (MoI 2011a), they occupy 1 percent of the total number of eligible voters as of March 2008 (CEC 2011). The presence of Chinese and Southeast Asian women has increased the plurality of the ethnic makeup of the island. Given that a percentage of the Southeast Asian women are of Chinese ancestry, or historically known as *Overseas Chinese (huaqiao)*, this immigration complicates the ethnic landscape of the Han Chinese racially dominant society.

Since the mid 1990s, promoted by the textbook *Understanding Taiwan (renshi taiwan)*, the recognition of Taiwan as being an immigrant and multicultural society has become a primary discourse. The discourse now promotes a civic national identity, the pillar of which is the sense of forging a 'community of shared destiny'. That is, citizens of Taiwan sharing the same historical experiences and destiny which are attached to the land of Taiwan (Hughes 1997: 37, 97-99; Lee 1999: 9; Chu and Lin 2001; Rigger 2002:

364-372). In 2004, President Chen Shiu-bian, in his second inauguration speech, used the example of the different origins of mothers (*'be it Vietnam or Tainan'*) to underline the notion that Taiwan is a society of 'diverse immigrant groups'. He proclaimed that the islanders formed a nation with a shared sense of belonging (Chen 2004). This speech symbolically incorporated the immigrant women into the national community. If this is so, what kind of impact do the migration experiences have on the national identity of the immigrant women? How does the state and society of Taiwan react to their settlement? How do these interactions affect their national identity? These are the core questions that this thesis aims to explore.

1.1 Why this topic?

Immigrants from outside seeking a sense of belonging in the destination country is a perennial challenge to immigrants themselves as well as to the destination country. Female marriage migration in East Asia opens new avenues with which to explore the intricate relationship between immigrants and the host states. The flows to Taiwan are of special significance for their theoretical implications, as well as empirical enrichment, for the study of national identity with respect to the following dimensions:

1. ***Gender and state.*** The settlement of marriage immigrant women is not to establish separate immigrant communities within the receiving society. Rather, their marriage makes them constituent members of the society and their reproduction ability makes them the mothers of the nation. It has been argued that women are the biological reproducers, cultural transmitters and boundary markers (Yuval-Davis and Anthias 1989: 7). Beyond this passive characterisation of the relationship between women and state, I argue that motherhood is a source with which to generate a sense of belonging to the adopted country and further become the foundation for the exercising of their

political rights.

2. ***Ethnicity and boundary.*** The immigrants are comprised of differing ethnicities, including but not limited to Mainland Chinese, Vietnamese, Indonesian Chinese, Filipino, Thai and Cambodian. However, studies comparing immigrants of different origins are still small in number. This thesis fills this critical void. It not only compares Chinese with Southeast Asians, but also separates the unique experiences of Indonesian Chinese from other Southeast Asian immigrants. It also illuminates the under-studied experiences of Filipino immigrants. This kind of comparison underlines that maintaining the imagined boundary between the immigrants and the host nation is critical to the consolidation of the national identity.
3. ***Ethnocentrism and nation-state.*** The great majority of Indonesian women are Overseas Chinese. Smaller numbers of Overseas Chinese are also from Vietnam, Malaysia, Myanmar and Cambodia. Most of them are foreigners in legal terms but they uphold various strengths of Chinese identity. My exploration of their in-between experiences finds that their integration is a testimony of the strength of ethnocentrism in the shaping of their national identity. Their integration also sets up a dialogue with the coexistent ethnic and civic pillars of the national identity of the people of Taiwan.
4. ***Transnational ties versus the territorial borders.*** It has been recognised that immigrant women maintain strong transnational ties in the form of helping their families achieve betterment in their natal countries. However, these ties are mainly discussed in the light of remittances and their daughterly fidelity. My findings demonstrate that this perspective is narrowly confined in socio-economic terms and thus is insufficient to grasp the political implications. I will show that the transnational link sustains their identification

with the natal country. Its strength spans across the state border and so poses a serious challenge to the concept of national identity, which develops alongside the formation of territorially confined nation-state.

5. *Citizenship and national identity.* The citizenship legislation adopted in Taiwan is differentiated for Chinese, Southeast Asian and Overseas Chinese. It demonstrates how the state awards immigrants with citizenship in accordance with the imagined distance between them and the national community. However, the dynamic between citizenship and national identity is under-studied. My analysis underlines the role played by the legislation for consolidating the territory-based *de facto* independence and sovereignty of the ROC on Taiwan. It highlights the differences between being a national and being a citizen. With a stress on gender, my findings defy the premise that the renunciation of a former nationality brings about a singular and exclusive identity. By focusing on women as being mothers and citizens, I argue that citizenship is a source of generating a sense of belonging, and that motherhood is a foundation for women's political participation.

6. *Methods of incorporation.* In spite of adhering to a discourse of multiculturalism, Taiwan has had limited experience of receiving immigration until the recent phases of female marriage migration. Thus, Taiwan urgently sought methods of incorporation, and has moved from the original aim of assimilation, to then revise the existent multiculturalism discourse. Nonetheless, paying limited attention to the experiences of immigrant women, current debates on the contents and contestation of the national identity of the people of Taiwan are still dominated by the Taiwan-China relationship and the internal divide within Taiwanese society. To address this inadequacy, my analysis centralises the external challenge brought about by immigration. By

presenting the critiques of Chinese, Vietnamese and Indonesian Chinese regarding the multiculturalism discourse, I will elaborate on how the ‘old’ incorporation issue is being challenged by a new ‘outside-in’ perspective.

7. **Regional comparison.** The experiences of Taiwan are in common with those of Japan, South Korea, and Hong Kong. They are common in terms of the origins of immigrants, the relatively homogenous ethnic makeup of the society, the citizenship legislation, and the return of overseas co-ethnics. The findings of my thesis can be used for regional comparison and to identify common trends and divergent practices.

1.2 Research Questions and Core Arguments

Given these theoretical as well as empirical significances, my research questions are refined as follows:

1. How is citizenship legislation shaped to incorporate, integrate and transform immigrant women from outsiders to *us*-members?
2. How do immigrant women engage with the integration scheme in their daily lives?
3. Given the diversity of immigrant women and the internal division of the host society, how is the relationship between the state and immigrants undercut by gender, class and ethnicity?

In this thesis, gender is defined as a social institution (Martin 2004) that maintains gender norms as well as individuals’ performativity that individuals repeatedly enact upon gender norms (Butler 1990, 1993, 1997, cited by Woronov 2007). Class is defined by the prevailing socio-economic presumption that the economic disparity between Taiwan and the originating countries makes people of Taiwan universally urban,

educated and better-off and the immigrants indiscernibly rural, poor and uneducated. As for the definition of ethnicity, the conventional conception in Taiwan is not different from the one in traditional immigration societies that the host population is a 'nation' whereas the immigrants are 'ethnic groups' (Hutcheson and Smith 1996: 5). Therefore, non-local ethnicity includes PRC-Chinese, Filipino, Vietnamese, and Indonesian.

To answer these questions, I argue that a *temporal* perspective, which is sensitive to the changes of their life courses and their legal status, is most needed. Studies in different fields have *separately* addressed their daughterly fidelity (Wang 2009; Fung *et al.* 2009), reproduction (Ko and Chang 2005; Chen 2006; Kuan 2006), motherhood (Nguyen 2009; Chen Mei-ying 2010; Wang 2010a; Fung and Liang 2008; Shu *et al.* 2008) and citizenship (Hsia 2004; Chao 2004a; Friedman 2010). These studies focus on disparate challenges derived from an unfamiliar lifestyle, a discriminative social and legal environment, the continuity of the daughterly fidelity, the addition of wifely and motherly duties, and the acquisition of citizen status. However, they fail to recognise that each of these aspects has its specific role to play in shaping the immigrant women's national identity. I will demonstrate how a *temporal* perspective can help to elucidate the impact of such disruption, continuity and acquisition on the national identity in their *entirety* rather than in isolation.

From this new perspective, grounded on ethnographic findings (see Chapter 5-7), this thesis asserts that the key with which to understand the shifting of immigrant women's national identity is to conceive it as a dual transition from a daughter to a mother and from an outsider to a citizen. Viewed in this transition and their multiple roles as daughter, wife, mother and citizen, marriage immigrant women who experience this dual transition develop an in-between identity. The in-between identity is a dual self-identification with both the originating and residing countries. The primordial

identification with the originating country is maintained because of the state's construction received from compulsory education curriculum and socialisation inside and outside of the family. The primordial identification is *mediated* through the caring responsibility for parents and this mediation is particularly pronounced in the decision to relinquish the former nationality. On the other hand, the identification with the residing country is induced from the instrumental gains of betterment in terms of individual financial security, the improvement of children's well-being and higher social living standards. It is also a result of developing a civic sense of belonging after acquiring citizenship, increasing familiarity with local languages and growing primordial ties with the residing country because of giving birth.

Although the identification with the residing country does not negate or eradicate the identification with the originating country, it does not mean the latter remains unchanged. Rather, in immigrant women's cognition, motherhood marks a threshold whereby the two senses of belonging are in competition as well as in fusion. Thus, in-betweenness is internally experienced as a tug of war and externally appears ambiguous. This ambiguity is in fact the *fluidity* of identity that has different presentations in different contexts. This crucial finding is gained from theorising their everyday practices in their interaction with the family, society and state, and the differentiation of Chinese, Southeast Asian and Overseas Chinese within the state-executed nation-building project. Their in-between identity defies the territorially bounded concept of exclusive and singular national identity that is inherent in the citizenship legislation.

1.3 Definition, Framework of Analysis, and Research Methods

Taking into account various modes of the initiation into marriage, my definition of marriage immigrant women is:

They are women who marry men in foreign countries and then migrate after the marriage to countries of their husbands' residence in order to achieve co-habitation and family life as married couples.

This definition has three major merits:

1. It underpins the correlation between marriage and migration, and this correlation is critical to the analysis of their national identity. Women's conformity to the gender norms of co-habitation with husbands (Pariwala and Uberio 2008: 28-30) is indispensable for this unique type of migration. For some, they marry in order to migrate; for others, they migrate because of marriage (Jones and Shen 2008: 21). Either as a means or an end, marriage is indispensable for migration.
2. It includes different modes of initiation into the marriage, such as commercial brokering, social matchmaking, and affection. When they enter the country of their husband's residence as spouses, their residency is dependent on the husband's sponsorship. If residency and citizenship are desired, both are premised on the continuity of marriage, and motherhood is given special consideration by the state. This highlights the impact of legal structure by which women are universally regulated in a foreign country, regardless of their class, ethnicity, nationality, and modes of the initiation into their marriage.
3. By focusing on the legal relationship between a foreign woman and the state, it creates space for elucidating how the same legal structure affects the well-being of women of different classes and ethnicity.

Following this definition, the movement of women who transgress the state border in order to marry is referred to as *female marriage migration*. It refers to movements from a less developed region to a more developed region, and vice versa. At the macro

level, it is the former that has occurred over the past two decades within the East Asian region. However, at the micro level, the reverse direction is not uncommon. Women from a less developed economy may ‘marry down’; that is, experiencing downward mobility because of her relatively higher socio-economic standing in her natal country.

To facilitate a *temporal* perspective and to be sensitive to immigrant women’s transnational ties, my framework of analysis comprises four conceptual tools. They are transnationalism, *rite of passage*, a cognitive approach, and category. They are employed to explore how immigrant women’s worldview is challenged by crossing the state border and how it is reconfigured throughout their transition of making Taiwan their home. The *temporal* perspective emerged from my participant observations and interviews with 98 women throughout Taiwan in 2009 and 2010. It is their own testimonies that this thesis aims to address. Although recognising that every woman has her unique story to tell, this thesis delineates the commonly shared themes of the dual transition of becoming mothers and citizens in their narratives.

This thesis mainly focuses on marriage immigrant women but not husbands of Chinese nor those of foreign origin for two main reasons. First of all, their number is marginal compared to the volume of female marriage migration. The figure of Chinese and foreign husbands who reside in Taiwan is a fractional 0.05 percent of the total number of male and female foreign spouses. The ratio of citizenship acquisition amongst Chinese and foreign husbands is as low as 0.01 per cent (see Chapter 3 for statistics). The extremely low numbers are an issue that requires further study. Secondly, the state is mostly concerned by the perceived inundation of female marriage immigration and its associated political, socio-economic, and cultural impacts on the national community. As argued in Chapter 3 and 4, the state refines the citizenship legislation particularly after 2000 as a direct response to the accumulation of female

marriage immigration. In other words, the legislation is gendered to implement an integration scheme that is designed to reflect the reality that female marriage migration has become the main channel of bringing immigrants and citizens to a Han-dominated society. On the other hand, calling for more exploration of the indispensable role played by Taiwanese husbands, this thesis recognises the significance of Taiwanese husbands in the public discourse relating to female marriage immigration and in the gradual change of their immigrant wives' national identity. In Chapter 2, I examine how Taiwanese husbands are seen as at odds with Taiwan's self-perception as a modern and prosperous society. In Chapter 5 to 7, I investigate their influence on their wives' change of identity in the context of citizenship legislation, use of Chinese language and fulfilment of motherhood. In Chapter 8, I further allude to their influence on their wives' voting decisions. Therefore, in this thesis the role of Taiwanese husbands is not singled out as an independent variable, but as an integral part of immigrant women's living environment in relation to the state, society and family.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis presents the in-between identity of marriage immigrant women from China, the Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia. After this introductory chapter, the thesis consists of two parts. The first part (Chapter 2, 3, and 4) establishes the framework of analysis, provides the historical background, and analyses the political, social and legal environment. The second part (Chapter 5, 6, 7 and 8) presents the results of interviews with Chinese, Southeast Asian and Indonesian Chinese immigrants. Chapter 8 elaborates upon immigrant women's political participation in order to shed light on how they play the role of citizen. This is of particular importance as it is a transition that has been largely overlooked. Chapter 9 concludes these explorations.

Chapter 2 develops the framework of analysis for this thesis. After critiquing the literature on marriage immigrant women and the national identity of immigrant women in Taiwan, I point out the essentiality of adopting a *temporal* perspective with which to conceive migration as a process. Extending the concept of *relational nationality* (Knop 2001), I propose to place family relationships as the centre of the exploration for their national identity. Transnationalism and the concept of *rite of passage* are employed to serve this purpose. The concept of category is used to divide the immigrants into Chinese, Southeast Asian and Overseas Chinese categories. The categorisation is critical for delineating the differentiation of legislation and the interactions between the immigrants and Taiwan. The cognitive approach is employed to analyse how immigrant women perceive the change of their national identity. To explain how the in-betweenness is shaped, three clusters of variables are introduced. They are the perception of the impact of citizenship, the facility of the Chinese language, and fulfilling motherhood. The last section explains my research methods including participant observation and in-depth interviews.

Chapter 3 lays out the historical waves of the migration from Southeast Asia and China over the past 30 years. This chapter elaborates how female marriage immigration is appropriated into Taiwan's nation-building project. This is done by drawing up the Taiwanese category and the three immigrant categories. This demonstrates how the Taiwanese category is consolidated by emphasising the territorial link with Taiwan, which strengthens the civic identity as the pillar of the Taiwanese category. Setting the three immigrant categories in contrast with the Taiwanese category demonstrates how they are excluded and how this exclusion is crucial for the nation-building project.

Chapter 4 investigates the legal environment of immigrant women in Taiwan. The analysis of the citizenship legislation shows what the government *does with* the three

categories and how the three variables affect immigrant women's everyday lives. The examination of how the legislation disciplines and modulates immigrant women to become citizens highlights that the territorial link emphasised by the legislation of household registration contradicts immigrant women's sustained transnational ties across the state border.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 present my exploration of immigrant women's in-between identity. Chapter 5 focuses on 39 Chinese women, Chapter 6 on 13 Filipino and 26 Vietnamese women, and Chapter 7 on 20 Indonesian Chinese women. All three chapters are organised with the same structure. The foundation for exploration is laid by tracing their migration motivations. This puts transnational ties in focus and defies the stereotype of immigrant women as being materialistic opportunists. It restores the complexities of their needs, wants and desires. These chapters then move on to examine the impact of the three variables on their self-identification with Taiwan and the originating country.

These chapters conclude by comparing the different paths of in-betweenness within the Chinese, Southeast Asian and Indonesian Chinese immigrants. That is, comparing older re-married Chinese women with younger Chinese mothers, comparing Filipino with Vietnamese, and comparing diasporic Indonesian Chinese with their younger hybrid counterparts. Whilst Taiwan claims itself to be a multicultural society, their experiences show that this claim is more of a normative discourse than an implemented reality. They utilise this multicultural discourse to advocate their causes or speak up their critiques. Chinese immigrants adopt the multicultural discourse to call for an equal treatment. A Vietnamese immigrant employs it to criticise the adaptation pressure as being a form of internal colonialism. Indonesian Chinese women cast their doubts about the internal division within the Taiwanese category (Mainlanders, Hoklo, Hakka).

Chapter 8 elaborates what immigrant women *do with* their citizenship in the democratic system. This is particularly significant given that democracy is an indispensable element of the Taiwanese identity. This chapter analyses how immigrant women use their voting rights to resist the pressure from their in-laws, who dictate their voting preferences. This uncovers a subtle but dynamic interaction and challenges the conventional views that immigrant voters are passively influenced by their husbands/in-laws. Afterwards, the chapter examines how the two major political parties assess the potential of immigrant voters as being a distinct constituency. The last section examines the experiences of two Vietnamese women's participation in and management of social organisations. It not only highlights their identification with Taiwan and empowered *agency*, but also projects a potential alliance between immigrant organisations and political forces.

Chapter 9 concludes the findings of the case study chapters, discusses the theoretical implications and makes suggestions for further research. By delineating the roles played by the primordial ties with both countries, the constructivist compulsory education, and the instrumental gains (betterment), I conclude that in-betweenness is the concept that grasps the essence of their dynamic identity. It defies the imposition of the host state on immigrant women for their singular, exclusive, and fixed national identity. Moreover, the in-betweenness goes beyond centralising the fluidity of the identity. It situates the fluidity in a specific context embedded in their daily lives and clarify which role they play to articulate a specific identity. This transforms the seemingly ambiguous identity into a path-defined and role-specific *identification*. I then conclude my thesis by suggesting directions for further research.

CHAPTER 2: THE NATIONAL IDENTITY OF MARRIAGE IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN TAIWAN: THE UNKNOWN

No later than 1997 Taiwan had begun to claim itself to be a multicultural society. In that year, the constitutional amendment which protected the rights of the Indigenous Peoples under the banner of multiculturalism was passed. In the same year, the publication of the textbook series *Understanding Taiwan (renshi taiwan)* began to give shape to a national narrative¹ that was defined by the immigration past which brought Han Chinese settlers to the island (Chang Mao-kuei 2002; Hughes and Stone 1999; Wang 2005b). The multicultural composition and the associated national narrative define the boundary of the national community. It reflects the internal bifurcation of the Indigenous Peoples and the dominant Han Chinese and the latter's internal division of three 'ethnic' groups (Hughes and Stone 1999: 986). Grounded on the common origin and specified interpretation of the history, each of the four constituent groups is constructed to be a part of the national community according to its specific historical, political and socio-economic positioning in the national narrative.

In this national narrative, marriage immigrant women from China and Southeast Asia are strangers and outsiders, who have no prior participation in the formation of the national narrative. How would marriage immigrant women find their place in this historically rooted national narrative? As bearers of specific nationality and ethnicity which may be imposed upon certain implication in the national narrative, how would

¹ 'National narrative' is a modified term borrowed from Melissa Brown's 'narrative of unfolding'. Brown explains that it is used for three advantages: a) distinguishing the constructed narratives of the past and the totality of what is known about the past; b) conveying an 'inevitable' unfolding of destiny from the past; c) stressing the changing nature of the interpretation of the past to reflect the present situation (Brown 2004: 5-6). To streamline the term and stress that it is a narrative concerning the people of Taiwan in entirety, I change it to 'national narrative'. A similar concept is 'historical narrative', which provides an interpretative framework for a national community to link the past with the present and understand the nation's place in the world (e.g. Bukh 2007: 687).

this imposition affect their self-identification in relation to Taiwan and their country of origin? Immigrant women's marriage and childbirth mean that, as wives of the local citizens and mothers of the nation, their *foreignness* is to become an *internal* constituent of the national community. How would their reproduction affect their self-identification with Taiwan and their country of origin? Seeing citizenship as an expression of national identity, Peter Schuck analogies citizenship as family ties, marriage commitment and voluntary club membership which bind citizens and the national community together (1998: 217-218). In this vein, what are the theoretical implications of marriage immigrant women as wives, mothers and citizens in our understanding of the bond between individuals and the collective?

2.1 Research Questions

Questions concerning the bond between immigrants and the host state are fundamental in any receiving society. Alternately characterised as *international* (e.g. Tan 2008; Thai 2008; Jones and Shen 2008; Turner 2008), *transnational* (e.g. Hsia 1997; Suzuki 2000; Palriwala and Uberoi 2008; Jones and Shen 2008: 15-17) or *cross-border* (e.g. Constable 2005; Lu and Yang 2008), women's marriage migration has challenged the views on national identity either constructed by the state or acquired through a primordial link. Each of these three characterisations stresses specific dimensions of national identity. *International* projects the potential of divided identity not only between the couple but also between the parents and the children because they may have or acquire different nationality. *Transnational* alludes to the maintaining of contact with the family in the natal country and the formation of the network between the two countries. *Cross-border* is underpinned by the political and socio-economic meanings of transgressing borders of state, class, culture or ethnicity.

These characterisations demonstrate that mixed marriage is far beyond being a private matter between husband and wife. A marital union of two nationalities and the wives' relocation sits right at the heart of the public realm in which the host state exerts sovereignty, conducts foreign policy, awards citizenship, maintains social cohesion and encourages integration. The admission of the formal membership of a national community to the couples and their family and its associated legal, political and socio-economic impact is an integral part of the nation-building process. Its consequences extend to the following generations and beyond state borders.

As wives of mixed marriages are outsiders to the national community of their husbands' country of residence, the expectation of them to conform to the local way of life is the focal point of policies aiming to bring about cohesion and integration. How do marriage immigrant women respond to the state-sanctioned nation-building process in their daily lives? How does the interaction embedded in daily living affect their national identity? These are timely questions while people of Taiwan are engaging in an intensive public debate to define their national identity and draw the boundaries of the national community. Individual women from China and Southeast Asia may not have a personal share in the deeply rooted historicity of national narrative. Nonetheless, at the macro level, there are available modules in the national narrative to incorporate them into the national community. Dynamically defined by their gender, origin, degrees of foreignness, and Taiwan's political and economic relationship with their country of origin, marriage immigrant women are involuntarily appropriated into the unfolding of the national narrative. The specified way of construction, or *othering*, reveals specific aspects of the national identity of the people of Taiwan.

Thus, the intersection of the state and marriage immigration is a critical field that warrants inquiries into the dynamic of nation-building and the national identity of

immigrants. More importantly, it requires a deep look at how immigrant women cognate and react to the overwhelming construction and acquire agency to self-identify their relationship with the originating and destination countries. Awarding citizenship is the formal admission of a foreign national to the national community. Besides, citizenship legislation has consistently been the centre of immigrants' entitlement claim movement. Therefore, this present thesis regards citizenship legislation as the principle policy area for the state to pursue nation-building. This is also a response to the calls of Zlotnik (1990: 374) and Tseng (2009: 39) to compare the differentiation of treatment of immigrants of different foreign groups in one country. Thus, my research questions are refined as follows:

- a. How is citizenship legislation shaped to incorporate, integrate and transform immigrant women from outsiders to *us*-members?
- b. How do immigrant women respond to the integration schemes in their daily life?
- c. Given the diversity of immigrant women and the internal division of the host society, how is the relationship between the state and immigrants undercut by gender, class and ethnicity?

These are the questions that my thesis is set to find answers to. I propose that with time, immigrant women as a daughter, wife, mother and citizen will arrive at an *in-between* identity. It is substantiated by the fusion, tension and ambiguity of the identifications with both the originating country and the residing country.

In this chapter, I will review the literature on marriage migration in East Asia with a focus on Taiwan. I will point out the discrepancy in exploring the impact of immigrant women playing the roles of daughter, mother and citizen on their national identity. I will examine how literature relating to the national identity of immigrant women ignores the

dynamic between the primordial attachment to the country of origin and the aspiration for achieving betterment in Taiwan.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 Migration as a Process

Previous research of female marriage migration identifies marriage migration as a new phenomenon within the feminised migration and its theorisation is influenced by women's labour migration. It sheds light on women's reproduction ability and its supply of cheap labour to maintain international division of labour (Lu and Yang 2009: 16). It is often conflated with the globalisation of sex workers, who may be part of labour and marriage migration (Lu 2008: 125). The influence of the latter is that established literature tends to pathologise marriage immigrant women (Wang and Bélanger 2008: 102-103) and associates them with mail-order brides (Piper and Roces 2003: 2), transnational prostitutes (for prostitute-turned wives in Germany and Denmark, see Ruenkaew 2002; Lisborg 2002; Mix and Piper 2003; Mix 2002) and victims of human trafficking (Wang and Chang 2002: 110; cf. Nakamatsu 2009: 191).

In the case of Taiwan, images of victims of domestic abuse and trafficking are strengthened by the assertion that brokered marriage is *commodified* (Wang and Chang 2002). This is conflated with the stigmatisation of marriage immigrant women as *commodities* for transaction. As a result, marriage immigrant women are denounced either for being materialistic and amoral, or as victims of a troubled marriage and of human trafficking. On the whole, they are blamed for causing social problems. The stigmatisation of marriage immigrant women is also evident in Hong Kong (Shih 1998; Ho Kit Mui 2006), South Korea (Lee Hye-Kyung 2008: 114) and Japan (Piper 1997; Burgess 2004: 228). In the case of Vietnamese women, they are also condemned as a threat to nationalism, masculinity and patriarchy (Bélanger *et al.* 2007). Ito describes

this kind of scholarship as pathologising immigrant women and argues that it creates a ‘compelling framing effect’, which makes it ‘seemingly impossible’ to conceive migrant women as citizens. The framing effect also impedes to conceive immigrant women taking part in activities related to citizenship (Ito 2005: 52).

Ito’s emphasis on citizenship – a status acquired *after a period of time* – underpins the merit of seeing migration as a *process* rather than as a one-off occasion. A perspective sensitive to ‘time’ is indispensable to grasp the significance of immigrant women’s change of life course in their self-perception, the social environment and the legal regulations. The problem of overlooking their change of life course is satirised by one immigrant woman: ‘*I’m an old woman now, why are others still calling me a bride?*’ (Hsia 2005a: 13). Seeing immigrant women only as brides essentialises and perpetuates their presumed confinement within domesticity without also considering, as Ito points out, their interaction with the host state as a citizen. The unexplored potential change of their national identity is amongst the consequential deficiency caused by such a narrow and static perspective.

Viewed as a process, immigrant women’s migration contains two significant changes: becoming a mother and becoming a citizen. In Taiwan’s case, up to 2003, 70.8 percent of Southeast Asian women and 50 percent of Chinese women gave birth in Taiwan (MoI 2004)². Up to 2010, 43 percent become citizens (MoI 2011a). This is a

² Two reasons can be suggested for the lower birth rate amongst Chinese women. First of all, there are more re-married Chinese wives who have passed the reproductive age (see Appendix B). Secondly, younger Southeast Asian women have a higher rate of co-residing with parents-in-law (more than 50 percent) and they are more likely to give birth (Chen Yu-hua 2006: 16). Up to 2008, 61.9 percent of immigrant women became mothers in Taiwan. This later figure does not distinguish immigrant mothers’ national origin (MoI 2009) and may be lower than reality as it excludes mothers who have acquired ROC citizenship. The ratio of citizenship acquisition amongst Southeast Asian women is 70 percent, twice as high as the figure for Chinese women. This is a result of discriminating Chinese immigrants (see Chapter 3 and 4).

situation pointed out by Piper and Roces that migrant women (workers and wives) have multiple roles, including workers, wives, mothers and citizens (2003: 15-17). What they do not acknowledge is that while immigrant women acquire these multiple roles, they also remain as daughters, and in this role the contact with their natal family is sustained. This is not only of socio-economic significance but also has profound political and legal implications. The former is underlined by the betterment motivations, which include supporting parents or siblings by sending remittances. The latter is evidenced by the fact that a married daughter may legally sponsor her family member's immigration; for instance, family-sponsored immigration is the most frequent type of immigration to the US (Knop 2001: 93; Yuh 2002: 4; 164-165).

2.2.2 National Identity: Chinese and Southeast Asian Women in Taiwan

Studies commissioned by the KMT government in the 1990s on controlling the settlement and employment of Chinese immigrants tend to dismiss the issue of identity. Supporting the restriction of Chinese immigration because of their communist indoctrination (Chen Hsiao-hung 1997: 8-15), these works acknowledge that it is a legal conundrum that PRC citizens are *constitutionally* ROC nationals but their settlement in Taiwan is *neither domestic nor international* (ibid: 5-14, 9-8; 1999: 5). They portray Chinese immigrants as economic migrants whose motivation for migration is betterment, and they neither 'think about' identity issue nor identify with Taiwan. These studies further strengthen Chinese immigrants' *apolitical* image by presenting them as wives and mothers whose rights of having a family life are impeded by the restrictive legislation. Taiwan is viewed by Chinese immigrants as a place where one can realise one's potential in the job market. If one achieves financial security because of employment, the stability may lead to identification with Taiwan (Chen Kuan-cheng 1994, Chen Hsiao-hung 1997, 1999). In addition to employment, Chen Hsiao-hung (1997) points

out that the acquisition of citizenship may generate a sense of inclusiveness. The positive correlation between identification and citizenship and employment is also supported by later studies (e.g. Yang 2010). On the other hand, Chen Hsio-hung (1999: 3) documents Chinese women's emotive 'here and there' complex: they 'miss China in Taiwan and miss Taiwan in China' and cannot make up their mind where to settle. Ultimately an indication of where their sense of belonging lies is whether they choose to dwell in Taiwan after acquiring citizenship.

In opposition to the 'here and there' complex, other studies document 'neither here nor there' sentiment (Liu 2003). Chinese women felt Taiwanese in China but are excluded for being seen as Chinese in Taiwan. They are wanderers across the strait but find nowhere to belong. For others, being treated as Taiwanese by people in their Mainland hometowns marks a turning point to begin to psychologically see themselves as Taiwanese. Critically, giving birth and raising children in Taiwan is pointed out as a source of strength to overcome the sense of isolation and rootless wandering. In this respect, the mother-child relationship is noted for its significance of generating identification with Taiwan. This was seen amongst Chinese as well as Southeast Asian immigrants (Kuo 2005). The number of children and the satisfaction with a marriage are positively correlated with identification with the family, society and the state. An expression of their identification is their willingness to vote.

In contrast, there is a lower interest in exploring the national identity of Southeast Asian women from a bottom-up perspective. Yeh's study (2003) finds that spousal affection, relationship with in-laws, social discrimination and negative media coverage affect immigrant women's identification with Taiwan. The positive familial relationship is said to be a major contributing factor, in addition to the satisfaction with the betterment achieved in Taiwan. The renunciation of their previous nationality

demonstrates a willingness and determination to align themselves with Taiwan. It is suggested that Indonesian Chinese and Vietnamese Chinese women are more adaptable to the local way of life, compared to Vietnamese immigrants. This is attributed to their inherited Chinese-ness and higher familiarity with the Chinese way of life and traditional culture (Chen Ting-yun 2002; Li Mei-chen 2002). Studies on Indonesian women acknowledge their Chinese ancestry and mention in passing that the anti-Chinese movement in Indonesia as a driving force for migration (Chen Mei-chen 2006, Chen Mei-ying 2010).

The other strand of studies is to examine the role of Taiwan's national identity in shaping the immigration policy. Focusing on Taiwan-China relationship, King (2007; 2011: 181) argues that the Taiwanese government uses the legislation of Chinese immigration to strengthen the national identity. The pursuit of Taiwanese identity sees a self-differentiation from China and leads to an exclusionary policy towards Chinese immigrants in terms of residency, employment and healthcare. This is liberalised later because of the general public's perception of an increasingly prosperous China, society's popular desire for a more moderate stance on Taiwanese identity, and the intensification of the interaction across the Strait (King 2007). More critically, King points out that cross-strait couples are able to dispel their questioned loyalty towards Taiwan and appeal to the human rights of marital company and parental care (ibid).

While King (2007) sees the moderation of the residency regulation in 2003 as a sign of the limitation of using nationalism as a policy tool, other studies argue that a growing Taiwanese identity under the watch of the DPP government resulted in a tightened control. Focusing on the DPP administration's *governmentality*, Chao (2004b) argues that the state uses border control as a way of asserting Taiwan's sovereignty and *de facto* separation from China. She elaborates that the effective border control is

central to maintaining the legitimacy of the nation-state as an ‘imagined community’. However, awarding citizenship to Chinese immigrants shakes the efficacy of border control. Contrary to King’s description of the protection of human rights as being a ‘long-held tradition’, Chao argues that the deprivation of their universal human rights and delegating the disciplining power to their husbands (as sponsors for their residency) reveals the insufficiency of Taiwan’s unsettled sovereignty due to a lack of protection for human rights. Most importantly, Chao (2006) argues that Chinese immigrants have undergone a process of sophisticated political socialisation. Under the spotlight, they announce that they ‘love Taiwan’, but off the stage they satirise the pressure of conforming to political correctness (Love Taiwan). Thus, Chinese marriage immigration to Taiwan is a field criss-crossed by sovereignty, national identity, citizenship, cultural conditioning and economic reproduction (Chao 2004b: 67).

Freidman (2010) also points out that the lack of protection for human rights reveals the contradiction of Taiwan’s national identity. Focusing on the *Interpretation of the Constitutional Court* (2006) which restricts the citizenship of the Chinese immigrant-turned citizen, she characterises the awarding of citizenship to Chinese immigrants as ‘graduated citizenship’ and articulates that this is contradictory to the values of democracy. This is ironic, argues Friedman, because protecting human rights and democratic values are the very fundamental distinction publicised by Taiwan to legitimise its difference from China. Thus, falling short of protecting human rights and contradicting democratic values discredits Taiwan’s self-acclimation, which is the core of its national identity. Freidman notes that Chinese immigrants under this unfavourable circumstance appeal to transcend the Taiwan-China divide and make claims of national inclusion based on their capacity for reproduction, caring and nurturing.

The dynamic between national identity and immigration policy towards Southeast Asian immigrants is also explored. Focusing on Vietnamese women, Lee Mei-hsian (2009) points out that their stigmatisation touches the heart of Taiwan's national identity, which is defined by the aspiration and accomplishment of modernity. She argues that economic success has enabled Taiwan to join a club of 'civilised' nations. Achieving modernity and winning an international reputation helps to uphold the islanders' national identity. Thus, the presumed inferior Vietnamese women from the perceived under-developed Vietnam are believed to lower the quality of the population, compromise the international competitiveness, erode Taiwan's international status, and weaken the core of national identity. Taiwan is imagined to be on the brink of falling back into poverty, an apocalypse that is also envisaged by Vietnamese elites. Kung points out that this apocalypse is constructed as a threat to national security (Kung 2009).

Immigrant women's biological reproduction is another aspect that marks the perceived difference between Taiwan and Southeast Asian states (Fan 2006). Following Yuval-Davis's (1997) argument that women are central to a nation-state's construction and reproduction, Fan analyses the items of required medical check-ups and the content of the family planning programme. She argues that the perceived under-development of Southeast Asian countries is 'embodied' by immigrant women, who are presumed to be an 'underclass' that is prone to carry infectious diseases. The examination of their body and the monitoring of their reproduction are legitimised by *eugenics*-driven motivations to ensure the 'quality' of the nation. This is supported by husbands and mothers-in-law, who regard the children born by immigrant women as *our* children (Fan 2006: 75-79). To ensure the transmission of national culture, the public health authorities and hospital staff carry a self-declared mission to preach,

discipline and enlighten the primitive women to become qualified mothers of the Taiwanese nation.

To sum up, studies of national identity of immigrant women in Taiwan have examined the dynamic between legislation and national identity and their daily experiences. However, the top-down examinations leave more questions to be answered about the relationship between Taiwan's national identity and the immigration policy. First of all, the policies of *othering* Chinese and Southeast Asian immigrants are separately investigated but not compared. Jenkins (2008: 11) points out that studying a minority group cannot be done without also studying the majority. Thus, without this comparison, a full understanding of how different aspects of Taiwan's national narrative are appropriated to legitimise the differentiation cannot be gained. Secondly, Vietnamese, Filipino and Indonesian women are lumped together into one single group. This misses the *endogenous* differences between the three national groups and the specified social exclusion by which they are modulated. Thirdly, this further glosses over the unique positioning of Overseas Chinese from Indonesia and Vietnam in Taiwan's evolving national narrative. Lastly, for Indonesian Chinese, their collective memory of anti-Chinese riots is not given primary attention with which to explore their migration motivations. Their Chinese-ness is taken for granted and prioritised over their Indonesian heritage. Thus, no efforts are made to explore how their self-identity as Indonesian Chinese interacts with the legislation after residing in Taiwan. The experiences of Chinese, Southeast Asian and Overseas Chinese outsiders are the indispensable pieces of the jigsaw puzzle for a complete portrait of Taiwan's national identity. Each of them in isolation cannot tell a full story.

From a bottom-up perspective, there is an insufficient sensitivity to the dual change of life course and legal status. That is, whilst immigrant women become from daughters

to wives and mothers, they also become citizens and have multiple roles to play. An appreciation of the conglomerated impact on their identification with the originating and residing countries is lacking. Although there is no shortage of suggestions of contributing factors to immigrant women's identification with Taiwan, they are not analysed in a way that is sensitive to the specific role they play in the required context. The importance of language for identification is recognised but the significance of Chinese immigrants' accent goes unnoticed. Findings that assert citizenship acquirement as a threshold of shifting self-identification abound, but there is no acknowledged mechanism to suggest how citizenship may induce a sense of belonging. What is most crucially missing in the examination of citizenship legislation is immigrant women's autonomous understanding of the meaning and consequence of losing their former nationality. In the case of Chinese immigrants, it is a requirement of cancelling their household registration (see Chapter 3, 4). This requirement is analogised as a married woman cutting herself off from her natal family in the public discourse and is equated to her identification with Taiwan in the above-mentioned studies. No efforts are made to reveal the implicit political assumption behind the legislation about an immigrant's allegiance. Most importantly, the allegiance is conceived in an 'either-or' dichotomy. Hence both 'here and there' and 'neither here nor there' complexes are seen as abnormal.

Although the two strands of scholarship are from opposite perspectives (top-down and bottom-up), they converge on two interconnected aspects. They are: a) using citizenship legislation as a legal force to regulate immigrant women and safeguard Taiwan's national identity, and b) incorporating immigrant women into the national community as wives and mothers. This convergence defies the scholarship of transnationalism which concentrates on immigrant women's sustained contact with the

natal family mainly in the role of daughters. Considering that citizenship is the critical threshold in inducing identification and immigrant women play multiple roles as daughters, wivs, mothers and citizens at private home and in the public sphere, Knop's concept of *relational nationality*³ (2001) is a useful proposition with which to elucidate how the family relationship is indispensable to immigrant women's self-understanding in relation to the countries of origin and destination.

2.2.3 Multiple Roles and Family Relationships: Relational Nationality

Studies commissioned by the KMT government in the 1990s on controlling the settlement and employment of Chinese immigrants tend to dismiss the issue of identity. Tasked to study about where and how to moderate the legislation, these works acknowledge that it is a legal conundrum that PRC citizens are *constitutionally* ROC nationals but their relocation to Taiwan is *neither domestic nor international* (Chen Hsiao-hung 1997: 5-14, 9-8; 1999: 5). However, they agree that it is a political and economic necessity to place their admission under strict control because of communist indoctrination of PRC citizens (Chen Hsiao-hung 1997: 8-15). These reports portray Chinese immigrants as economic migrants whose motivation for migration is betterment. Presenting them as apolitical, these studies report that Chinese immigrants 'do not think about' the identity issue and they do not identify with Taiwan. The non-political stance of Chinese immigrants is strengthened by being presented as wives and mothers whose rights in terms of having a family life are impeded by the restrictive legislation. However, employment is suggested by these studies as a channel to integration. Taiwan is viewed by Chinese immigrants as a place where one can realise one's potential in the

³ Nationality is often related to sovereignty thus regarded as an international issue, whereas citizenship is often associated with rights and entitlements hence considered as a domestic issue. However, both are usually used interchangeably.

job market. If one achieves financial security because of employment, the stability may lead to identification with Taiwan (Chen Kuan-cheng 1994, Chen Hsiao-hung 1997, 1999).

Grounded on the non-political stance, these studies acknowledge some sociological factors to identification with Taiwan. In addition to employment, the most prominent one is the acquisition of citizenship, which is said to generate a sense of inclusiveness (Chen Hsiao-hung 1997). The others are the duration of residing in Taiwan and the intimate relationship with husbands and in-laws. Ultimately an indication of where their sense of belonging lies is whether they choose to dwell in Taiwan after acquiring citizenship (Chen Hsiao-hung 1999: 3). In spite of the tendency to probe the *singular* sense of belonging, they also document the emotive ‘here and there’ complex: they ‘miss China in Taiwan and miss Taiwan in China’ and can not make up their mind where to settle (Chen Hsiao-hung 1997).

After the change of administration from the KMT to the DPP in 2000, these sociological factors continue to be documented. While an emphasis remains on the positive correlation between identification and citizenship, family relationship and employment (Yang 2010), there appears a variant of the ‘here and there’ complex. ‘Neither here nor there’ is found amongst Chinese immigrants. They felt Taiwanese in China but are excluded for being seen as Chinese in Taiwan. They are wanderers across the Strait but find nowhere to belong. For others, being treated as Taiwanese by people in their mainland hometowns marks a turning point to begin to psychologically see themselves as Taiwanese. Critically, giving birth and raising children in Taiwan is pointed out as a source of strength to overcome the sense of isolation and rootless wandering (Liu 2003). In this respect, the mother-child relationship is noted for its significance of generating identification with Taiwan. This was seen amongst Chinese

as well as Southeast Asian immigrants. The number of children and the satisfaction with a marriage are positively correlated with identification with the family, society and the state. An expression of their identification is their willingness to vote (Kuo 2005).

The findings of ‘neither here nor there’ indicate that the conceptualisation of what distinguishes Taiwan and China has gradually stabilised since 1987 when the Taiwanese government lifted the ban on its citizens travelling to China. Over the past twenty years, the fluctuating relationship between Taiwan and the PRC, and the increasing volume of Taiwanese marriage, trade, investment, employment, study, and tourism in China have seen the modification of Taiwan’s policies towards China as well as the legislation regulating Chinese immigrants in Taiwan. Thus, unlike the non-political stance of earlier works, studies conducted after 2000 during the DPP administration have the temporal advantage to inform how the immigration legislation is used by both the KMT and DPP governments to strengthen nation-building, consolidate national identity and assert independence and separation from China.

The government using immigration legislation to strengthen national identity is central to King’s analysis of the policy towards Chinese immigrants (King 2007, 2011: 181). King argues that the relationship with China is a parameter of the policy. The pursuit of Taiwanese identity sees a self-differentiation from China and leads to an exclusionary policy towards Chinese immigrants in terms of residency, employment and healthcare (King 2007). This is, however, liberalised later because of the general public’s perception of an increasingly prosperous China, society’s popular desire for a more moderate stance on Taiwanese identity, and the intensification of the interaction across the Strait. More critically, King points out that cross-strait couples are able to dispel their questionable loyalty towards Taiwan and appeal to the human rights of marital company and parental care for their children (ibid).

While King sees the moderation of the residency regulation in 2003 as a sign of the limitation of using nationalism as a policy tool (2007), other studies see the trend of a growing Taiwanese identity under the watch of the DPP government, and this resulted in tightened control measures. Focusing on the *governmentality* of the DPP administration, Chao (2004b) argues that the state uses border control measures as a way of asserting Taiwan's sovereignty and *de facto* separation from China. She argues that the effective border control is central to maintaining the legitimacy of the nation-state as an 'imagined community'. However, awarding citizenship to Chinese immigrants shakes the efficacy of that border control. Contrary to King's description of the protection of human rights as being a 'long-held tradition', Chao argues that the deprivation of their universal human rights and delegating the disciplining power to their husbands (as sponsors for their residency) reveals the insufficiency of Taiwan's unsettled sovereignty due to a lack of protection for human rights. Seeing female Chinese immigrants and their Taiwanese husbands as independent individuals rather than unified couples, Chao reveals their divergent interests in the entitlement claim movement and the government's restrictive interpretation of Chinese immigrants' rights of association and assembly. Most importantly, Chao (2006) argues that Chinese immigrants have undergone a process of sophisticated political socialisation. In public, they appear to accept the 'Love Taiwan' sentiment 'on the stage', but off the stage they espouse a satirist critique of demonstrating one's national identity in a way of conforming to politically correct scripts. Thus, Chinese marriage immigration to Taiwan is a field criss-crossed by sovereignty, national identity, citizenship, cultural conditioning and economic reproduction (Chao 2004b: 67).

In line with Chao's critique on the insufficiency of human rights protection, Freidman (2010) also points out that the lack of protection for human rights reveals the

contradiction of Taiwan's national identity. Focusing on the *Interpretation of the Constitutional Court* which restricts the citizenship of the Chinese immigrant-turned citizens (Justices of the Constitutional Court 2006), she characterises the awarding of citizenship to Chinese immigrants as 'graduated citizenship' and argues that this is contradictory to the values of democracy. This is ironic, argues Friedman, because protecting human rights and democratic values are the very fundamental distinction publicised by Taiwan to legitimise its difference from China. Thus, falling short of protecting human rights and contradicting democratic values discredits Taiwan's self-acclimation, which is the core of its national identity. Friedman notes that Chinese immigrants under this unfavourable circumstance appeal to transcend the Taiwan-China divide and make claims of national inclusion based on their capacity for reproduction, caring and nurturing.

The contradiction of national identity and human rights is not only a conflict between a fundamental value and public policies, it also becomes a cognitive framework for news agencies to comment on Chinese immigration. Between October 2002 and March 2004, when legislators debated about the amendments of the citizenship legislation initiated by the DPP government, all three national newspapers intensively covered the entitlement claims made by Chinese immigrants. Lin Miao-ling (2005) argues that one of their shared stances is to portray that Taiwan's sovereignty and political independence is under siege and this is out of the fear that the island is being inundated by Chinese immigrants. Lin finds that the presentation of Chinese immigrants by each newspaper reflects their political stance. The pro-independence *Liberty Times* advocates '*Taiwanese First*' and characterises Chinese immigrants as aliens, enemy and inferior others. Supporting the DPP government's proposal, it appeals to an overarching concern of national security, political stability, electorate equilibrium,

social stability and justice of resource allocation. The presentation of the pro-unification *China Times* and *United Daily News* was not imbued with the projection of Taiwanese nationalism but opted for advocating the protection of Chinese immigrants' human rights. Nevertheless, there is little difference between the papers regarding the introduction of an entry interview. The border control method is embraced out of necessity, which underlines Taiwan's self-perception as a sovereign nation-state.

The dynamic between national identity and immigration policy towards Southeast Asian immigrants is also explored. Focusing on Vietnamese immigration, Lee Mei-hsian (2009) points out that the stigmatised image of transnational marriage touches the heart of Taiwan's national identity, which is defined by the aspiration and accomplishment of modernity. She argues that economic success has enabled Taiwan to join a club of 'civilised' nations. Achieving modernity and winning an international reputation helps to uphold the islanders' national identity. Thus, the presumed inferiority of Vietnamese women deriving from the perceived under-development of Vietnam is seen as likely to result in a reduced-quality population and compromising Taiwan's international competitiveness. Such marriages, viewed as slowly eroding Taiwan's hard-earned international status, weaken the core of national identity. Taiwan is imagined to be on the brink of falling back into poverty, an apocalypse that is also envisaged by Vietnamese elites. Kung points out that this apocalypse is further constructed to be a threat to national security (Kung 2009).

Following Yuval-Davis's (1997) argument that women are central to a nation-state's construction and reproduction, Fan (2006) elucidates the subjection of Southeast Asian women's reproduction to the government's constructed hierarchy between Taiwan and Southeast Asian states. By analysing the items of required medical check-ups and the content of the family planning programme, Fan argues that the

perceived under-development of Southeast Asian countries is 'embodied' by immigrant women, who are presumed to be an 'underclass' that is prone to carry infectious diseases. The examination of their body and the monitoring of their reproduction are legitimised by *eugenics*-driven motivations to ensure the 'quality' of the nation. This is supported by husbands and mothers-in-law, who regard the children born by immigrant women as *our* children (ibid: 75-79). To ensure the transmission of national culture, the public health authorities and hospital staff carry a self-declared mission to preach, discipline and enlighten the primitive women to become qualified mothers of the Taiwanese nation.

At the micro level, however, there is relatively less interest in exploring the national identity of Southeast Asian women from a bottom-up perspective. Yeh's study finds that spousal affection, in-laws' care, social discrimination and negative media coverage are contributing factors to immigrant women's identification with Taiwan. The positive familial relationship is said to be a major contributing factor, in addition to the satisfaction with the betterment achieved in Taiwan. The renunciation of their previous nationality demonstrates a willingness and determination to align themselves with Taiwan (Yeh 2003). It is suggested that Indonesian Chinese and Vietnamese Chinese women are more adaptable to the local way of life, compared to Vietnamese immigrants. This is attributed to their inherited Chinese-ness and they are more familiar with the Chinese way of life and traditional culture (Chen Ting-yun 2002; Li Mei-chen 2002).

To sum up, studies of national identity of immigrant women in Taiwan have examined the dynamic between legislation and national identity and the daily experiences of these women. However, there are issues and aspects not examined. First of all, attention is not given to the critical threshold of renouncing a previous nationality.

It is simply treated as an administrative procedure and its impact on immigrant women's identification with Taiwan and with the originating country is ignored. Secondly, while the policies of *othering* Chinese and Southeast Asian immigrants are individually examined, they are not placed together to contrast the different aspects of Taiwan's national narrative. Thirdly, studies on Southeast Asian immigrants tend to lump Vietnamese, Filipino and Indonesian Chinese together as a combined category. This results in missing the *endogenous* differences amongst the three national groups and the specified social exclusion they are modulated by. Moreover, it also glosses over the unique positioning of Overseas Chinese in Taiwan's evolving national narrative. Lastly, for Indonesian Chinese specifically, most studies emphasise the anti-Chinese movement in Indonesia as a driving force for migration (Chen Mei-chen 2006, Chen Mei-ying 2010), but none pays attention to how this collective memory and their evolving Chinese consciousness is acted on before migration, and how it interacts with the legislation after residing in Taiwan. The experiences of Chinese, Southeast Asian and Overseas Chinese outsiders are the indispensable pieces of the jigsaw puzzle for a complete portrait of Taiwan's national identity. Each of them in isolation cannot tell a full story.

At the micro level, there is an insufficient sensitivity to the fact that as their life course changes, immigrant women are expected to play multiple roles as daughter, wife, mother and citizen at the same time. Hence an appreciation of the conglomerated impact on their identification with both of the originating and destination countries is lacking. Although there is no shortage of suggestions of contributing factors to immigrant women's identification with Taiwan, they are not analysed in a way that is sensitive to the specific role they play in the required context. Findings that assert citizenship acquirement as a threshold of shifting self-identification abound, but there is no

acknowledged mechanism to suggest how citizenship may induce a sense of belonging after acquiring citizenship. Most importantly, the identification is conceived in an ‘either-or’ manner that identification with Taiwan develops at the expense of severing identification with the originating country.

Acknowledging these discrepancies, I suggest the value of juxtaposing Taiwan’s national identity and national narrative with its differentiation of Chinese, Southeast Asian and Overseas Chinese. As Jenkins points out that studying a minority group cannot be done without also studying the majority (2008: 11), this juxtaposition is to find out how the differentiation engages in a specific aspect of the national identity,. In line with the concept of *relational nationality*, I propose that the web of relationships experienced by immigrant women, deriving from their roles as daughter, wife, mother and citizen, lays the foundation to support identification with Taiwan and the originating country. It defies the epistemological tendency of seeking a singular and exclusive identity.

2.3 Variables and Framework of Analysis

2.3.1 Framework of Analysis

To conceptualise identity change and the resultant in-between identity, I employ four analytical tools, namely transnationalism, *rite of passage*, a cognitive approach, and category.

First of all, transnationalism conceptualises the continuity of the primordial attachment to the originating country. Secondly, *rite of passage* focuses on the change of life course as in a transition. Thirdly, a cognitive approach makes it possible to understand how an immigrant practices transnationalism, perceives the meaning of the change of life course and legal status, and employs different strategies to react to the

change along with the *rite of passage*. Finally, treating the interaction between the host society and immigrants as interactions between categories, it is conceptually possible to analyse a change of identity in the sense of crossing the boundary of categories.

Transnationalism

Transnationalism is a sociological and anthropological echo to Knop's (2001) legal studies of immigrant women having a bond with both their originating and residing countries. As argued above, migration is a process that does not end at the point when immigrants enter the state of their destination. Contrary to the conventional imagination of immigrants as being uprooted, immigrants today are more politically and socio-economically connected with their origin, thanks to the technological advancement which enables easier travel, communication and remittance. 'Discovering' that the experience of immigrants defies dichotomy but embodies continuity in terms of time span and spatial connections, Basch *et al* (1994: 7) define the social connectedness as *transnationalism*, which is the '*process by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement.*' It is characterised as a process in order to emphasise that immigrants develop and maintain multiple relationships – familial, economic, social, organisational, religious, and political – that traverse borders of state and culture.

Transnationalism is a useful tool to conceptualise the lived experiences of marriage immigrant women. It is a perspective grounded in daily practices in which their interaction with the host state and connection with their country of origin is embedded (Rogers 2008: 120). Basch *et al* (1994) point out that immigrants live 'simultaneously' across national borders and engage in nation-building projects that are characterised by race and ethnicity. Such participation shapes their identity. They assert that conceptualising the experience of immigrants as a continuum allows researchers to trace

the lived and fluid experience of immigrants who sustain themselves across geographic and social space in multiple ways (ibid: 8). This allows us to conceive the activities of immigrant women in the public realm and private family domain as different forms of responding to the nation-building of the host state and maintaining connections with the country of origin.

Dragojlovic (2008) points out that there are two major strands of scholarship on transnationalism with which to analyse the increasing human mobility in an age of globalisation. One strand is developed by Basch *et al* (1994) and draws from labour migration. It sees migration as a process where people live their lives in more than one nation (hence *trans*-national) and advocates the agency of individuals in this process. The transnationalist approach employed by Appadurai and Hannerz, on the other hand, pays attention to the flows of capital and technology and the formation of communication networks. The former may be used as an alternate of *Diaspora* and the latter gives rise to the concept of a *borderless* world (Dragojlovic 2008: 279-280). However, the vision of a borderless (or post-national) world is rejected by Michael Smith, who elucidates the fact that state borders, policies and national identities are often transgressed by transnational communication and practices. In spite of the transgression, the state borders, policies and national identities sustain (Smith 2001: 3, cited by Yeoh *et al* 2003: 2). In the case of marriage immigration to Taiwan, the state borders and policies are strengthened in response to the perceived inundation by 'underclass' women. Thus, as proposed by Dragojlovic (2008: 280), I use a transnationalist approach to highlight the tension between Taiwanese legislation that demands singular loyalty and the dual belonging derived from immigrant women's everyday practice of playing multiple roles.

Rite of Passage

Rite of passage is another useful insight to conceptualise migration as a life-long experience rather than two discrete components of 'before' and 'after'. Sensitive to the state policies and social practices, transnationalism conceptualises the migration process at a macro- and meta-level. At a micro level, *rite of passage* offers an inroad to the personal transition which is characterised by two critical thresholds: becoming a mother and becoming a citizen. Most importantly, it renders the concept of the ambiguous transitional state of '*betwix and between*'.

In his book *Les rites de passage* published in 1909, the Belgian folklorist Arnold van Gennep uses the concept '*rite of passage*' to characterise the dependent relationship between individuals and the collective of which individuals are members. Developing from observing the 'semi-civilised' societies, he argues that in these societies, an individual's life is composed of successive events that are marked by beginnings and ends. These events are birth, childhood, social puberty, adulthood, marriage, parenthood, advancement to a higher class, occupational specialisation and death. Between successions, there are specified ceremonies to accompany an individual to remove themselves from a defined situation to the next. The existence and operation of ceremonies ensure each succession is well regulated and guarded so that the social order of the collective life is maintained. Ceremonies as such are *rites of passage* that announce an individual's advancement through life (Van Gennep 2004: 3). Although these articulations derive from the 'semi-civilised' societies, he argues that *rites of passage* also operate in the 'modern' societies.

Van Gennep argues that within each passage there are three distinctive stages: separation, transition (*liminality*) and incorporation (re-aggregation). At the separation stage, individuals are separated or physically removed from their previous social life and are aware of the disengagement from a former role. At the transition stage, they

move from one role to another and fall into a limbo of their past and present modes of social existence. At the incorporation stage, an individual re-enters the original society either at a higher status level or in an altered state of consciousness or social being (Turner 1979: 466-467).

Van Gennep's concept is expanded by Turner, whose central interest and contribution is his further elaboration of the significance of the transition stage, *liminality*. Liminality derives from *Limen*, a Greek word for *threshold*, or as van Gennep defines as '*on-a-threshold*' (ibid: 465). Turner elaborates that liminality is characterised by the blurring and merging of distinctions. Between separation and incorporation, one enters a realm that is neither like one's past nor one's future state. In liminality, one stays in a state that is not clearly defined; they are not here nor there. They are 'betwix and between the passions assigned by law, custom, convention and ceremonial' (Turner 1969: 94-95). Turner points out that *rite of passage* is not restricted to movements from an ascribed state to another. They also refer to individuals entering a 'new achieved' status, such as acquiring a membership of a group (Turner 1987: 5).

Locating the interactive relationship between individuals and the collective in a process, *rite of passage* is used in this thesis to underline the transitional connotation of the intertwined marriage and migration. Moreover, it underlines the change from an immigrant to a citizen and from a married daughter to a mother. Accentuated by the renunciation of a previous nationality, acquiring citizenship is a critical threshold to legally terminate the formal relationship with the country of origin and unfold the other formal relationship with the country of residence. However, this transition is not as neat and lineal as the legislation implies. The insight of transnationalism reminds us that the contact immigrants have with their family in the originating country remains, and the concept of *relational nationality* informs us that there is also a possibility of developing

identification with the residing country because of private relationships derived from immigrant women's multiple roles. As the private relationships and the embedded interests may be in conflict with each other, the dual identifications are constantly in tension and immigrant women are caught in between two senses of belonging. Thus, *liminality* is borrowed to underline the unsettled infusion and tension of the in-between identity, which is embodied by Korean and Chinese women's 'neither here nor there' and 'here and there' emotive complex. The in-betweenness defies the dominant conception that identities are fixed and united; it also defies the conception that ambiguous and situational identities are inauthentic or even fake.

After conceptualising in-between identity, I will now turn to explain how the identification with the country of residence develops. This is aided by employing an instrumentalist approach to analyse identity.

Category

Assigning immigrants to conceptual *categories* rather than perceiving them as fixed members of bounded national *groups* helps to underline the commonality and difference of their identification experiences. It also helps to conceive the interaction not only between immigrants and the host society, but also between the internal division of immigrants (Chinese, Southeast Asian, Overseas Chinese) and the internal division of the host society (so-called Four Ethnic Groups).

This approach – observing and analysing what people *do with* category rather than what people are of category - is advocated by Roger Brubaker in his book *Ethnicity without Group* (Brubaker 2004). He develops it after reviewing the use of the identity concept, the tendency to prioritise the collective over individuals, and the application of the cognitive approach in identity studies. Alerted by the tendency that studies of ethnic relationships tend to be drawn towards *conflict between groups*, Brubaker criticises that

the *groupist* perspective externally reifies the boundary between groups and internally essentialises members of the given group. He defines and critiques on ‘*groupism*’ as:

‘[T]he tendency to take discrete, bounded groups as basic constituents of social life, chief protagonists of social conflicts, and fundamental units of social analysis... [T]he tendency to treat ethnic groups, nations and races as substantial entities to which interests and agency can be attributed...[T]he tendency to reify such groups as if they were internally homogenous, externally bounded groups, even unitary collective actors with common purposes... [T]he tendency to represent the social and cultural world as a multichrome mosaic of monochrome ethnic, racial or cultural blocs’. (ibid: 8)

Under such a perspective, people who share common traits are not seen as individuals who bear *similar as well as different* characteristics but members of a bigger and bounded entity. Individuals are transformed from unique persons to exemplars of a given group (ibid: 41). The *groupism* perspective hence runs the risk of ignoring the internal differences amongst group members, inflating ethnic organizations to representatives of individual members of the ethnic group, and conferring advocacy to self-declared ethnic group leaders.

However, a solution to the fallacy of groupism is not, argues Brubaker, to write off the significance of groups as social, political and economic actors. Rather, the significance it plays in the social life justifies the implementation of a more effective way to examine how individuals act and interact within the conceptually bounded group and with group membership. In Brubaker’s own words, it is to explore how people ‘do things with categories’, and he phrases it as ‘groupness’ (ibid: 13).

Brubaker's suggestion is in line with Fredrik Barth's emphasis on ethnic group *boundary maintenance* (Barth 1998: 9-16). Barth asserts that the critical focus of studies of ethnic groups is the boundary that defines the group, rather than the cultural connotation attributed to a specific ethnic group. The core argument is that ethnic groups are a form of social organisation. Ethnicity, the recognised boundary amongst ethnic categories, is an ascription the actors use to categorise themselves and by others (*ibid*: 13-14).

To sum up, I employ the groupist approach to observe and analyse what immigrant women do *with* the category, rather than what they are *of* the category. The former illuminates their agency given the structural constraints; the latter is confined to examine their tangible and intangible cultural traits. In other words, instead of seeing them as persons *of* a fixed and ascribed label, this research sees them as persons acting and interacting with the available resources, which legally and socially derive from the categories. This approach makes it epistemologically possible to perceive personal agency and category (boundary) crossing and avoids the risk of essentialising immigrants according to their nationality.

Cognitive Approach and Instrumentalism

Migration is a process involving change of life course and legal status, both of which may change one's worldview and self-understanding in relation to the collective. To study national identity *from the bottom up*, this thesis employs cognitive approach, in line with the analytical concept of category, to explore how individuals in everyday life act under structural and cultural influences. Brubaker argues that the cognitive approach sees identity as perspectives rather than entities. This approach has been implicitly used by studies which see ethnicity as an objective entity recognised by its commonality, and studies which stress individuals' subjective beliefs, perceptions, and identification

(Brubaker *et al* 2004: 31-32). The cognitive approach focuses on how individuals subjectively understand the operation of daily events, and perceive their relationship with other individuals and categories. This processing is a social interaction in which individuals act out their self-identification and react to their ascribed categorisation (ibid: 43). Therefore, the cognitive approach allows us to look at the effect of primordial sentiment and person-to-person intimacy on one's relationship with the collective. It also enables us to see how individuals subjectively perceive their political and economic standing and potential resources as defined by public policies, institutional power, and public discourse. In other words, the cognitive approach bridges impersonal structure and personal agency.

Aided by the cognitive approach, instrumentalism suggests a perspective different from birth-bounded primordialism and state-launched constructivism. It is concerned with why and how people change their identity, or their incentive of doing so (Barth 1998; Esman 1994: 10-11). Primordialism provides an insight into the formation of an identity group when the group is recognised by a common origin that is associated with birth (Geertz 1963). As primordialism is attached to birth, it is useful for conceiving the continuity of identity but weak in explaining any variation amongst group members and potential change of identity (Eller and Coughlan 1996: 46; Gleason 1983: 919). Constructivist approach, on the other hand, underlines the intentionality of the ruling power and highlights the vested interest of creating, transforming or renewing a specific identity in the process of modernisation. Also collectively known as modernist approach, constructivist approach catches the dynamics of a political action intending to achieve a definite purpose (Ichijo and Uzelac 2005: 9-13; Özkirimli 2010: 83-120). In this regard, a constructivist project can utilise primordialist discourses to strengthen the shared belief in a common origin, reinforce the *us-them* boundary and project a moral

mission or destiny⁴. Constructivism illuminates how state policies involving the distribution of resources result in identity formation and transformation.

Compared to these two approaches which concentrate on a singular identity and its subsequent political and socio-economic surrounding, instrumentalism is an embryo conceived in a multi-identity environment. Instrumentalism operates in an environment where multiple identities are present and each actively interacts with others. In line with the theorisation of Barth (1998: 9-38), Jenkins (2008: 14-15, 19-26) and Brubaker *et al* (2004: 31-41), it is a conceptualisation of how individuals of specific ethnic categories encounter the challenges posed by other ethnic identities to their worldview and how individuals counteract with a response strategy. In other words, ethnicity is subjectively self-ascribed and objectively ascribed by others, and ethnic identity is expressed and experienced in social interactions. In these social interactions, the co-existence of multiple categories means an inchoate mass of information, and individuals are offered with opportunities and confronted with constraints. It is up to the cognition of individuals to absorb and digest the information and take actions (Epstein 1978: 100). Thus, instrumentalism takes into account *changeability*.

Migration offers such a multiple-identity setting. In this setting, with their own cultural endowment and socio-economic resources, immigrants encounter the receiving state and other sub-level social categories, including ethnic categories. Their cultural heritage in the eyes of the local population conveys their *otherness* and henceforth

⁴ Instrumentalism is also known for its assertion that ethnic or national identities are seen as resources for elites to mobilise support for their competition of power, wealth, or the interest of the group they claim to represent (Esman 1994: 11; Smith 2001: 54-57). In this view, instrumentalists, for instance, Paul Brass (1991), are also labelled as *modernists* for their belief in the modernity of nations and nationalism (Özkirimli 2010: 88; Jaffrelot 2005: 24). However, in this thesis, instrumentalism is used to elucidate the cognition and practice of individuals in their everyday interaction with the host state and society, rather than the roles of elites in ethnic mobilisation.

builds up the ethnic boundary between them and the local society. At the same time, the state utilises legal and institutional assets, packaged in the immigration legislation, to eradicate their otherness and to realise the political goal of transforming *outsider* immigrants to 'standardised' nationals. Against this backdrop, immigrants mobilise their cognitive capacity to produce a response strategy.

To generate a response strategy requires an ongoing cognitive processing of personal endowment and the available resources attached to specific categories. What is being considered by immigrants is a complex of incentives, disincentives, hurdles, and rewards. It involves an assessment of personal well-being, employable capital for realising one's potential, and subjective cultural adoption. It also involves the evaluation of the objective boundary of otherness, the institutional resources and limitations, and the socio-economic structure that renders constraints and opportunities to realise one's potential. One of the potential outcomes of this processing is to cross the boundary and enter the other category, if this crossing ensures rewards. For marriage immigrant women, along their *rite of passage*, the contents of positive rewards *evolve*. They may change from a reliable livelihood for themselves, improved living standards for their parents, to a stable life with their children, and self-achievement gained from career or motherhood. They also include civility, safety, higher social status, sound governance, and access to rights and entitlement.

With the advance of life course and legal status, cognitive processing is consistently ongoing. If the cultural adjustment is sufficient, the legislation provides effective incentives whereby personal well-being is secured, and the prospect of realising one's personal potential is possible, then the boundary between immigrants and the national community can be subjectively crossed, and then a sense of national belonging can emerge. In other words, immigrants may acquire a new identity with the

residing country and see themselves members of the national community. Their cognitive system regarding themselves in relation to the host nation will have been transformed to accommodate this new sense of belonging⁵ (Esman 1994: 15). From the outset, it is an 'identity change'. The change is accompanied by a worldview through which the inchoate mass of information can be arranged and explained in a *meaningful* order. By this newly established order, interest, conflict, cooperation, and opportunity within a category and amongst the categories can be perceived at an individual, organisational and institutional level.

It must be stressed that identity change is just *one of* the potential outcomes. The challenge may be beyond the cognitive capacity of the individuals. The barrier of entering the desired category may be difficult to surmount (particularly when it is phenotypic). Or the incentives and potential rewards are not strong enough to stimulate any counter-action. It must also be stressed that the cognitive processing is not *lineal*. It is a *holistic* re-examination of personal endowments and external resources with an open ending. Immigrants may or may not acquire a new national identity with the country of residence, and there are a range of potential scenarios between both outcomes. In other words, there are different paths leading to acquiring a new identity.

Acquiring a new identity does not necessarily negate the previous identity. However, it does not mean the previous identity remains intact and does not undergo challenges and re-evaluation. In the case of marriage immigrant women, the previous national identity is a combination of the primordial attachment mediated by family ties, the socialisation received at home and the state's constructivist schooling. Primordial

⁵ It goes without saying that identity transformation resulting from such a cognitive reorganisation may also occur at other levels, between other categories divided by gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and life course stage.

attachments co-exist as well as contradict instrumental reasoning during the cognitive processing (Jenkins 2008: 48; Esman 1994: 14). ‘Before’ and ‘after’ migration are not two *discrete* components of the migration experience. On the contrary, as the re-evaluation of personal assets and available resources goes on, the previous identity provides support to undergo the cognitive evolution. The two identities may co-exist or contradict with each other at the same time, depending on the underlined context. As the concept of *liminality* elucidates, the underlined property of the dual identity is more likely to result in tension and infusion because of the competition between the multiple roles.

Not only acknowledging the duality but also seeing it as the defining feature of the identity change, I propose to conceptualise the dual identity as an *in-between* identity. Recognising only the *singular* allegiance to one country and overlooking the in-betweenness is a political action that defies reality. In the following section, I will discuss the variables that contribute to the development of the in-between identity.

2.3.2 Three Clusters of Interactive Variables

Utilising the cocenpt of *relational nationality* and extracted from the above-examined literature (see 2.2.2), my exploration of the national identity of immigrant women is set out in a way that considers holistically their multiple roles and connections with both countries. Knop’s examination of nationality highlights the impact of legal provisions on the lives of immigrant women. This is reflected by the immigrant movement in Taiwan placing citizenship at the centre of their entitlement claims. Her application of *relational nationality* to national identity illuminates the correlation between a formal membership and a self-identification. Findings of the significance of motherhood in social reproduction (Yuh 2002, Fan 2007, Lee Mei-hsian 2009) echoes Yuval-Davis and Anthias’s argument (1989: 6-9) that women are an integral part of nation-building

because women are the biological reproducers, cultural transmitters and boundary markers. Korean women's experience in using both languages that is 'not fully American yet rusty in Korean' is an expression of their in-between positioning. In sum, legal constraints, language and motherhood underline immigrant women's interaction with the state, society and family in the role of daughters, wives, mothers, and citizens.

Therefore, I propose three interactive clusters of variables that are conducive for the in-between identity. They are the perception of the impact of citizenship legislation, the facility of the Chinese language, and the performing of motherhood duties. The first variable concentrates on the state's omnipresent influence on the well-being of immigrants. The second variable focuses on communication between the society, family and the immigrants. The third variable underlines the reproduction capacity of immigrant women and its overwhelming symbolic significance in their self-understanding and relationship with family members. Each variable stresses an aspect of the interplay of self-identification and external categorisation. They are the relationship with the state, the society, and the family with reference to nationality, ethnicity and gender.

Perception of the Impact of Citizenship Legislation

At the state level, citizenship legislation regulates who can be accepted as *us*-members under what kind of criteria and what kind of substantial rights they are entitled to. As the embodiment of the *governmentality* (Inda 2005), it authorises the state to control the in-flow of immigrant outsiders and regulate their conduct in order to enhance the security and prosperity of the host society and distribute resources amongst the immigrants. Roger Smith (2004) offers a useful framework to look at the impact of legislation on identification. Smith argues that political science has not sufficiently studied how national identity is formed and transformed *in process* that is entailed in

institutions and policies. He deduces a framework comprising three essential components that inspire people to identify with a political community. They are: *economic* elements that offer material benefits, *political* elements that provide personal protection and a share in the collective power, and *ethnic* elements that accredit the intrinsic property of either subjective identification or objective categorisation (ibid: 309).

Following Smith's framework, I will examine how citizenship legislation is perceived as affecting an immigrant's pursuit of betterment for herself and her significant family members. On the political account, I will trace how the legislation of citizenship eligibility evolves. Brubaker points out that citizenship is inclusive as well exclusive (2004: 141). It is exclusive because the state grants the final reward by which immigrants enjoy equal access to political, economic and social rights. It is also exclusive because immigrants will not be entitled to such access until they pass the state's scrutiny to be accepted as national members. Therefore, my examination focuses on whether immigrants perceive the legislation as embracing or excluding. Considering that motherhood is one of the two pillars of the citizenship legislation, I will also look at whether citizenship empowers the immigrant-turned citizens to participate in public affairs, and how this empowerment is related to motherhood. On the ethnic account, immigrants embody the natural and epistemological *otherness* in the receiving society. I will find out how the ethnic profiling imposed by the host society constrains the opportunity and resources available to them, and how they interpret and react to this constraint at home and outside the family.

The Facility of the Chinese Language

At the society level, language is one of the most tangible boundary markers distinguishing locals and immigrants. Not only does it verbalise the foreignness of

Southeast Asian immigrants but also creates distance between locals and Chinese immigrants because of accents. Linguistic studies of cross-cultural couples inform that successful second-language (L2) learning - the use of a language that does not obviously belong to the speaker - involves 'self-translation' of identity or 'discursive assimilation' to a new linguistic and cultural community (Piller 2002: 11). Focusing on motherhood and making the Chinese language ability as a legal requirement for naturalisation, the state has a vested interest in promoting immigrant women's acculturation in terms of language proficiency so as to assure the quality of the future citizens (their children). Thus, I will examine how the facility of the Chinese language affects immigrant women's sense of inclusion, and how the linguistic familiarity affects employment opportunity and the mother-child relationship.

Performing Motherhood Duties

At the family level, giving birth generates a real link with Taiwan, and establishing one's own family further strengthens the sense of rootedness in Taiwan. Becoming a mother overcomes the sense of loneliness and isolation. Fulfilling the role of motherhood is a source of personal satisfaction, or achieving a 'moral career', as Liamputtong characterises (2006). It also transforms their relationship with their parents in the country of origin. Therefore, I will explore how they prioritise their motherly duty over their daughterly duty, and how they perceive Taiwan as their own home.

There are several reasons why I propose to make motherhood as an independent variable. First of all, statistics shows that the majority of immigrant women experience motherhood in Taiwan (see 2.2.1). That means motherhood is a common experience. Secondly, motherhood is a field of state intervention in the name of nation-building. Women are biological reproducers of the collective as well as boundaries of ethnic or national groups. Women participate centrally in the ideological reproduction of the

collective and as transmitters of its culture (Yuval-Davis and Anthias 1989: 7). Thus motherhood is seen by the state as an auxiliary instrument to forge national identity. Billig argues that reproduction is the sole purpose of the nationalism campaign because the national community is a moral existence. To maintain and sustain the community is to safeguard the moral community (2009: 4). It has to be done in a *mundane* way so that members of the national community will take it for granted. The overwhelming belief that immigrant women degrade the quality of the island nation is a case in point. Thus reproduction is an example of *banal nationalism* (*ibid*: 6). In this sense, motherhood is not only a private relationship but also a site where the state authority, public myth and private relationship overlaps. Conflict of identity may arise from this overlapped site as seen in the above-mentioned Korean women's experiences (Yuh 2002). Thirdly, the overlapping of the public and the private in motherhood (Prokhovnik 1998) may also makes motherhood a source of agency. In 'political motherhood', Webner (1999) argues that women in an encompassing relationship are responsible for the family and the political community in its entirety. In this delineation, a mechanism exists to connect motherhood with citizenship in the sense of participating in public affairs. This participation may further transform the primordial link with Taiwan (giving birth and growing a sense of rootedness) into a civic sense of belonging. On the other hand, the notion and ethic of care (Liamputtong 2006) transcends the public-private divide and leads to duty-based citizenship (Lister 2002). Lastly, as analysed above, citizenship legislation and the use of Chinese language intersects in motherhood. Based on these critical reasons, motherhood is pivotal to understand how the three variables interconnect and interact. To highlight the difference made by motherhood, my interviewees also include women who did not become mothers in Taiwan. They are either re-married women whose children remain in China, the Philippines and Indonesia, or women who were willing but yet to establish their family in Taiwan. Their

experiences are valuable comparison with which to show whether and how the other two variables lead to an in-between identity.

It is necessary to emphasise that the distinction between the three aspects (state, society, family) is mainly for analytical clearance. In fact, each variable includes sub-level factors and the reference to the state, society and family can be observed within each variable. For instance, the legislation sees motherhood as part of the foundation to grant immigrant women residency. The legislation also affects the scope of social contact, involvement of social networks, and the prospect of employment. The language facility affects the fulfilment of motherhood and the eligibility for naturalisation. The childrearing capacity is a population and education policy target and affects immigrants' legal rights, eligibility to entitlement and exposure to formal institutions. The division of each variable lays out distinctive threads of investigation. However, it is the *interconnection* between each variable and the combination of the whole experiences that conveys the complex of immigrant's becoming.

Gender is the indispensable concept that interconnects these clusters of variables. In this thesis, gender is viewed as a social institution (Martin 2004) as well as an individual's performativity (Butler 1990, 1993, 1997, cited by Oromo 2007). The former argues that gender is not biological or personal but 'a property of the collectivities, institutions, and historical processes' (Connell 1987:139, cited by Martin 2004: 1259). The latter also asserts that gender is not a biological given but a 'consequence of the enactment of social norms' (Oromo 2007: 654). I employ the former to highlight that citizenship legislation centralises immigrant women's marriage and motherhood as the foundation of their legal rights. It is also embedded in the requirement of naturalisation which follows the tradition of requiring foreign wives to renounce their former nationality. I utilise the latter to underline that immigrant women

internalise the gender norms and perform these norms in their commitment to live with husband and care for their children and parents.

How do these three variables lead to an in-between identity? Using a cognitive approach to shed light on individual agency under the structural constraint, my hypotheses are as follows:

The more the citizenship legislation is perceived as inclusive and beneficial, the more likely it will induce identification with Taiwan, while the primordial ties sustain the identification with the originating country;

The higher proficiency of Chinese language, the more likely it will induce identification with Taiwan, but it is conditioned by accent;

The stronger the sense of fulfilling motherhood, the more likely it will induce identification with Taiwan, but it is constrained by husband's support and daughterly duties towards parents in the originating countries.

2.4 Research Methods and Fieldwork

This thesis seeks to explore the daily lives of immigrant women for correlations between self-identification and the three independent variables. This is inspired by Yuh's '*way, way, way down below*' perspective she adopts to examine the resistance in the private life of Korean wives (Yuh 2002: 7), and Rosaldo's advocacy of conducting research in the *vernacular* notions of the cultural citizenship of Latino immigrants in a subordinate social position (Rosaldo 1999: 260). This is also following Hobsbawm's call that nationalism, being constructed from *above*, 'cannot be understood unless also analysed from below, that is in terms of the assumptions, hopes, needs, longings and interests of ordinary people, which are not necessarily national and still less nationalistic' (Hobsbawm 1990: 10).

The following section explains the process of categorising immigrant women and outlines how the fieldwork was performed and the subsequent data was collected.

2.4.1 Categorising Marriage Immigrant Women

The settlement of marriage immigrant women has diversified the ethnic landscape of the island state. In the first instance, it seems logical (*natural*) to divide the immigrants into two blocs – Chinese and Southeast Asians – as they have been categorised by media and governmental reports. However, the convenience of bracketing all Southeast Asians into one group is gained at the expense of missing the ethnographic complexities of their identification experiences. In addition to obscuring the obvious differences between women of different nationalities, this also overlooks the fact that there are women of Chinese ethnicity migrating from Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Cambodia and Myanmar. The Chinese ethnicity locates them in a specific political, socio-economic and cultural positioning defined by the emergence of Chinese nationalism, and the split of the two Chinas, the anti-colonial independence movement and the subsequent nation-building strategies of their residing country (Wang Gungwu 2001: 63-64; 73-86). As a result, ethnic Chinese women are *qualitatively distinctive* from women from the same countries who are not ethnically Chinese. Moreover, within Taiwan's legal system, they may be differentiated if they are able to prove inheriting ROC nationality and will be applied to by a set of specialised legislation for *returned* Overseas Chinese (see Chapter 3 and 4).

Therefore, to be sensitive to the ethnic differences and social complexities, I adopt the concept of '*groupness*' as discussed above and divide marriage immigrant women into three categories: Chinese, Southeast Asian, and Overseas Chinese. The Southeast Asian category includes only Filipino and Vietnamese immigrants. The Overseas Chinese category includes only Indonesian Chinese. Although I came across six

Vietnamese Chinese in my fieldwork, they are not included in the Overseas Chinese category because of their differences to Indonesian Chinese. Although both have the experience of being treated as ethnic others by the state and mainstream society, Vietnamese Chinese did not show the same strong home-going aspirations as some Indonesian Chinese did. Over the past decade, in Vietnam there was no large-scale ethnic conflict such as the May 1998 riot in Jakarta, which saw ethnic Chinese taking refuge outside of the country. Given that these are the significant characteristics of the migration of Indonesian Chinese to Taiwan, Vietnamese Chinese are retained within the Southeast Asian category. However, individual Vietnamese Chinese will be mentioned in the relevant contexts, and the differences between the Vietnamese Chinese and Indonesian Chinese will be discussed when necessary.

2.4.2 Fieldwork: Semi-Structured Interviews, Participant Observations

This research is grounded on the findings of intensive fieldwork conducted from March-June 2009 and January-February 2010 throughout Taiwan. The main method used was semi-structured interview. The sampling method used is purposeful sampling and snowballing. The majority of the interviews were one-to-one interviews. Due to the interviewees' range of availability, there were also twelve group interviews, and the number of participants ranged from two to four. In addition, participant observations were conducted of Chinese language classes in Taipei and Kaohsiung, and of a Bible Study Group in Keelung. In total, 98 immigrant women were interviewed (Table 2.1).

Interviews usually took one to two hours. After explaining the scope of the research and the measures taken to protect personal identity and privacy, interviews commenced with the collection of key pieces of personal-attribute data (see Appendix A for details). Loss of information was occasionally experienced when interviewees declined to disclose. Interviews were audio recorded after express consent was sought and these recordings

were transcribed after all fieldwork was complete. Three interviewees declined to be recorded hence written notes were taken. Transcripts in English or Chinese were sent to interviewees if they had supplied postal addresses or email accounts. After the completion of fieldwork, return courtesy visits were made to some interviewees who remained in the same job or residences. Contact was maintained with some Chinese, Vietnamese and Indonesian interviewees via email or by post.

Table 2.1 Categories of Interviewees (unit: person)

Category	Number	Detail			
Chinese	39	1 st marriage	26	2 nd marriage	13
Southeast Asian	39	Vietnamese	26	Philippine	13
Overseas Chinese	20	Indonesian Chinese	20		
Total	98				

Source: the author.

1. Languages for Interviewing

Interviews were conducted in English with Filipino immigrants, as they requested, and Mandarin with immigrants of all other nationalities. This is a demonstration of the high proficiency in the Chinese language by the Southeast Asian interviewees. Filipino interviewees freely inserted Mandarin and Taiwanese dialect words and phrases. Owing to my inability to speak Tagalog, Visaya (spoken in Cebu), Vietnamese and Indonesian languages, and there was no funding to employ interpreters, besides English, Mandarin was therefore the only communication tool available with which to facilitate the interviews. Interviewing in Mandarin rather than in the immigrants' own languages no

doubt restricted the depth and quantity of the narration. This is an acknowledged restriction on the fieldwork findings.

2. Naming of Interviewees

All of the interviewees (including their husbands) were given pseudonyms for the purpose of protecting their privacy and delineating research findings. Different naming methods were used for interviewees of different nationalities. For Chinese interviewees, the Hanyu Pinyin system was used together with the convention of placing surnames in front of given names and combining the given names (two characters) in one word. Filipino interviewees were given English names because of their preference for speaking English. For Vietnamese interviewees, Vietnamese spelling was used with or without the gender signifier '*Thi*' to reflect the latest trend of omitting the indicator. Most of the Indonesian Chinese interviewees were given Chinese names pronounced in the Hokkien (Fujian), Teowchew (Chaozhou), Hakka or Cantonese dialects. This was decided upon their language habit in Indonesia. The practice used in Southeast Asia where the surname is placed first and the two characters of the given name are spelled as two separate words was followed. Some younger interviewees were given Indonesian names if they confirmed that their parents adopted Indonesian names or they were introduced to me by their Indonesian names. This is to highlight their hybrid Indonesian-Chinese identity. The names of Taiwanese husbands were spelled in accordance with Wide-Giles system.

3. Locality and Recruitment Channels

Metropolitan Taipei area (Taipei City and New Taipei City) is a hub for female marriage migration. In total, this area accommodates 22.4 percent of the entire population of marriage immigrant women in Taiwan (MoI 2011a, see also Appendix B

for details). Taking into account this geographical concentration, 32 Chinese, 9 Vietnamese, 1 Filipino and 8 Indonesian Chinese women were interviewed in this area. I met Vietnamese and Indonesian interviewees mainly at the evening Mandarin classes and a church in Keelung.

The main recruitment channels of Chinese interviewees were via personal referrals, a Bible Study Group in Keelung, and two Taipei-based placement agencies. Introduced by 71-year-old Granny Yang, I got to know older women in their 60s whose husbands are Mainlanders on a military pension. The contact with two placement agencies led me to get to know other women in their 40s and 50s who were actively seeking employment. Helped by 29-year-old Gong Pingying, I met younger women who became mothers in Taiwan. Joining a Bible study group allowed me to join a group of young Chinese mothers in their late 20s and late 30s, most of whom were converted to Christianity after migrating to Taiwan. By participating in their activities, I was able to see the growth of their networking within and beyond the church connections and their conscious differentiation of themselves from Chinese ‘newcomers’.

Wan’s spatial analysis of the location of Southeast Asian immigrant women between 1987 and 2006 shows that a higher demand of transnational marriage occurs in places where farming is the dominant industry (Wan 2006). Thus, there is a class dimension in locality, in terms of their husband’s occupation, the socio-economic status of their in-laws, and the available employment for the immigrants themselves. To be sensitive to the urban-rural movement they might have experienced while moving across the state border, interviews were also conducted in Yunlin and Kaohsiung, as well as at seaside villages in Chinshan and Yilan, and agricultural villages in Nantou and Taichung. Interviewees were introduced to me by their teacher, in-law, neighbours, a placement agency, and local law enforcement personnel. The locations of a broker and

a foreign missionary broadened the geographical reach of this research to Penghu and Pingtung where 14 Indonesian Chinese and 11 Filipino immigrants were interviewed.

4. Social Interaction at Home and Beyond

To explore how immigrant women interacted with family members and people beyond the family domain in their daily living, interviews took place in different social settings. When interviews were conducted at home, workplace and in the classroom, interactions between interviewees and their in-laws, children, husbands, neighbours, friends, customers, colleagues, teachers or fellow immigrants were observed.

In a number of cases, parents-in-law were present, but they were not concerned about the interview. Children were interested to hear about their mothers' narratives and their reaction suggested that they had been told about some parts of the stories before. Husbands, including two with a record of wife-beating, were at ease with my interest in their wives' life. Most left the venue after greeting me. Phạm Thi Phuong's husband specifically wanted to leave me alone to talk to his wife. (I later learnt from Phuong's sister-in-law that she had left home twice before.) Some husbands actively participated in the interview to explain questions to their wives, supplement their wives' replies, and express their own views. An exception was Auntie Shi's elderly Mainlander husband. They lived in the military dormitory for elderly discharged servicemen and some of their neighbours were also cross-strait couples. After I left, he scolded his wife and showed disapproval of other Chinese wives for participating in interviews. He suspected that I was a journalist and that my main concern was their opinions about Taiwan-China relationship and the prospect of war.

Interactions between immigrants and their surroundings reveal the prevalence of discrimination. I met Võ Thi Ngọc Diệp at an evening class and often accompanied her

at her fruit stall before the class started. Ngọc Diệp's language ability was gained also through running her business, which was an embodiment of globalisation. Her home-made Vietnamese snacks were sold alongside local produce and imported highly priced fruit from the US, Canada and New Zealand. Ngọc Diệp's landlady did not conceal her contempt towards Ngọc Diệp. After seeing me giving my UK mailing address to Ngọc Diệp (her Christmas card to me had gone missing), the landlady asked 'Does she know how to write?' The landlady's presumption is an example of equating the inability of Chinese language to *total illiteracy* and lack of education.

5. State-Society Relationship in Everyday Life

Publicly-funded language courses establish an institutional contact between the state and immigrants. Thus, regular participant observation was conducted at evening Chinese language classes at two Taipei-based primary schools over three months (a total of 20 sessions), in addition to three sessions at Kaohsiung-based primary schools. In Taipei, female teachers nearing retirement age acted as a motherly figure and a go-between for immigrants and in-laws/husbands. They gave advice on marriage, property inheritance, and childrearing during private conversations. Being trusted and respected by both sides, they conveyed the expectations of in-laws/husbands and reported back the immigrant wives' responses. Therefore, the classroom served as the venue for two kinds of acculturation. On the one hand, following the textbooks designed for school pupils, the teachers transmitted to their adult students knowledge deemed necessary for *children aged between seven and twelve*. On the other hand, their suggestions on how to be a good wife and a capable mother were also delivered, whereby the gender norms were interpreted and reinforced.

However, three other classes in Kaohsiung taught by male and female teachers in their 30s did not have strong gender implications. These teachers interacted with their

adult students more or less as equals because of the similarity in age and their teaching was more closely following the given curriculum. It was probably also because of the presence of voluntary teaching assistants, who were students at a nearby college, and who were studying the teaching of the Chinese language to non-native speakers.

To further understand the formation of public discourse and the social pressures deriving from it, I also interviewed officials, law enforcement agents, teachers, a political party manager, social organisation staff members, social workers, a borough head (*lizhang*), a marriage broker, placement agency owners and church clergy. They also assisted with introductions to interviewees. This gave me insight to how these actors interpret the impact of marriage immigration. Their interaction forms a tightly knitted web along which the agents of the state (law enforcement agents, teachers, officials) are aided as well as challenged by the social actors (broker, agency owners, church, social organisations, social workers) for accommodating, disciplining, and integrating immigrant women.

2.5 Summary

In this chapter it is proposed that marriage immigrant women develop an *in-between* identity after they reside in the host country for a period of time. It is a transition affected by their perception of the citizenship legislation, their facility of the Chinese language and their fulfilment of motherhood duties. This is a process that simultaneously takes place with the change of their legal status and life course. During the process, acquiring citizenship and performing motherhood have the most enduring impact on the transformation of the national identity. The in-between identity is understood as developing a self-identification with the receiving country whilst maintaining the identity with the originating country. However, it is not simply *dual* identity with both countries. Rather, it is the infusion, tension and ambiguity of two

identities. The insights of transnationalism and *rite of passage* conceptualise the co-existence of two identities and the unsettled ambiguity of an in-between identity. Instrumentalism informs identification with Taiwan and it is similar to a beneficial club membership. On the other hand, as relational nationality suggests, the primordial attachment with the originating country is sustained. A *groupness* approach is used to analyse the interaction between the categories of the host society and immigrants, and to investigate how each category is reinforced in the evolution of Taiwan's national identity and the formation of marriage immigration. Finally, the subtle transition to an in-between identity is explained by the cognitive approach which informs their perceptions of self-understanding in relation to Taiwan and the originating country.

CHAPTER 3: WOMEN WHO MIGRATE TO MARRY AND SETTLE: THE ARRIVAL OF CHINESE, SOUTHEAST ASIAN AND OVERSEAS CHINESE WIVES

In this chapter, I will trace the successive waves of marriage migration from Southeast Asia and China and examine how their ‘foreignness’ and presumed inferiority are appropriated and incorporated into Taiwan’s nation-building efforts. Taiwan is no stranger to female marriage migration. In the 1960s and 1970s there were women in Taiwan marrying US servicemen who became part of the ‘military bride migration’ to the US⁶. Similar to their Korean counterparts who initiated a process of family chain migration to the US (Yuh 2002: 4; 164-165), Taiwanese wives in the US were also family migration sponsors (interview with Mr. Wang, 16/03/09, Panchiao). This bygone era is captured by the comment of an Indonesian Chinese matchmaker: ‘Don’t they (Taiwanese) remember just about two or three decades ago when *every Taiwanese girl dreamt about marrying an American soldier?!*’ (Hsia 1997: 10, my emphasis added).

Then, the poverty-stricken Taiwan was known as *Free China* and internationally referred to as *Taiwan, Republic of China* (Harrison 2006: 11-12). In the 1980s and 1990s, Taiwan’s position in marriage migration has reversed. The economic growth and social transformation by industrialisation and urbanisation have turned Taiwan, together with Hong Kong, South Korea and Japan, into a destination for Southeast Asian women’s marriage migration. Around the same time, another similar wave of human

⁶ Some of the marriages might be between Taiwanese bar girls and US servicemen as Taiwan was one of the ‘R & R’ (‘Rest and Relaxation’ or ‘Rest and Recreation’) destinations for US troops during the Vietnam War (Farris 2004: 346; Young 2007: 20). It is estimated that between 1965 and 1975 the total number of US servicemen who holidayed in Taiwan exceeded 200,000 and the transaction between them and the local sex workers was estimated to be US\$1 billion (Chin 2004: 23). The desire to marry an American soldier is depicted by Wang Chen-he in his novel ‘*Rose Rose I Love You*’ (Wang 1998; translated by Howard Goldblatt; Yee 2001: 95-96).

movement was taking place over the Taiwan Strait. Immigration from a variety of origins has complicated the Taiwan's ethnic landscape and has become intertwined with Taiwan's ongoing nation-building project.

3.1 Marrying Someone from Afar: Marriage Immigrant Women from China and Southeast Asia

3.1.1 Earlier Waves: 'Unknown' Overseas Chinese from Indonesia

The earlier waves of marriage migration occurred in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Via the transnational links between Taiwan and the Chinese community in Indonesia, Indonesian Chinese women were introduced to marry men in Taiwan (Yang and Lan 2006: 13; Hsia 1997: 40). Some of these women, including those seeking a second marriage, married discharged Mainlander servicemen (interviews with Liew Bak Moi, 09/03/09, Taichung, and Le Fen Fen, 30/01/10, Taipei), who were amongst the refugees and evacuees fleeing from China to Taiwan along with the defeated KMT government under Chiang Kai-Shek's leadership. In order to preserve military capacity, reduce the expense of providing welfare to military families and prevent PRC penetration conducted by female agents, in 1952 the Republic of China government passed a law restricting the right of military personnel to get married (Li 1998: 53-55). The restriction, known as the 'marriage ban', was moderated in 1959 but was not abolished until 1974 (Chen Bo-yu 2007: 71). The marriage ban delayed their marriage, and low military salaries restricted their marriage options to those women in the mid to low-level strata of society (Chen Ku-ping 2011: 109-115). In light of this situation, the marriage opportunities from overseas are likely to have become appealing, and were no doubt welcomed as an extra channel for finding a wife. However, no literature was found to shed light on how the transnational links were operating to facilitate such marriages.

The practice of seeking marriage with Indonesian Chinese women was later adopted by rural Hakka villages via professional marriage brokering. Hsia's study of marriage between local men and Indonesian Chinese women in Meinung Township, a Hakka settlement, in the early 1990s (1997: 7, 10, 16, 37, 53, 55-60) epitomises the social phenomenon known as 'marriage squeeze' (Akers 1967). That is, when women in Taiwan were seeking higher education, economic independence, personal autonomy and later marriage (Farris 2004: 358-364; Chen 2000: 43-53, 70-83; Lee 2004:116; Thornton *et al.* 1994: 149-224), women as marital partners were in short supply. As a result, men encountered difficulties in finding suitable wives. Hakka women in West Kalimantan as an external source were welcomed because of their cultural proximity.

Nowadays perceived as 'foreign brides', Indonesian Chinese wives at that time were known as Overseas Chinese *returnees*. Amongst them, the marriage and settlement of Hakka woman attracted more consistent attention. Hsia's study formulated that their marriage was an intra-marriage between two Hakka communities who are marginalised by other ethnic communities who are socio-economically more advantaged (Hsia 1997: 43-60). This argument was maintained by later studies, the underlying interest of which is to reinforce a Taiwanese-Hakka 'ethnic' identity (Hsieh 2005; Hsu 2007). However, these arguments contain a fallacy that Indonesian Hakka are not perceived by Chinese community in Indonesia as an *ethnic* group (Hsiao and Lim 2007) and the Indonesian Hakka in Taiwan prioritise the more inclusive 'Chinese' identity over a Hakka identity (Yang and Lan 2006: 16). Most importantly, little is known about whether or not Indonesian Hakka women were also looking out for Hakka men, and whether they view such a marriage as an ethnic union.

3.1.2 Second Wave: Tying the Knot across the Taiwan Strait

Since the late 1980s when contact between Taiwan and China resumed, marriages across the Taiwan Strait have become more common (Chen Kuan-chen 1994: 1). The contact between Chinese people and their relatives abroad, including those in Taiwan, was encouraged by Beijing as a way of attracting investment from abroad (Oxford 2005: 25-26). On the Taiwanese side, four months after Martial Law was lifted in July 1987, the government eased a nearly forty-year ban on travel to China, followed by the opening of Taiwan to selected Chinese visitors in 1990.

Mainlanders (waishengren), mostly men at old age, were the first batch of visitors permitted to travel to China. Returning to their mainland hometowns, some *waishengren* found wives, who could be their carers in later life (Chao 2003). Their Chinese wives were mostly divorcees and widows (Chao 2005a). Since then, the number of the cross-strait couples has boomed as contacts between Taiwan and China rapidly expanded and professional brokering agencies emerged (but outlawed in August 2009). With more Taiwanese people investing, studying, working, travelling and forging expatriate communities in China, the ratio of younger and better-off couples marrying on the basis of affection has risen (Friedman 2010: 76-77). Online social networking sites have become an effective platform with which to start a relationship (Hsia 2005a: 65-71; interviews with An Qilan and Ma Xinting, 23/03/09, Taipei). Also diversified are the socio-economic backgrounds of the wives and husbands (King 2007). As the number of cross-strait marriages has increased to include non-Mainlander segments of the Taiwanese community (Chu and Liu 2004), unions between Mainlander veterans and second-marriage Chinese women now only represents one tenth of the total number of cross-strait couples (Chao 2004b: 66).

A study employing spatial analysis of marriage immigrant women's locations between 1987 and 2006 found that Chinese immigration was originally concentrated in

northern Taiwan, but gradually spread to the south and east. This illustrates the changing nature of cross-strait marriages and reveals that demand later appeared in the non-Mainlander segments. However, the incidence of such marriages was lower in places where there was a high degree support for *pan-green* forces (Wan 2006). This seems to echo a political prescription which sees Chinese immigrants as *New Mainlanders* (*xin washengren*) (Song 2004: 113) and as such presumes their political inclination.

3.1.3 Third Wave: Where There Is Investment, There Is Marriage (And Brokering Opportunities)

Just as Taiwan's contacts with China opened doors for marriage, so did Taiwan's economic interaction with some Southeast Asian countries. Beginning in the late 1980s, Taiwanese businesses began to invest and migrate to a number of stabilised Southeast Asian countries (Ku 2006). In 1992, by promulgating *the Employment Services Act*, the government formally authorised the importation of Southeast Asian labour. In 1994, as part of Taiwan's pragmatic diplomacy towards Southeast Asian states (Leifer 2001), the government launched a policy that encouraged business to '*Go South*' and participate in regional economic integration, strengthen economic relationships with Southeast Asian countries, divert investment from China to Southeast Asia and explore new markets in the Indochinese Peninsula (Wu 1995: 63). Importing a relatively cheaper workforce for Taiwan's labour-intensive industries and infrastructure projects was a component of this policy (Kung 2005: 28; Lee 2003: 23). After the government liberalised foreign currency control, between 1986 and 1991 Taiwan's out-bound investment boomed in Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines. In 1994, Taiwan's investment in Southeast Asia amounted to US\$15 billion (Wu 1995: 64), and Vietnam and the Philippines were amongst those that received soft loans from Taiwan (Hughes 1997: 132).

The outflow of Taiwan's investment is correlated with the emergence of *brokered* transnational marriage (Ko and Chang 2005: 4; Wang Hong-zen 2001). In the mid 1980s, this was limited to marriages between Taiwanese men and Thai and Filipino women. After 1991, the number of marriages with Indonesian Chinese women increased. As trade with Cambodia began to open, Taiwanese men started to seek Cambodian wives (Hsia 1997: 40). In 1991, Taiwan became the leading investor in Vietnam (Leifer 2001: 181), and the number of Taiwanese-Vietnamese marriages soared. In 1996, Vietnamese women marrying Taiwanese men outnumbered their Indonesian counterparts, and women from Vietnam remain the largest group of foreign wives (Chang 2007: 73; Lee 2003: 219; BOCA 2011). It is estimated that a quarter of these Vietnamese women are of Chinese ancestry (Wang Hong-zen 2001: 110). The correlation between investment and transnational marriage is attributed to the expansion of Taiwanese business networking in the invested countries and the similar *modus operandi* of marriage and contract labour brokering industries (Wang Hong-zen 2001: 115). The above-mentioned spatial analysis of marriage immigration found that demand for marriage with Southeast Asian women appeared in places where farming was the main livelihood (Wan 2006), and that the majority of their Taiwanese husbands are Taiwanese-speaking Hoklo (Wang Hong-zen 2001: 112).

Another source country of women entering Taiwan for the purposes of marriage is Ukraine. Targeting the so-called *IT New Rich* market located in the Hsinchu Science Park, a marriage brokering agency was founded in 2003 and was congratulated by the Hsinchu City Mayor for providing another option to the science park's bachelors. Media coverage revealed that the agency ran a database of 3,500 women, all of whom had received tertiary education, spoke fluent English, and had stable jobs. Taiwanese clients were high flyers (Wu Huei-lin 2004). As official statistics do not distinguish Ukrainians

from immigrant women of other nationalities, it is difficult to ascertain their marginal numbers. In addition to marriage with Ukrainian women, there is a sinister undercurrent of marriages with *Caucasian* women: women from Uzbekistan were ‘purchased’ in order to serve as surrogate mothers (Lih Pao, 24/05/10; TVSB 08/09/10). What is common between the Ukrainian and Uzbek streams is that the *imagined* physical appearance of their children features strongly in the media coverage. In spite of being fathered by Taiwanese men, they are unanimously depicted as loveable ‘*blond-haired and blue-eyed western dolls*’ (*ibid*). Conceptualising them as *foreign* is a strong contrast to addressing children born to Chinese and Southeast Asian mothers as *local*, or ‘*New Children of Taiwan*’.

3.1.4 Feminised Marriage Immigration

Statistics reveal that Taiwan is a recipient of female marriage migration and marriage with male ROC citizens is the chief channel by which such women acquire citizenship⁷. By 2010, the total number of Chinese marriage immigrant women who applied to reside in Taiwan amounted to 272,670 (Table 3.1), whereas the total number of foreign marriage immigrant women who resided in Taiwan amounted to 134,727 (Table 3.2) (NIA 2011a). Ninety-five percent of these women originate from Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Thailand and Cambodia (Table 3.3) (NIA 2011a). This means that there are a total of 399,552 women from China and five Southeast Asian countries who have adopted Taiwan as their home. A total of 84,205 Chinese women acquired ROC citizenship (NIA 2011a), whereas the number of new citizens of Southeast Asia

⁷ Other causes are voluntary naturalisation, either parent being an ROC citizen, being born in the ROC, conjunction with parent’s naturalisation, adoption, acknowledgement, domicile in the ROC for over ten years, and having distinguished service to the ROC.

amounted to 88,971 (MoI 2011a). Altogether, by 2010, there were 173,176 Chinese and Southeast Asian women who had become ROC citizens. They represent 1.72 percent of the total population (MoI 2011b) and 1 percent of the total number of eligible voters as of 2008 (Table 3.4) (CEC 2011). A Taiwan government survey conducted in 2008 showed that by that year 61.9 percent of marriage immigrant women gave birth in Taiwan (MoI 2009). Considering that up to 2010 the number of children born to transnational marriage amounted to 293,430 (MoI 2011c⁸), the nuclear members of the transnational families (husbands, wives, and children) represent at least 4.9 percent of the island's population, which is twice the total population of *Indigenous Peoples* in Taiwan.

Before 2003, the official designations for Chinese and Southeast Asian immigrants were '*Mainland Brides*' and '*Foreign Brides*'. In August 2003, as a result of a social campaign which called for rectifying their official designation (Lim and Chang 2003: 201; Wang Chun-lin 2005: 204), the designations were changed to '*Mainland Spouses*' and '*Foreign Spouses*' to demonstrate the government's awareness of the stigmatisation of immigrant women (Yu 2003). Although government statistics relating to *Foreign Spouses* also includes women from other parts of the world, the social meaning of *Foreign Spouses* exclusively restricts to women of Southeast Asian origin (Ho, 2005; Chen Yu-hua 2006: 14).

⁸ This may be an under-estimated number because it excludes the number of children born by immigrant women who have acquired citizenship.

Table 3.1 Number of Chinese Spouses: 1987-2010 (unit: person)

Visitors			Residents			Citizens		
Sub total	M	F	Sub total	M	F	Sub total	M	F
107,752	7,518	100,234	91,342	3,111	88,231	86,064	1,859	84,205
Grand Total								
Total	M	F						
285,158	12,488	272,670						

Source: NIA 2011a.

Note:

1. The number of visitors includes those on the status of visitation and family reunion.
2. The number of residents includes those on the status of *Dependent Residency* and *Long-Term Residency*.

Table 3.2 Number of Foreign Spouses of All Nationalities: 1989-2010 (unit: person)

Total			Citizens			Residents (incl. Permanent Residents)		
Sub total	M	F	Sub total	M	F	Sub total	M	F
146,979	12,252	134,727	90,706	668	90,038	56,273	11,584	44,689

Source: NIA 2011a.

Table 3.3 Number of Foreign Spouses by Nationality: 1982/7-2010 (unit: person)

	Spouse			Citizen		
	Total	M	F	Total	M	F
Vietnamese	84,246	247	83,999	58,819	193	58,626
Indonesian	26,980	429	26,551	21,876	259	21,617
Philippine	6,888	420	6,468	3,726	186	3,540
Thai	7,970	2,409	5,561	1,156	20	1,136
Cambodian	4,306	3	4,303	4,056	4	4,052
Japanese	3,270	1,550	1,720	116	39	77
Korean	1,037	295	742	1,045	127	918
Others	12,282	6,899	5,383	3,410	907	2,503
Total	146,979	12,252	134,727	94,204	1,735	92,469
SEA total	130,390	3,508	126,882	89,633	662	88,971

Source:

1. Spouse (1987-2010): NIA 2011a,
2. Citizen (1982-2010): MoI 2011a.

Note: The numbers of citizens includes 1,067 men and 1,729 women who acquired citizenship for reasons other than being the spouse of an ROC citizen.

Table 3.4 Number of Female Citizens of Chinese and Southeast Asian Origin**(unit: person)**

	Spouses(a)	Citizens (b)	b/a (%)
Chinese	272,670	84,205	30.88
Southeast Asian	126,882	88,971	70.12
Total	399,552	173,176	43.34
Total population	23,162,123		
Total eligible voters in March 2008	1,7321,622		

Source: NIA 2011a, MoI 2011a., MoIb, CEC 2011.

Note: The number of new citizens from Southeast Asia includes those who acquired citizenship for reasons other than being the spouse of an ROC citizen.

3.2 Immigration and Nation-Building

Given that ‘ethnic group’ has replaced ‘provincial origin’ as a means with which to categorise the Taiwanese society (Wang 2005a), in the multiculturalism discourse marriage immigrant women are conventionally lumped together as one *single* ethnic group (NICT-S 2008: 9; NSC 2006: 63). To bundle them together reflects the preference of grouping in order to differentiate outsiders. However, this treatment is more problematic than informative, given the plurality of their nationalities. To adequately address the structural similarity of their migration and the ethnographic differences of their integration, I employ the *groupness* approach defined by Brubaker and divide marriage immigrant women into three categories, namely Chinese, Southeast

Asian and Overseas Chinese (see Chapter 2). By assigning immigrant women to these corresponding categories, we will see how the host society erects a boundary between *us* and *outsiders* in line with gender, class and ethnicity. By examining relevant government policy papers, textbook content and changed legislation, we can trace how the perceived *foreignness* and *inferiority* of immigrant women is *othered* and how this perceived *undesirability* becomes an ingredient of Taiwan's nation-building project.

A starting point of this investigation shall be made by exploring how Taiwan, as the host society, thinks of itself.

During the Cold War era, Taiwan was relatively closed from international migration flows in order to preserve the population stock and prevent PRC penetration (Selya 2004: 308; Chen Bo-yu 2007: 15-16). However, from the mid 1990s onwards, immigration began to play a pivotal role in the national narrative. In 1996, a textbook entitled *Understanding Taiwan* unveils the common origin of the *Han* population as '*Taiwan is an immigrant society, from the Stone Age to the present, people coming here across many different times and places. Before the largest number of Han arrived on Taiwan, Aborigines were already here*' (cited by Harrison: 2006: 195). Although the immigration theme was controversial in the mid 1990s (Wang, 2005), it later gained recognition. The government now portrays the people of Taiwan as a nation who inherited a culture generated and enriched by successive waves of immigration (e.g. Chen 2004). The launch of the textbook (Hughes and Stone 1998; Harrison, 2006) and the revised edition released at the end of the DPP presidency in March 2008⁹ (NICT 2008) is a part of the ongoing nation-building project. It presents an officially

⁹ The textbook is divided into three series: history, geography, and society. In this thesis, each series is abbreviated to NICT-H, NICT-G, and NICT-S.

sanctioned national narrative to define how the nation of Taiwan is constituted internally and externally.

Immigration is the theme of that national narrative. Repeatedly, the people of Taiwan are said to be the offspring of immigrants, including the Indigenous Peoples (NICT-S: 5). As a result of their multiple origins, distinctive language and cultural practices, Taiwan is said to be a *multicultural* society of plural ethnicities and cultural heritage (NICT-H: 1; NICT-S: 2, 5). The textbooks categorise the ethnic constitution into four groups: Minnan (also known as Hoklo), Hakka, the Indigenous Peoples, and ‘Mainlanders’ (*waishengren*) (NICT-H: 98; NICT-S: 9). The textbook acknowledges not only that there are historical conflicts between ethnic groups (Han vs. Indigenous; Minnan vs. Hakka), but there is also an *ongoing* divide between the ‘offspring of earlier immigrants’ and Mainlanders (NICT-H: 65; NICT-S: 8-9). Nevertheless, the textbook concludes that regardless of *where* and *when* one is (originally) from, the integration of ethnic groups has brought into being *a community of common destiny* (NICT-S: 3), in which everyone is Taiwanese. This is a new Taiwanese consciousness; it is to identify with the ‘Mother Earth’ where life is given, and share with others the *same* historical memories (NICT-H: 96; NICT-S: 105-107).

The *New Taiwanese Consciousness* is not only built on *shared* historical experiences and destiny (NICT-S: 105-107), it also has a moral dimension - the pursuit of freedom, democracy and the protection of human rights - and this moral mission has an international appeal. Peaceful political reform is held up together with successful economic development to showcase the ‘Taiwan experience’¹⁰. Socio-economic

¹⁰ The islanders are said to ‘win the praise of the world’ for their determination and endeavours of

indicators are compared with those of the ‘*advanced* European and American countries’ (NICT-G: 77, 87); the purpose of preserving and renovating Taiwan’s cultural heritage is to ‘introduce Taiwan to the world’ (NICT-H: 96) and ‘*elevate* Taiwan’s international standing’ (emphasis added) (NICT-S: 44). These descriptions effectively reveal Taiwan’s longing for international recognition. Geertz points out that the aspiration to be recognised by other nations and to be ‘somebody in the world’ is a major driver for nationalism of newly independent states (Geertz 1963: 108). Taiwan is a case in point. Democracy and prosperity are not only the essence of the ‘*internationally* admired’ Taiwan experience (Harrison 2006: 137-144), they are also strategic assets to fend off the threat posed by the Chinese communist regime (*ibid*: 102).

The textbooks in effect construct a Taiwanese category. Derived from the theme of immigration, the Taiwanese identity is not ethnic but civic because of its emphasis on territory-based self-identification with a shared history and democratic participation. The pride in democracy and prosperity and a commitment to the protection of human rights are not only the contents of this identity but also a self-declared moral mission. This is how Taiwan presents itself to the outside world. Internally, it does not negate its Chinese heritage but regards it as just as one of several origins. Externally, it recognises the PRC as an equal entity but falls short of treating it as a *foreign* state. By stressing its hostility towards Taiwan, it depicts the PRC as an entity opposite to Taiwan. In other words, Chinese heritage is integral to the Taiwanese category, but the Chinese state ruled by the Chinese Community Party (CCP) is external to the category.

strengthening democracy after the presidential election of 2004 (NICT-H: 83). Similarly, after the 2008 presidential election, President Ma also proclaimed in his inaugural address that Taiwan became “a beacon of democracy to Asia and the world” and the Republic of China is *now* a democracy respected by the international community (emphasis added) (Ma 2008).

3.3 The Chinese Category – the Political Enemy within

In this section, I will discuss how the Chinese immigrant category is shaped and how it is imposed on Chinese immigrant women. Before I start, it is necessary to clarify why I define the category as ‘Chinese’ rather than ‘mainland’, as in the vernacular and official use it is *Mainland (dalu)* rather than Chinese (*zhongguo*) that is used as the designation to refer to immigrant women from China.

First of all, using ‘Chinese’ can avoid confusion arising from different Chinese vocabulary - *waishengren* and *daluren* (people of Mainland) – being translated to similar English words. Secondly, it also avoids conceptualising the cross-strait marriage as one exclusively between Mainlanders and Chinese, given that cross-strait marriages also appear in non-Mainlander segments of Taiwan society. Thirdly, using ‘Chinese’ evokes intensive interactions between the immigrant outsiders and the host society. ‘Chinese’ (*zhongguoren*) is the self-identity of immigrant women from China and this self-identity unambiguously manifests the status of PRC as a nation-state. Packed within this self-identity is juxtaposing China and Taiwan as in a *central-peripheral hierarchy* (see Chapter 5). This conceptual hierarchy clashes with the notion of Taiwan’s *de facto* independence. Thus, using ‘Chinese’ can illuminate the potential conflict between the host and the immigrant outsiders.

I will now discuss how the Chinese category is constructed by the host society. First of all, I will analyse how an essentialist approach creates the Chinese category and how it is developed along the lines of class and gender in order to legally, politically and socially consolidate the Taiwanese category.

3.3.1 A Legal Boundary

The foundation of creating a Chinese category begins by defining the status of PRC citizens according to Taiwan's legal system. Defining their status was designed to confront head-on the constitutional ambiguity that continental China is within ROC sovereign territory and that PRC citizens are therefore ROC *nationals* (EY 1990: 13). The first step was taken by *the Guidelines for National Unification* passed in 1990 (henceforth *the 1990 Guidelines*) (MAC 1997). *The 1990 Guidelines* divided ROC territory into *the Taiwan Area* and *the Mainland Area*, which were said to be political entities of equal footing. The 'parity' of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area were legally realised by the termination of *the Period of Mobilisation for the Suppression of the Communist Rebellion* in May 1991 (henceforth *the Mobilisation Period*). The termination of this policy objective put an end to the relegation of the CCP to the status of a military *insurgent group* and a start to regarding China's ruling party as an equal entity without recognising the PRC as a separate state.

The second step was to draw up a legal framework to regulate the interaction between people of both sides of the Taiwan Strait. The constitutional amendments were passed in May 1991 and politically characterised Taiwan as the *Free Area* and mandated the government to regulate the relationship between *People of the Free Area* and *People of the Mainland Area*. The mandate brought the promulgation of *the Statute Governing the Relations between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area* in August 1992 (henceforth *the Cross-Strait Statute*). *The Cross-Strait Statute* specifies the Taiwan Area as 'Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu and any other areas that are under the effective control of the government'. The Mainland Area refers to 'the territory of the Republic of China outside the Taiwan area' (Art. 2, MAC 2005: 12). It fundamentally defines the factual separation and jurisdictional mutual exclusion of Taiwan and China, a formula phrased as 'one country two areas' (EY 1990: 7).

The geographical separation and jurisdictional exclusion could not be consolidated had the status of Taiwan *proper* not been re-configured in the past few decades. This is clearly conveyed by border control regulations, which are designed to safeguard the tangible border and the imagined sovereign territorial boundary. Before the central government exiled to Taiwan in 1949, the island was a province, thus in February 1949 entry control was maintained pursuant to *the Temporary Rules of Permitting Entry of Military Personnel, Civil Servants and Visitors into Taiwan Province*.¹¹ After 1949, while Taiwan remained a provincial entity, it was elevated to be the physical and institutional container of the ROC state. Hence, in 1957 the above-mentioned rules were succeeded by *the Administrative Rules of Entry and Exit of the Taiwan Area* (Hu 2009: 26-27). Taiwan, in this regulation, had become an entity that was factually *operated* as the ROC state, although this was meant to be a temporary measure before the final retrocession of the mainland¹². The decree was finally succeeded in 1999 by *the Immigration Act*, which legally defines the Taiwan Area as the territory effectively under ROC jurisdiction (Art. 3). Thus, the implementation of *the Immigration Act* clearly defined the tangible border of ROC jurisdiction.

The territorial separation and jurisdictional mutual exclusion substantiates the division of the people on both sides. *The Cross-Strait Statute* stipulates that ‘People of the Taiwan Area’ are those who have a household registration in Taiwan, whereas

¹¹ The other decree controlling exit was announced in May 1949 (Hu 2009: 26). These regulations were adopted to restrict the number of people from China taking refuge in Taiwan while Taiwan was under Martial Law after the 228 Incident in 1947. The affected refugees were semantically referred to as ‘people outside of the (Taiwan) province’, hence *waishengren* in Chinese, whereas residents of Taiwan were people ‘within the province’, hence *benishengren* (Wu 2006: 86-92).

¹² This can be also found in Taiwan’s position and involvement in the regional geopolitical conflict in the bipolar Cold War system. Chang argues that after the Korean War (1950-53), the First Taiwan Strait Crisis (1954-55) and the signing of *the ROC-US Mutual Defence Treaty* (1954), Taiwan was gradually constructed as *ROC on Taiwan* (Chang Mao-kuei 2011: 277).

‘People of the Mainland Area’ are those who have a household registration in China. Thus the geographical separation points to people’s attachment to the land where they were born and bred and to the jurisdiction which endows them with rights and duties. Household registration – a link derived from the territorial attachment between individuals and the state - is imagined as authentic, substantial, committing and longitudinal. Household registration establishes the mutual exclusion of people of each area and is utilised as a practical solution to the constitutional ambiguity.

The last step of consolidating the mutual exclusion is to practically conceptualise household registration as nationality. Thus, in accordance with citizenship legislation, *the Cross-Strait Statute* forbids ROC citizens holding dual household registrations in Taiwan and China. The 1990 KMT draft bill of *the Cross-Strait Statute* stipulated that if one domiciled in China consecutively for two years, his/her household registration in Taiwan would be automatically cancelled (Art. 2, the LY extended to four years). In 2002, the DPP government amended Article 2 and stipulated that ‘People of the Taiwan Area’ acquiring household registration in China would automatically have their household registration in Taiwan cancelled (Art. 9). Likewise, ‘People of the Mainland Area’ cannot acquire household registration in Taiwan unless they cancel their household registration in China (Art. 17). A singular household registration was take as implying exclusive loyalty towards Taiwan and was deemed necessary to ensure national security (EY 2002a: 54-56).

The legal boundary of the Chinese category is thus established. It is defined by a territorial and jurisdictional separation and consolidated by the mutual exclusion and singular loyalty. In the constitution they are ambiguously ROC *nationals*, but by legality they are clearly not ROC *citizens* because of their lack of a territorial link with Taiwan. Excluded by this boundary, PRC citizens are constructed as an *external*

population to Taiwan (CY 2010: 29). The fact that laws regulating foreign nationals do not apply to them underlines the notion that they are *neither foreign nor domestic* under Taiwan's legal system (Chen Kuan-cheng 1994: iii). Their in-betweenness is embedded in citizenship legislation.

Although by law PRC citizens are not foreign, in political reality they are *alien*. This alienation becomes a critical challenge when PRC citizens are permitted to reside in Taiwan. The prospect of physical inclusion calls for the erection of an inner boundary behind the legal boundary to distinguish them from the host population.

3.3.2 A Political Boundary

The political alienation of the Chinese category can be traced back to *the 1990 Guidelines*. *The Guidelines* envisioned the unification of China by the principles of promoting Chinese culture, safeguarding human dignity, guaranteeing fundamental human rights, practicing democracy and the rule of law (MAC 1997). In 1990, with the exception of the promotion of Chinese culture, all of the principles were values pursued through Taiwan's political reforms. They were fundamentally incompatible with the direction for which the PRC was heading, particularly in the aftermath of the 1989 Tiananmen Massacre. These principles were used to highlight the differences between Taiwan and China, and effectively prolonged (if not obstructed) unification.

The emphasis on the political system was inherited by the 1991 constitutional amendment, which characterised the two sides as being the *Free Area* and the *Mainland Area*. Characterising territory that was not controlled by the CCP as 'free area' was a

Civil War legacy¹³. During the Cold War era, the characterisation acquired an additional international aspect with the bipolar ideological antagonism between the two sides. Taiwan was internationally referred to as *Free China* (Harrison 2006: 11-12) in opposition to *Red China* or *Communist China*. A practice that served to highlight the diametrically opposed positions of the two sides was the use of international trade shows, such as the 1956 International Trade Expo in Thailand, as a platform to showcase the economic achievements of *Free China* (Wang Wen-lung 2001). Another example was the government's publication of the English-language news digest between 1961 and 1999 was titled the *Free China Weekly* and later *Free China Journal*. These efforts signified Taiwan's attempts of internationally advertising itself as a free and prosperous democracy. After a series of political reforms, known as the *Quiet Revolution* (Copper 1988), Taiwan was praised for being a 'beacon of democracy' (Glaser 2007). In contrast to Taiwan's pride in its democratisation as conveyed by the *Understanding Taiwan* textbook, China's one-party dictatorship began to be seen in terms of *inferiority*.

This inferiority is also applied to PRC citizens. The 1990 KMT draft bill of the Cross-Strait Statute described PRC citizens as 'contaminated' by communism and imagined them as agents to execute the PRC's 'united front' strategy in Taiwan (EY 1990: 3). These suspicions were unchanged even after they became ROC citizens because 'being under the Chinese Communist control for a long time, they are not used to the democratic political system and need a certain period of adaptation' (EY 1990:

¹³ This can be seen by a comment made on 30th November 1949 by Chen Cheng while serving as governor of Taiwan. Commenting on political refugees from China to Taiwan, Chen stated 'Since Jiangsu, Zhejiang and other places in the mainland were entrapped by the iron curtain, the arrival of military personnel and civilian population in the *free area* to Taiwan grew day by day' (Chu 1997: 488-489; cited by Wu 2006: 91).

15). This justifies the postponement of their right to exercise full political rights (candidacy for public office and employment in the public sector, including teaching at university) to five years after acquiring citizenship (Art. 21, extended to ten years in 1997).

Suspicious towards PRC citizens grew in the early DPP administration when relations between Taipei and Beijing were strained. In October 2002, two months after President Chen Shui-bian's talk of 'One Country on Each Side', the DPP government submitted the amendments of *the Cross-Strait Statute* for parliamentary review. The government stressed that the parameters of the amendments were in response to China's reluctance to denounce the use of force against Taiwan and its persistent reluctance to recognise Taiwan as a *de facto* independent entity in *international* society (EY 2002a: 36). Such criticisms espoused a fundamentally different threat perception: in the 1990 KMT proposal, the perceived threat was communist penetration; in the 2002 DPP proposal, not only the communist infiltration but China itself has become the threat. This frustration was pronounced by amending Article 21, which further restricted the rights of political participation of Chinese immigrants-turned citizens (EY 2002a: 67-68).

The restriction was later supported by the Constitutional Court. In 2006, after receiving a challenge to the postponement of political rights for these new citizens (Xie 2005: 76-79; Friedman 2010), the Constitutional Court determined that the postponement was constitutional. Arguing from an essentialist perspective, the Court revived the stance taken by the KMT government in 1990 and determined that *by nature* the political, economic and social systems on both sides of the strait were different. As such, it would take time for the 'People of the Mainland Area' to shed their communist cultivation, familiarise themselves with free democracy and internalise the values

embedded within a democratic system. The Court categorically pointed out that holders of public office and civil servants who were originally PRC citizens needed to win *trust* to exercise the authority conferred on them (Justices of the Constitutional Court 2006). What the Court indicated was that Taiwanese people distrusted these former PRC citizens.

The above discussion demonstrates that there is a political boundary behind the legal boundary to alienate Chinese immigrants from the host society. This boundary is created by Taiwan's self-identification as a free democracy as opposed to China's inferior ideologically communist system and China's military strength is considered as a threat to Taiwan's survival. Chinese immigrants are effectively *othered* because of their perceived lack of belief in and experience of free democracy. Chinese immigrants are imagined to be *born* out of the communist ideology; therefore they are *by nature* different from Taiwanese people. They are imagined to be foot soldiers of the PRC state and to robotically carry out the PRC state's political strategy. What the Taiwanese government does with the Chinese category is to restrict their ability to exercise political rights in Taiwan.

As soon as Chinese immigrant women began to arrive on Taiwan's shores, they became a convenient object of political essentialisation. As marriage immigrant women are presumed to pursue nothing except material gains offered by their Taiwanese husbands, or Taiwan's labour market, their image is additionally underlined by gender and class.

3.3.3 Personifying a Hostile China

The resumed contact between Taiwan and China since 1987 has brought home a different image of people in China. Before 1987, they were said to be unfortunate

compatriots who suffered at the hands of a totalitarian regime. Gradually after 1987, the eye-witness accounts of people who had visited China were uttered in tones of disbelief at the level of poverty to which Chinese people were subjected. Through the lens of class, the suffering compatriots became unanimously poor, greedy, and materialistic peasants who were better to be kept at a distance. A similar social perception can be found in Hong Kong, where Mainland Chinese people are perceived as being prejudiced by language, religion, dress, food and moral values. Their arrival has had an impact on law and order, housing, education, employment, and healthcare (Lee 2008: 102-103). Chinese women are believed to abuse the systems of marriage and tourism to engage in sex work (Lim 2008). It is believed that Chinese women are offered for a price (Shih 1998) and are sensationalised as *amoral* seducers, family wreckers, husband-snatchers and money seekers (Lee 2008: 103).

What seems perplexing is that the 'poor peasant' image persists in spite of the fact that China has become a 'land of opportunity' for Taiwan's workforce. A public poll conducted by a private company found that 84 percent of business owners were positive about China's continuing growth, and that 63 percent of the Taiwanese workforce had considered the option of working in China (China Times 27/10/10). A survey conducted by Taiwan's Education Ministry found that the bright career prospects in China attracted 22.7 percent of Taiwanese parents to enrol their children at China's top universities (Commonwealth Magazine 06/10/09). Although China has recently acquired such a glistening image amongst some Taiwanese people, Chinese immigrant women are not perceived as a part of China's formidable economic clout and the seemingly boundless opportunities to be had there.

Thus, a class- and gender-biased discrimination has emerged against Chinese immigrant women, including those who marry Taiwanese men. Negatively known as

Mainland Brides (dalu xinniàng) or *Mainland Girls (dalumei)*, Chinese immigrant wives are universally thought of as poverty-stricken and under-educated peasants from remote rural villages. This discrimination creates certain stereotypes. One such distinctive stereotype is that of the ‘red widow’, ‘black widow’, or ‘pink undertaker’, who serially remarries after her elderly Mainlander husband passes away, in order to remain in Taiwan, or who has acquired citizenship and inherits her late husband’s military pension (King 2007; Nownews 06/03/03; interview with Yuan Panpan, 01/06/09, Keelung). The second stereotype presumes that they abuse the institution of marriage as a means of accessing employment, including sex work. The third stereotype sees them as purchased property. It is not uncommon that an immigrant Chinese woman was asked, ‘How much did your husband spend to marry you?’ Or someone demanded to see the Taiwanese husband’s picture to ascertain whether he is old, disabled or simply ‘plain looking’ (interview with Dong Mei, 23/03/09, Taipei). The fourth stereotype focuses on their reproduction potential and sees immigrant Chinese mothers as giving additional input to ease the pressure of Taiwan’s aging population (Chen Kuan-cheng 1994: 27).

In the eyes of security personnel, the *amoral* Chinese immigrant women are a security threat and they will be exploited by the PRC government which takes advantage of the porous border of Taiwan (Chen Chin-chung 1997: 104). The number of detained Chinese women exceeded male detainees in 2003 (75.6 percent, Chen Su-chen 2008: 20) and this is used as evidence for arguing that the migration of Chinese women to Taiwan poses a more serious threat than the migration of men to the island (*ibid*). Allegedly, Chinese women are prone to breaking the law, and are seen as using pregnancy in order to qualify for longer residency (Tang 2004: 35). Due to the perceived poverty, low education, tendency towards law-breaking, lack of civility and

sophistication, sub-level public sanitation and the under-development of China, Chinese immigrants are said to cast a shadow over public health, national competitiveness, and public finance. The fact that the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) pandemic which hit Taiwan badly in 2003 originated from Guangdong (Xu *et al.* 2004) reinforced, in the minds of some, the fears about the impact on public health posed by immigration. What seems most extraordinary in these accusations is that the publicity generated from a fatal incident of Chinese women drowning at sea¹⁴ was condemned for harming Taiwan's *international image* of human rights protection (Lin Kun-yuan 2005: 112-115; Hao 2007: 53-55; Chen Su-chen 2008: 66-67; 78-84). However, the concern of the security personnel seemed less on how Chinese illegal immigrants were victimised by human trafficking but that they exposed Taiwan's inadequate protection of human rights to the outside world. In other words, their concern was not so much about human rights protection but about losing face.

On top of this discrimination is a process of political essentialisation. Interestingly, a study commissioned by the Mainland Affairs Council in 1999 reported that mid-level officials rebuffed any concerns that Chinese *wives* in Taiwan might be PRC secret agents (Chen Hsiao-hung 1999: viii, 5-2, 8, 9-5). Under the DPP administration, it was believed by the security apparatus that the PRC purposefully promoted marriage across the strait to 'speed up unification' (Wu Shyun-yann 2004: 273) and dispatched Chinese women under the guise of seeking marriage in order to conduct clandestine operations (Chou 2006: 2; Chen Su-chen 2008: 76-77).

¹⁴ On 26th August 2003 two boats operated by Taiwanese smugglers pushed 26 Chinese women out of the boat before they were hunted down by the Coast Guard. Six women drowned in the incident (Asia Times, 02/10/03).

The most prominent effort designed to exclude Chinese immigrant women was the attempt to prolong the qualifying period for their citizenship eligibility. Between October 2002 and October 2003, the DPP government in alliance with the pro-independence Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU) introduced amendments to prolong the qualifying period from eight to eleven years and postpone eligibility for voting after acquiring citizenship (see Chapter 4). Six women's organisations¹⁵, speaking 'on behalf of' Taiwanese women, sided with the government and supported the initiation. In addition to the usual security and stability arguments, the DPP-TSU alliance projected a picture of the Chinese immigrant-turned citizen endangering Taiwan's *de facto* independence. They argued that their loyalty towards China would erode Taiwan's sovereignty and their political inclination towards the pro-unification KMT would tilt the vote share, which would eventually compromise Taiwan's independence. The arguments were summed up by slogans such as '*Taiwanese First!*', '*Save Taiwan*' and '*Preventing Chinese Brides' Annexation of Taiwan!*' (Chang 2004: 89-90; Lin Miao-ling 2005: 49-77)

These appeals send a concerted message: China itself is *the* threat to Taiwan (Chen Ching-chang 2008: 34-53). Chinese immigrants as a whole are taken as being agents of an authoritarian, bellicose and hostile China. The amorality and inferiority of Chinese women is a projection of an *inferior* and *hostile* PRC, in contrast to the *superior* and *vulnerable* Taiwan. However, this vulnerability also derives from Taiwan's highly volatile partisan politics. This is conveyed by an official of the Mainland Affairs Council: 'There is no need for China to use force. *The sheer presence*

¹⁵ They included *Taiwan 21st Century Women's Association*, *Taiwan Women's Link*, and the *National Alliance of Taiwan Women's Associations* and *ECPAT Taiwan (End China Prostitution in Asian Tourism)* (Wang Chun-lin 2005: 205).

of Chinese spouses in Taiwan and their families is sufficient to subjugate Taiwan' (Lin Miao-ling 2005: 43). This approach presumed that not only was the loyalty of Chinese immigrants to Taiwan in doubt, so too was the loyalty of their Taiwanese husbands. Thus, their husbands are also excluded from the Taiwanese category.

The politicised othering of immigrants finds an outlet in official pronouncements. In June 2004, the Executive Yuan announced that Mainland Spouses were to be included in the *Foreign Spouses* category (Li *et al.* 2006: 483). Four months later, the government further attempted to change the official designation of *Mainland Spouses* to *Chinese Spouses* (*zhongguo peiou*) to highlight China's *foreignness* (Lin Miao-ling 2005: 1, 32). Although this failed, it made an appearance in the *Understanding Taiwan* textbook. This textbook introduces Chinese immigrants as 'women of the *nationality* of People's of Republic of China' (NICT-S: 19). By employing the wording of 'PRC nationality', the clear message is that China is a state as *foreign* as any other states.

In summary, Chinese immigrant women are under a situation of overarching political essentialisation. Chinese women are imagined as being the agents of a threatening PRC state whilst they are subjected to class- and gender-biased discrimination, which projects them as an amoral underclass and undermining Taiwan's image as a standard bearer for the protection of human rights in East Asia. During the DPP era, immigrant women were further imagined as a disturbance to the electoral equilibrium. Therefore, restricting their citizenship eligibility served to protect Taiwan's sovereignty; excluding them from Taiwan's political processes served to safeguard Taiwan's independence. Thus, maintaining the boundary of the Chinese category not only manifests Taiwanese consciousness, but also consolidates the Taiwanese category. However, an uncomfortable weakness existed in this boundary. That is, while Chinese

immigrant women were othered by the Taiwanese category, this othering also excludes their Taiwanese husbands from the Taiwanese category.

3.4 The Southeast Asian Category- The Ethnic Inferior Other

3.4.1 A Gender and Class Boundary

In public discourse Southeast Asian immigrants are unanimously perceived as young and uneducated women brought up in rural villages. They are presumed to be in such dire poverty that they, out of filial piety, agree to be married off to far-flung countries with total strangers who are shunned by local women because of their disadvantaged socio-economic status and lowly occupations in rural areas. Southeast Asia immigrant women are despised for their willingness to trade themselves through a *commercialised* or *commoditised* marriage (Wang and Chang 2002) for the purpose of improving the standard of living for themselves and their families. Their remittances to their families are interpreted as evidence of this trade and are condemned based on a perception that they are in-effect stealing from their Taiwanese family's resources for the benefit of their kin back home. If their demands for remittance money from their husbands are not satisfied, they are imagined as being prepared to desert their marriage and family for other sources of income, including sex work.

The life of an immigrant woman is imagined to be entirely controlled by her Taiwanese husband and her in-laws. The desire of immigrant women to acquire citizenship is said to be suspected by in-laws as a plot by a future *runaway* or an attempt to claim inheritance of property (interview with Nguyễn Minh Nguyệt, 29/03/09, Chinshan). It is believed that immigrant women are restrained by their husbands and in-laws to prevent them from seeking waged employment outside of the home because of the danger of falling prey to unscrupulous elements, who may be their fellow

immigrants or male Taiwanese seducers. It is believed that their husbands treat them as *traded goods*, or purchase them as an instrument for reproduction with which to fulfil their familial obligations. Thus, Taiwanese husbands and in-laws are aggregated into this category of condemned *abnormality*. This was unmistakably conveyed by a female frontline immigration officer of the airport squad. While claiming female marriage migration was good for the underclass of Taiwanese men, she said, 'I wouldn't want to marry any man like them, *would you?*' (17/04/09, Taoyuan Airport).

The role of immigrant women as reproducers is a focal point for social stigmatisation. They are looked down upon because of their perceived inability to raise children as a result of poor education and linguistic inability (Wang 2010a). In some cases, their alleged superstition is characterised as primitive and blamed for the slow development of their children (Central News Agency 25/06/11). Their husbands are of limited assistance because they are also seen as uneducated and incapable. A low proficiency in the Chinese language is conflated with total *illiteracy*, in spite of the fact that these women are not illiterate in their own language. It is believed that enrolment at language training courses is discouraged by husbands and in-laws to prevent the possibility of wives 'talking back'. Thus their children are at best offered sympathy for receiving insufficient parenting and, at worst, are labelled as late or slow developers. Their children, being born in Taiwan and *fathered* by Taiwanese, are supposed to fully belong to and identify with Taiwan. Hence, the transmission of the immigrant mothers' cultural heritage is deemed unnecessary and useless because it is the culture of a poor and backward country. The presumed lower human *quality* of immigrant women and their children is elevated to be a national threat because it hampers Taiwan's international competitiveness (Kung 2009). Included in the *National Security Report* and policy recommendations for education, economy, and demography, a remedy is to

recruit highly skilled professional ‘white-collar’ immigrants to balance out the imagined quality deficit (Yu 2003; CEPD 2006: 7, 14; NSC 2006: 129, MoI 2004b, 2008: 51-53; 102-103). The discourse outlined here is a combination of what Yuval-Davis characterises as the ‘people as power’ discourse and the eugenicist discourse (Yuval-Davis 2001: 123-124).

This stigmatisation also derives from the denunciation of Southeast Asian migrant workers (Kung 2002: 246). Brokers and placement agencies create an ethnic profiling to essentialise workers of selected nationalities (Fan Yu-Kang 2005). Hence, Vietnamese workers are said to be mild-tempered, subservient and suitable for all industries. Filipinos are smart, demanding, English-speaking, and suitable for high tech industries and, if recruiting them for domestic work, an additional bonus is to gain a resident English-language tutor (Lan 2003). While it is believed that Indonesians are poor, uneducated, uncivilised, lazy, domestic, subservient and even ‘stupid’ (Loveband 2004: 340), some agencies essentialise them as hard-working and ‘taking no time off all year round’. However, it is believed that they need to be ‘modernised’ to work in Taiwan, such as ‘learning to use toilet paper’ (Cheng 2003: 176). It is necessary to point out that the profiling of Indonesian domestic workers and caregivers is mostly derived from perceptions of Indonesian Muslims rather than from Indonesian Chinese, who are less likely to take up these jobs (interview with Choi Sook Yin, 19/05/09, Taipei). Nonetheless, this perception does not distinguish between them. Both of them are uniformly appropriated into the same inferior category.

Male Taiwanese investors and managers in Vietnam contribute to *feminise* Vietnam as a destination for sex tourism. Vietnam is culturally essentialised as a Confucian society (Chang 2007: 23) but is believed to be ‘modernised’ by Taiwanese investors (Wang 2004b: 38). Vietnamese women are described as diligent workers,

dutiful daughters, virtuous wives and good mothers who are willing to sacrifice themselves for family well-being. However, they are also depicted as dangerous, sexy and mysterious mistresses and conspirators who are blamed for Taiwanese businessmen's downfall (Wang 2004a: 49-52, 2004b; Kung 2005: 140-179; Wang 2010b). Until the brokering service was outlawed in August 2009, marriage to a Vietnamese woman was advertised by such provocative slogans as: '*Virgins guaranteed*' and '*marry one get one for free if runaway within a year*' (Hsia 2005: 181).

These portraits, which are painted with brushstrokes of gender, class and ethnicity, reveal how Southeast Asian women are perceived inasmuch as how Taiwan regards itself. A sketch of this portrait can be found in the racist slurs made by politicians¹⁶, in policy papers (CEPD 2004; Yu 2003), the media (Hsia 2007; Lim and Chang 2003; Chen Yu-hua 2006: 19), in comments made by police officers and medical staff (Young 2007; Fan 2006) and the attitude of the general public (Yi and Chang 2006). Marriage migration is deemed traditional, abnormal, amoral and irrational. It is seen as being in opposition to Taiwan's *modernity*, which is embodied by women attaining higher levels of education, higher labour participation, later marriage based on an autonomous decision, and a declining birth rate. It is clear, then, that women become the boundary marker: *their* women are traded goods and *our* women are the masters of their own lives. The prescribed national traits of each country are in contrast to Taiwan as an accomplished nation, who enjoys affluence and power to employ foreigners of lesser nations to do demeaning jobs shunned by local workers. The traditional, primitive, poor,

¹⁶ Often cited examples are an education official openly calling on immigrant women to refrain from 'producing too many babies' (China Times 13/07/04) and a lawmaker claiming Vietnamese women carry residues of *Agent Orange* and are prone to give birth to deformed infants, thus they shall be denied childrearing allowances (Broadcasting Corporation of China 31/03/06).

amoral and abnormal Southeast Asia is contrasted with the modern, scientific, affluent, moral and rational Taiwan

3.4.2 Undesired Members of the National Community

In spite of the prevailing discrimination, in the official discourse they are included as members of the national community. For example, the *Understanding Taiwan* textbook regards the spouses of transnational marriage and their children as constituent members of the society (NICT-S: 9¹⁷). However, they are not embraced wholeheartedly. The textbook determines that the sole motivation of transnational marriages is to continue the family line. Thus, it declares that the *function* of immigrant women is to be mothers of the nation's next generation. The textbook also depicts immigrant women as troubled by a long list of problems. These include wide age gaps between husband and wife, an inability to adapt to life in Taiwan, prone to social discrimination, testing relationships with mothers-in-law, language and communication difficulties, a difficult financial situation, disadvantaged husbands, the challenged education of their children, limited employment opportunities and domestic violence (NICT-S: 20). This indicates that although the textbook sees motherhood as an instrument for transmitting *our* culture, their motherhood is nevertheless seen as unsatisfactory. Their recognised contribution is merely 'adding Southeast Asian *colours* to the street outlook' for tourism (emphasis added) (NICT-G: 166). Piper (1997) criticises that earlier studies of international marriages tend to see problems as interpersonal or at a micro level. The textbook

¹⁷ The following discussion is based on the text of Section 3, Chapter 2 of *the Society Series* published in March 2008 (available at http://dic.nict.gov.tw/~Taiwan_series/soc_pdf/soc_2.pdf.) However, for reasons unknown to this author, this section was taken out in the version updated in December 2008. All texts are available at <http://dic.nict.gov.tw/~taiwan> and the reduced text is available at http://dic.nict.gov.tw/~taiwan/PDF/CS_ch2.pdf.

authors also perceive these problems as deriving from the inferiority of individual immigrant women rather than institutional or structural bias.

The position of Southeast Asian women in the national narrative is also seen in relation to their own human rights. The victimisation of some immigrant women at the hands of Taiwanese families and their subjection to unfavourable legal conditions impedes their human rights. From the government's perspective it is uncomfortable and embarrassing to admit that the state and society of Taiwan is the ultimate culprit, particularly after the plight of some immigrant women prompted the US State Department to blacklist Taiwan in 2005 and 2006 for its ineffectiveness in clamping down on human trafficking. This is seen as seriously tarnishing Taiwan's *international* image and its 'sound record' of human rights protection (MOFA 2007: 2). Therefore, the argument that 'improving' the human rights of immigrants showcases Taiwan's sincerity in protecting human rights (interview with a KMT campaign manager, 29/04/09, Taipei) is also about face-saving.

However, what is not revealed by the national narrative is a racial hierarchy whereby people of Taiwan position themselves as superior to the immigrants. This can be found in the 2004 special issue of a government-published journal *the Community Development Quarterly*. The editorial appeals to the teachings of a Confucian humanist Han Yu (768-824 AD), who sees the *Chinese* as the sovereign of the world which comprises humans, barbarians and beasts. Han Yu purports that the sovereign's reign will not be humanitarian unless humans, barbarians, and beasts are treated the same by the benevolent sovereign. The editorial argues that the manner in which immigrants are treated is a testament as to whether Taiwan can take up such a *mandate* (CDQ 2004: 1, 5). Thus, it is more than revealing that Taiwan positions itself as the said benevolent sovereign while immigrant women are shunned into the combined category of

'barbarians and beasts'. Thus, an appeal for empathy unintentionally reinstates the self-declared moral and racial supremacy and discloses contempt for the inferior ethnic outsiders.

This ethnic hierarchy is clearer when the image of Southeast Asian women is juxtaposed with that of Ukrainian women (TVBS 18/06/03, 11/09/03). Although their marriage is also arranged via commercial brokering, the sincerity of Ukrainian women in the marriage is not questioned. On the contrary, they are admired for *embodying* the advanced European culture. The media coverage gives an impression that if Taiwanese suitors fail to tie the knot, it is because of their insufficient cultivation of the European etiquette of respect for women. Younger Ukrainian women choosing much older but high-income earning Taiwanese men are not criticised for being materialistic but blessed (Wu 2004). Unlike Southeast Asian women (and their children) being concerned about their Chinese language ability, the Chinese proficiency of Ukrainian mothers (and their children) is not an issue. Instead, children born to Ukrainian mothers are envied for *automatically* acquiring a higher proficiency in a 'foreign language' (read: English). Thus, although both Southeast Asian and Ukrainian women are gendered as *a womb* for national reproduction, the former are unwanted as a liability and the latter are praised as a contribution to Taiwan's 'internationalisation'. This contrast indicates that there exists a three-tiered ethnic hierarchy: Caucasian at the top, Taiwanese in the middle, and Southeast Asian at the bottom.

To sum up, although the textbook unfolds the national narrative along the immigration theme, it nevertheless falls short of embracing marriage immigrant women as part of the national community, despite claiming to do so. Restricted by the intertwined concepts of class, gender and ethnicity, the textbook and government papers depict marriage immigrant women as inferior ethnic others in the public sphere, and as

incapable mothers in the private family domain. This depiction is contrasted by the positive projection of Caucasian women as symbolised by Ukrainian immigrant women.

3.5 The Overseas Chinese Category: From Overseas Nationals to External Population

Conventionally, *Overseas Chinese* refer to the Chinese and their descendents who live in countries other than China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao. However, this term is historically rooted, politically controversial, and vernacularly contested (Wang 1981: 12-14; Wang 1994: 1-3; Wang 2000: 41-42). It is historically postulated that their departure from the homeland is temporary and that at some point they will return home. Hence they are characterised as *sojourners (qiao)* (Wang 2000: 42-77). In this section I will discuss their political image as well as the change of legal categorisation over the past decades. Seeing legislation as embodying the imagination of the Overseas Chinese, I will focus on the change of legislation concerning nationality, household registration and immigration.

Before moving on, I shall emphasise that for Southeast Asian immigrant women of Chinese ancestry, *Overseas Chinese (huaqiao)* is a subjective and *hybrid* identity that forms part of their identification with their adopted country. That is, they subjectively identify themselves as Indonesian and Vietnamese, but at the same time they also identify themselves as Chinese. The content of their hybrid identity varies from generation to generation but discussing this is beyond the scope of this thesis. What I am stressing here is that parallel to their subjective hybrid identity, in the eyes of the Taiwanese society they are *foreign*, destitute, desperate and inferior Indonesian and Vietnamese. In the public discourse there is limited acknowledgement of their Chinese ancestry and the denunciation of Southeast Asia excludes them from the Taiwanese category.

3.5.1 Nationalistic Nationals Sojourning Abroad: Before 1991

Perceiving emigrants abroad as *sojourning* is a legacy of the Qing Dynasty. This legacy began to take shape after the imperial court abolished the ban on travelling abroad in 1893 (Wang 2000: 46). This is because the imperial court began to appreciate the political and economic resources of the Chinese emigrant community (McKeown 1999: 323). To reap these resources, it required a method to maintain the link between emigrants and the state. A policy recommendation that was responsible for drafting the very first nationality law (promulgated on 28th March 1909) articulated that the method was to award nationality *by jus sanguinis* to sojourners who were expected to return home. Conceptualising population as the foundation of national wealth, it saw nationality as a permanent link between emigrants and the state. By this link, the imperial government could exert sovereignty and strengthen individuals' identification with the country (Chen Huei-hsin 2008: 2-3). When emigrants returned, they would be brought under state control through the household registration system for purposes such as taxation. Thus, the *governmentality* of sojourning was realised by *extraterritorially-awarded* nationality and *land-bound* household registration; emigrants sojourning abroad were imagined as an *internal but absent* population.

This approach was inherited by successive governments after the Republican revolution. Following the Qing precedence, *the Nationality Act* promulgated in 1929 adopted *jus sanguinis and* stipulated that a person fathered by a Chinese national (*zhongguoren*) was endowed with ROC nationality (Art. 1). The appreciation of the political value of the Overseas Chinese was reinstated because of the successful revolutionary mobilisation. This appreciation was further strengthened as a result of their war-time remittances for the final victory in the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-45) (e.g. Chiang Kai-shek's open letter on 21st November 1953 to Overseas

Chinese, see OCAC 1967: 11; for Overseas Chinese war-time donations, see Ho 1999). Engraved on a memorial erected on the campus of a college that provides tertiary education for overseas Chinese students in Taiwan (Fan Ya-mei 2005: 1), Sun Yat-sen is quoted as saying ‘*Overseas Chinese are the Mother of the Revolution*’ (Wang 1994: 11). The presentation of such a famous quote on a college campus embeds the patriotic and nationalistic image of overseas Chinese in modern Chinese history. Praise for their nationalistic leanings became a pillar in historiography of Overseas Chinese (Wang 1981: 1-8) and found its place in the Constitution passed in 1946. In defining them as *Nationals Sojourning Abroad*, not only does the Constitution reserve seats for overseas delegates in the national representative bodies¹⁸ (Art. 26, 64, 91), but it also protects their interests, assists their economic activities and subsidises their education abroad (Art. 151, 156, 167). While *the Nationality Act* characterised the Overseas Chinese as nationals *sojourning* abroad, *the Household Registration Law* characterised them as an *internal but absent* population. That is, although they were physically absent from home, their household registrations were maintained. From 1931 to 1987, the law stipulated different ways of maintaining the household registration of the Overseas Chinese population¹⁹. The legal tradition of imagining overseas nationals as an internal population sustained in Taiwan.

¹⁸ The national representative bodies included the National Assembly, Legislative Yuan and Control Yuan. In the first general elections held in 1947 and 1948 for National Assembly delegates and legislators, there were overseas candidates elected by overseas constituencies (Huang Chen-tao 2009:77; Chicago Daily Tribune, 24/11/1947, p.27; Los Angeles Times, 25/11/1947, p.7). After the KMT government moved to Taiwan, the election of overseas delegates to national bodies was frozen and replaced by the president’s personal appointment.

¹⁹ In its earliest 1931 version, the maintenance of their household registration was mediated by ROC embassies (Art. 37). In the 1946 version, embassies were required to dispatch the monthly recordings of household registration back to the Ministry of the Interior. In the 1973 version, the responsibility of recording overseas nationals’ household registration became a joint task shared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior and the Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission (Art. 8).

From 1930/1936 onwards, the *Regulations on Overseas Chinese Registration* (*huaqiao dengji quicheng*,

In addition to the revolutionary and nationalistic image, the Overseas Chinese are also traditionally portrayed as *male* middle-upper class traders, businessmen and entrepreneurs (Lin 2001; Cheung 2005), who possess useful political and social resources (Wang 1993: 936). After the KMT government retreated to Taiwan in 1949, the nationalistic image of the Overseas Chinese was upheld for renewed geographical and political connotations. Given that the political inclinations of Chinese communities were split towards the ROC and the PRC, Taiwan constructed itself as the spiritual Chinese *Homeland* with priority being given to strengthen identification with the ROC to serve the commanding interest of anti-Chinese Communists and the retrocession of the Mainland. For example, in 1956, partly funded by the US government, Taiwan attended the International Trade Expo in Thailand, at which Taiwan's socio-economic progress was the theme of a photo exhibition. Originally scenic photos of the landscape of Mainland China were included, but these were eventually removed to avoid 'identification confusion' (Wang Wen-lung 2001: 89-90). Trade opportunities were franchised to pro-ROC Overseas Chinese merchants as a reward for their loyalty (Wang 2006). Eyeing the wealth of the Overseas Chinese business community, in 1955 *the Rules on Overseas Chinese Investment in the Free Area of the Motherland* was promulgated to attract Overseas Chinese investment in Taiwan. Owing to the popularity of a novel, *the Alien Realm* (Bo Yang, 1961; translated by Yu 1996) and its film adaptation, *A Home Too Far*, those Overseas Chinese in the border area between China

華僑登記規程) stipulated that ROC foreign missions should register Overseas Chinese (Ho 1999). It is unclear whether household registration was included as an item to be recorded in the registration. Between 1946 and 1955, household registration of residents in Taiwan was gradually established by 16 island-wide annual and biannual census (Lee 2011: 43-60; Wu 2006: 94-99). It is unclear whether this included the household registration of the Overseas Chinese.

(Yunnan), Myanmar and Thailand were imagined as loyal troops deserted by the KMT government (Huang Yu-han 2009: 17-23; Kaufman 2001).

In a bipolar world order, the political values of the Overseas Chinese went beyond the national level. In the early 1950s, the US government saw the political inclination of the Overseas Chinese as a contributing factor to the political stability of newly independent Southeast Asian countries. Before the Overseas Chinese were assimilated into their adopted countries, they were considered to be a potential ally of the Communist China. Supporting the ROC on Taiwan and encouraging the Overseas Chinese to identify with the ROC was seen by the US as a way of curbing Communist penetration in Southeast Asia (Kao 1974: 166; Chao 1996: 13-15). As suggested by the visiting US Vice President Nixon, from 1954 to 1965 Taiwan used US funding to facilitate the tertiary education of Overseas Chinese students in Taiwan²⁰ (NIOERAR 1957: 52-55). This was to counter the PRC's funding and staffing of Chinese schools in Southeast Asia and its recruitment of students to study in China.

The KMT government also accommodated the settlement of Overseas Chinese in Taiwan. Before 1991, their request out of a personal choice or political instability of their residing country was permitted without much complication²¹ (CY 2010: 25, 39). Special rules were in place to settle those who became stateless in Indonesia (Tseng Wen-chang 1999: 19). Their desire to live in Taiwan was propagandised as a

²⁰ Between 1952 and 1961, there was a total of 4,299 Overseas Chinese students who graduated from Taiwan's colleges and universities (MoE 1999: 87).

²¹ In practice, this is an issue of whether one can prove one's inheritance of ROC nationality, i.e. birth to a Chinese father. A Control Yuan investigation established that before the 1990s there was no specific legislation to regulate how an individual proved his/her Chinese lineage. In practice, a range of documentations were accepted as long as they recorded a birth to a Chinese father (CY 2010: 24-25). Overseas Chinese who could present evidence of having ROC nationality or being born to *Chinese* (*zhongguoren*, 中國人) fathers could apply to enter and reside in Taiwan as long as there was someone in Taiwan to endorse their application (ibid: 3).

demonstration of their loyalty towards the ROC and returning to the *Homeland*, in spite of the fact that they did not physically emigrate from Taiwan (Chao 2001: 17-18). However, there was a political boundary between Overseas Chinese returnees and the island's citizens. Accommodating trickles of returnees was one thing, receiving Overseas Chinese evacuees in large numbers from Vietnam in 1956-57 and Indonesia around 1960 was quite another. The government was alerted to the political sensitivity that favourably settling Overseas Chinese might spark a sense of unfairness and deprivation amongst the *native Taiwanese (benshenren)* (Chao 2001; Hsia 2006)²². Reserving representation for the Overseas Chinese was criticised for being fundamentally 'representation without taxation' and aroused doubts about the loyalty of overseas delegates who had dual nationality (National Affairs Conference Secretariat 1990: 12).

At the societal level, there was a boundary erected by class. The Overseas Chinese were collectively imagined as affluent *businessmen*, an envied status highlighted by the marriage of female entertainers to Overseas Chinese tycoons²³. Ethnographical information shows that there was envy of the westernised lifestyle of Indonesian Chinese (Li Yun-fei 2005: 51). The affluent image also applied to Overseas Chinese students (Chang 1973: 18), and male students were seen as desirable marital partners (interview with Le Fen Fen, 30/01/10, Taipei). Overseas Chinese students

²² Between 1974 and 1981, there was a total of 3,939 Overseas Chinese refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos relocated to Taiwan (OCAC 1982: 414-415). In Hualian County, adjacent to a settlement farm for discharged NCOs and soldiers, there is a residential compound built for settling evacuated Overseas Chinese refugees from Vietnam. However, it was never used and has now become derelict (Li Chi-ping 1998: 124).

²³ A well-known case is the marriage of Pai Chia-li (白嘉莉) in 1977 with Sarawak-born Burhan Uray (Huang Shuang An/Bong Suan An, 黃雙安) (Chang 2003: 61). Burhan Uray is a timber tycoon, who owns *Djayanti Group*. In 1994 he expanded his business to fisheries (Kanō 2008: 258; Indonesian Commercial Newsletter 28/03/94).

tended to be excluded by local students because of the privileges bestowed upon them (Fan Ya-mei 2005: 2, 7; Li Yan-tsao 2008: 9, 29). While *male* Overseas Chinese students were particularly singled out for being exempt from compulsory military service (Simon 1988), they were seen as enjoying privileges without making any contribution and not fulfilling their duties *as citizens*.

To sum up, the prescribed Overseas Chinese category is wrought with historically and geopolitically rooted conceptions. They were legally categorised as nationals sojourning abroad, but are imagined as an *internal* population. As their domicile in the adopted country was only *sojourning* (Fan Ya-mei 2005: 4), their allegiance was *extraterritorially* desired, irrespective of whether they had acquired another nationality. These imaginations were not flawless; bitterness emerged when disparity was sensed by their compatriots in Taiwan. Viewed through the lens of gender, these imaginations were male-dominated and little is known about the socio-economic status of Overseas Chinese women.

3.5.2 External Population: After 1991

From 1991 onwards, the tradition of viewing the Overseas Chinese as an internal population was discontinued. A new decree *the Rules of Nationals' Visitation, Residency and Household Registration* (henceforth *the 1991 Rules*) defined them as '*Nationals without Household Registration in the Taiwan Area*' (*taiwan diqu wu huji guomin*, 臺灣地區無戶籍國民²⁴) (Tseng Wen-chang 1999: 9). This decree realistically

²⁴ The official English translation used by *the Immigration Act* and *the Household Registration Law* is *Nationals without Registered Permanent Residence*, but the English translation used by *the Cross-Strait Statute* is *Nationals without Household Registration* (MAC 2005: 12). Considering that permanent residency is commonly used in the English language to refer to a permanent domicile but without acquiring citizenship, in this thesis I opt for *Nationals without Household Registration* to avoid confusion.

recognised that their dwelling abroad was not sojourning, Taiwan was not their geographical and ancestral home, and hence they had no authentic link with Taiwan (Art. 3). They were an *external* population (ibid: 31; NIA 2009: 1, 9) and as such their status had to be differentiated from that of citizens born on the island, who had an authentic link with Taiwan because of their rights and duties acquired at birth. *The 1991 Rules* terminated the imagination of the Overseas Chinese as Taiwan's *internal* population.

This re-categorisation was adopted by the amended *Household Registration Law* in 1987 and succeeded by the 1999 *Immigration Act*. The last stroke of re-categorising the Overseas Chinese was the final modernisation of *the Nationality Act* in 2000, after its long lease of life lasting some 71 years. Still adopting *jus sanguinis* as the principle for awarding nationality, the reformed law replaced the ambiguous regulation 'fathered by a *Chinese national*' with 'born to a father or mother who is a national of *the Republic of China*' (Art. 2). The reformed *Nationality Act* still tolerates dual nationality (CY 2010: 26). Before the 1990s, the verification and awarding of ROC nationality was lax for the sake of strengthening identification with the ROC, accommodating those who were affected by the Vietnam War, or encouraging investment in Taiwan (CY 2010: 25). However, after the 1990s, a tighter system of verification was put in place. Amongst accepted documentation as evidence for entitlement to ROC nationality²⁵ (Art.10, *the Enforcement Rules of Nationality Law*), documents issued by foreign governments bearing the legend of 'Chinese nationality' (*zhongguoji*) or 'Chinese race' are excluded (Art. 11, *the Enforcement Rules of the Statute Governing the Certificate*

²⁵ They include Certificate of Household Registration, ID Card, Household Registration Book, passport, Certificate for Nationality, Certificate for Overseas Chinese Status, certificate of nationality of either parent and the applicant's birth certificate.

for Overseas Chinese Status). In other words, the connection with *historical* China is not sufficient to claim ROC nationality. What is demanded is a recorded link with the ROC on Taiwan.

Thus, the imagination and legal categorisation of the Overseas Chinese becomes stratified. The Constitution categorises them as *Nationals Sojourning Abroad* and maintains an imagination of the permanent link between emigrants and the *Homeland*. *The Nationality Act* awards nationality by *jus sanguinis*, tolerates dual nationality, tightens the verification of the nationality claim and excludes claims based on a connection with historical China. *The Immigration Act* and *the Household Registration Law* specify that the *Homeland* is Taiwan and defines Overseas Chinese as *geographically* external to the Homeland. Although they are categorised as nationals, they are in fact treated as if they were foreigners (CY 2010: 7). The Constitutional Court determined that they do not enjoy citizenship including the right to return (CY 2010: 101-103). Instead, to rein in the increased settlement of Overseas Chinese in Taiwan, their requests for residency have to be scrutinised. They will have to be either sponsored by citizens who are kin, or who make a contribution to the national economy, such as investing in Taiwan or being highly skilled professionals (Art.9, 10, *the Immigration Act*).

This significant change has to be understood in the context of democratisation and the growing Taiwanese consciousness. Since the late 1980s, Taiwan had become assertive about its aspiration to be recognised as an entity separate from China (Deans 2001). With the growing Taiwanese consciousness, the lure of the Overseas Chinese as a political asset to support Taiwan's claim as the sole and legitimate representative of China has faded. The KMT government began to re-draw the boundary of the national and political community under the 'nationalist principle'. That is, the political and the

national unit should be congruent (Gellner 2002: 1). Utilising the territorial link in the form of household registration, the government separates PRC citizens from ROC citizens and defines amongst the Overseas Chinese who, and under what kind of conditions, they can be included inside the communities and be entitled to the substantive rights endowed by citizenship. When the principle of awarding nationality by bloodline (*jus sanguinis*) draws an *ethnic* boundary of the national community, the legislation stressing a territorial link draws a *civic* boundary of the political community.

Taiwan's confidence gained from its economic achievements has also contributed to the re-drawing of the *civic* boundary. In the mid 1980s, while Taiwanese investors looked for partners amongst the Chinese business communities in Southeast Asia (Hsiao *et al.*, 2002; Hsiao 2003; Kung 2005), overseas Chinese workers were found to be illegally employed in Taiwan (Seyla 1992: 788, 792; Kung 2002: 248; interview with Lum Lok Yee, 02/04/09, Taipei)²⁶. The image of Overseas Chinese began to change from being affluent businessmen to being poor workers seeking employment in better-off Taiwan. The government was also alarmed by the surge of settlement of Overseas Chinese after the social welfare system started to take shape in the late 1980s (CY 2010: 100; NIA 2009: 8). Instead of embracing them as returning to the Homeland, the government began to see them as free-riders of Taiwan's growing prosperity, and their settlement needed to be examined in respect of their contribution to the national community.

²⁶ Illegal workers included Indonesians, Malaysians, Filipinos, South Koreans, and Thais in equal numbers with a substantive number from Sri Lanka. The police assumed those who entered Taiwan on a transit visa intended to work and overstay, particularly those who were Overseas Chinese (Seyla 1992: 792). Reportedly, 51.3 percent of the illegal workers were Overseas Chinese (Selya 2004: 329).

Now I shall specify how marriage immigrant women of Chinese ancestry feature in the Overseas Chinese category. The general theme is that they are absent in this category. That is, in spite of their numeric existence, there is a lack of a clearly constructed image specifically attributed to them *within* this category. Before the occurrence of large-scale marriage immigration, they were perceived as part of the Overseas Chinese settlement and they were socially known as ‘Overseas Chinese from Indonesia’ (*yinni huaqiao*) (Yang and Lan 2006: 12-14). After marriage migration became an established concept, Overseas Chinese women from Indonesia and Vietnam were not separately conceived as Overseas Chinese but grouped together with indigenous Indonesian and ethnic Vietnamese and bundled into the Southeast Asian category. Although some studies mentioned the experiences of ethnic tension between indigenous Indonesian and Indonesian Chinese (Chen Mei-chen 2006) and the impact of anti-Chinese violence on their migration decision (Chen Mei-ying 2010: 9), their Chinese heritage is not given sufficient attention to consider their relationship with Taiwan. As Vietnamese Chinese Hoàng Minh Suong pointed out, ‘Regardless of whether we’re Overseas Chinese or Vietnamese, the way you (Taiwanese people) see us is the same – *as long as we come from Vietnam, we represent the country “Vietnam”*’(27/05/09, Chinshan). It was only with reference to their Chinese language ability that their Chinese-ness was mentioned in passing as an explanatory variable for their assumed faster familiarisation with the Chinese language (Chen Ting-yun 2002; Li 2002). For those who were of Hakka ancestry, they were enthusiastically expected to be assimilated into the Taiwanese Hakka community.

However, the lack of a constructed image shall not exclude them from the Overseas Chinese category. Alerted by Constable’s elucidation that it is critical to distinguish people’s use of ascribed labels and prescribed labels (Constable 2006: 11), I

opted for the term Chinese rather than Mainland to categorise immigrant women from China. In the same vein, my interviews with Indonesian Chinese and Vietnamese Chinese women found that they self-identified as Overseas Chinese and held various degrees of subjective Chinese identity. The narratives of their self-identification corresponded to the nationalistic image of the Cold War era and the imagination of Overseas Chinese as an *internal* population. The application of the lax or restrictive legislation had an impact on the perception of some interviewees of their relationship with Taiwan. Thus, observing what they *themselves* say about and do with the Overseas Chinese category draws a picture with which to fully understand their identification with Taiwan.

3.6 Summary

In this chapter I have examined what locals *say about* the categories of the Chinese, Southeast Asian and Overseas Chinese categories. The categorisations are contrasted with the Taiwanese category as depicted by the *Understanding Taiwan* textbook. The Taiwanese category is established by the historiography of immigration and carries with it a moral mission to pursue democracy, safeguard prosperity and protect human rights. These categorisations have become elements of the nation-building project. Biased by gender, class and ethnicity, the presumed inferiority of the immigrant outsiders is to contrast the imagined homogeneous modernity, democracy, prosperity of the Taiwanese category.

Chinese immigrant women are defined as an *external* population and hence kept out of the Taiwanese category. Under the process of political essentialisation, which is based on Taiwan's self-identity as a free democracy, they are seen as fundamentally different, inferior and dangerous because of their communist cultivation. Perceived as

the personification of an uncivilised and bellicose China, they are assumed to be diametrically opposite to the Taiwanese category. They embody the formidable forces China possesses to compromise Taiwan's vulnerable sovereignty (Pan 2004: 41). Hence, a boundary is built upon the suspicions towards China's intention, fear of China's power, resentment of China's threatening posture and its non-recognition of Taiwan's separateness and independence. The Communist ideology and its systems are imagined to be so overpowering that Taiwanese expatriates who reside in the PRC may fall under its influence. Thus, it is necessary to impose the requirement of a singular household registration on people of both sides who move across the strait. Chinese women are also discriminated against as being amoral and poor because of their gender and class and this also poses a threat to Taiwan's security.

The categorisation of Southeast Asian women has its roots in Taiwan's economic and diplomatic strategy towards Southeast Asia. The lower economic development of the region and the presumed personal poverty is highlighted as a stark contrast to Taiwan's prosperity. However, the plight of Southeast Asian women poses a serious challenge to Taiwan's self-identity as a protector of human rights. When Taiwan attempts to right wrongs, it nevertheless exposes its worldview of a racial hierarchy. This revelation is made clearer when juxtaposing the imaginations of Ukrainian women with those of Southeast Asian women. Although Taiwan tried to strengthen ties with Southeast Asia or even identify itself as a member of that region (Hsiao 1997: 5), the categorisation of Southeast Asian women adversely distances Taiwan from its neighbours.

The categorisation of the Overseas Chinese as an *external* population is crucial to the establishment of the Taiwanese category. It is a necessity with which to uphold the civic aspect of the Taiwanese identity, which stresses Taiwan as the Homeland

where people share the same historical experiences and destiny. This is manifested by using the territorial link as the criterion for awarding citizenship, in addition to awarding nationality by bloodline. However, in spite of the large numbers of ethnic Chinese women from Indonesia and Vietnam, their self-identity as Overseas Chinese is unnoticed and they are nearly always perceived exclusively as Indonesian and Vietnamese.

In short, both Chinese and Southeast Asian immigrant women are subjected to an overwhelming public imagination that is closely attached to the self-perception of the Taiwanese category. In the case of Chinese immigrants, this reflects how China is perceived in relation to Taiwan politically and economically. In the case of Southeast Asian immigrants, it serves as a mirror-image of Taiwan's sense of racial and economic superiority. However, while presenting Taiwan as a *homogenous* entity opposite to the outsiders, these categorisations inevitably reveal the internal divide and differentiation. In the case of the Chinese category, it manifests in questioning the husbands' loyalty towards Taiwan. In the case of the Southeast Asian category, it emerges when the husbands and in-laws are also perceived as amoral, inferior and backward.

CHAPTER 4: DISCIPLINE UNDESIRE IMMIGRANTS TO ACCEPTABLE CITIZENS: THE GENDERED CITIZENSHIP LEGISLATION AND NATION-BUILDING

Continuing on from the discussion of categorisation in the previous chapter, I will now discuss what Taiwan's government does with these categories and how it reacts to the perceived *inundation* of marriage immigrants. Zlotnik suggests that it is necessary to compare the legal differentiation of different foreign groups in one country (Zlotnik 1990: 374); Taiwan is a good example of this. The locus of the government's reaction is to reduce the volume of immigrants by detecting and denying bogus marriages. On the other hand, it is to transform their foreignness and a presumed inferiority to conform to the mainstream norms and values. In accordance with how immigrants are categorised, this reaction is embodied by the legislation which regulates entry, residency, employment, naturalisation and citizenship. As the outsiders are women who are wives and mothers of the future citizens, the legislation is gendered to achieve integration whereby the foreign wives and mothers can then perform the function of cultural transmission for the host society.

Therefore, the legislation is not only a package of laws and regulations, but it also sets out the opportunities for and restrictions on the living environment for immigrants in Taiwan. In Chapters 5, 6, and 7, these restrictions and opportunities are deduced into three clusters of variables, namely the perception of citizenship legislation, facility in the Chinese language and the fulfilling of motherhood duties. Considering that acquiring citizenship is widely desired as the ultimate assurance of a stable and secure life in Taiwan, and citizenship is safeguarded for the endowed substantive rights, the package of laws and regulations is phrased thereafter as 'citizenship legislation' to underline its legality as a threshold for immigrants and the host state.

4.1 Gate Crossing: From an Outsider to a Citizen

Tseng argues that it is necessary to compare the citizenship legislation of receiving countries of marriage immigrants in East Asia to uncover the underlined gender roles embedded within the legislation (Tseng 2009). In this comparative light, a reflection on the composition of the national community, which is illuminated by receiving marriage immigrant women, appears in Singapore and Taiwan. In the case of Singapore, immigration of different nationalities (including couples of mixed nationality marriages) exposes the ‘acute sense of vulnerability’ of Singapore as an ‘improbable nation’ (Tan 2008: 74). This contributed to the city state’s constitutional amendments in 2004, one of which enabled female Singaporeans to pass their citizenship to their foreign-born children (ibid: 77). In the case of Taiwan, the evolution of citizenship legislation is characterised by the island’s self-perception as a free democracy and prosperous economy that is eager to demonstrate its sincerity for human rights protection.

Abrams points out that as far as foreign spouses are concerned, US immigration law is a *family* law (Abrams 2007: 1629). Ito also finds that family is a constitutive concept of the Japanese citizenship regime with regard to Filipino wives (Ito 2005). Upon receiving female marriage migration as the major source of immigration, Taiwan’s legislation is also shaped by the concepts of gender and family with which to regulate the living of the immigrant outsiders who are inserted into local families and after a period of time become constituent members of the national community. For Southeast Asian immigrant women, including those of Chinese ethnicity, the legislation is aggregated in *the Nationality Act*, *the Immigration Act*, and *the Household Registration Law*. For Chinese immigrants, however, the legislation is formulated within a single law *the Cross-Strait Statute*. Since 1999, both sets of the legislation have been amended several times as a result of negotiations between the government and

advocacy organisations. The interaction between state and society demonstrates how the state defines the boundary of the national community in order to accommodate and cultivate immigrant women of differing ethnicity, cultural heritage, and divergent political outlooks into *acceptable* citizens.

From being an immigrant to then becoming a citizen is thus to be accepted by the host state as a member of the polity. In the terminology of Tomas Hammar, the legal procedure of becoming a citizen is analogous to crossing gates guarded by relevant legislation of residency and citizenship (Hammar 1990: 21). At a meta-level, it is to cross the boundary between the host society and immigrant categories. At a micro-level, it is a *rite of passage* from an outsider to become a member of the national community. In the following sections, I will analyse how the gates are maintained and safeguarded by the state, and in the following three chapters I will discuss how Chinese, Southeast Asian and Overseas Chinese immigrants in their daily experiences cross the boundary as their *rite of passage*.

4.2 The Legislation for Southeast Asian Immigrants

In concept, the first gate of entry and residency is safeguarded by *the Immigration Act*. The second gate of naturalisation is controlled by *the Nationality Act*. The third gate of citizenship is overseen by *the Household Registration Law*. In Taiwan's legal system, naturalisation alone does not equal to citizenship. Rather, it is a transition to the final acquirement of citizenship. Citizenship is not granted until a naturalised person is permitted to register his/her permanent residence within a household (Chao 2005b: 68-76; Rigger 2002; Friedman 2010: 74-75). When the household registration (*huji*) is completed, a naturalised person is issued with *the National Identification Card* (ID Card), which is the symbol of acquiring citizenship and being entitled to the substantive rights which are reserved for citizens. The legislation marked by this legal transition

visualises the existence of the boundary and maps out the distance between the host state and an immigrant who seeks settlement and formal inclusion.

1. Residency

The first gate to cross is to receive permission to enter and reside. *The Immigration Act* permits a foreign spouse to reside in Taiwan (Art. 23) because the state cannot deprive its citizens of marital companionship. Thus, by law the residency of an immigrant woman is dependent on marriage and in reality is dependent on her husband, who endorses her application for residency. To prevent marriage from being abused as a channel for illegal employment and human trafficking, *the Immigration Act* stipulates that if the marriage is *factually* proven to be fraudulent, the residency permit shall be withdrawn (Art. 24). Whether the marriage is fraudulent is up to the scrutiny of the state and this is where the state apparatus intervenes.

The authenticity of a marriage is examined when an immigrant woman applies for a dependent visa to enter Taiwan. Mandated with the power of permitting or denying entry, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in June 2005 began to tighten the verification of marriage documentation and visa applications. The conventional group interview was replaced by one-to-one interviews. During the interview consular officers are authorised to raise questions regarding the applicants' courtship, family background, wedding arrangements and post-marital life in order to *authenticate* the marriage (MOFA 2007: 9-16). The average rate of rejection in 2006 (36.8 percent) is taken as demonstrating the effectiveness of deterring and preventing bogus marriages and human trafficking (*ibid*: 11). However, behind the legal and neutral language used by the government report, the actual conduct of the interview is scripted by a layered discrimination undercut by class, gender, and ethnicity. In Jakarta (Hsia 1997: 89-113; 124-136) and Ho Chi Minh City (Kung 2009: 182-183), male and female Taiwanese consular officers did not disguise

their contempt for marriage immigrant women (and their Taiwanese husbands), including questioning their virginity (Formosa TV 25/05/10). Immigrant women are despised as a liability to Taiwan's international competitiveness, and the consular officers elevate their visa-issuing authority to a mission of safeguarding the boundary and preventing immigrant women from 'contaminating' the nation. The discrimination of the state enacted by the consular officers is the very first gate a marriage immigrant woman has to cross to commence her marriage migration.

After crossing the first gate and stepping on foreign soil, marriage immigrant women are required to apply for a residency permit and register their residence address with the government. After four months of residency, they are entitled to be insured by the National Health Insurance (NHI) programme. After residing in Taiwan for a certain period of time, an immigrant woman may be eligible to apply for Permanent Residency (Art. 25)²⁷. As preventing bogus marriages is a vested interest, *the Immigration Act* authorises the law enforcement agencies to conduct interviews when immigrants apply for a residency permit or other documentation (Art. 65). It is also at the discretion of the agencies to conduct searches or 'stop and check' when deemed necessary (Art. 67, 68, 71). As all foreign residents are required to register their residential address with the government (Art. 31), and for marriage immigrant women the residential address is usually their husband's address, whether immigrant women actually reside at the registered address is held as an indication of the authenticity of the marriage. This requirement – foreign wives taking their husband's residence as their residence - is in conflict with the reformed *Family Laws of the Civil Code* which states that married

²⁷ Up to the end of 2010, out of the 44,689 foreign female spouses who were Residency Permit holders (excluding those who had acquired citizenship), there was only a fractional number of 672 Permanent Residency holders (1.5 percent) (NIA 2011b).

couples should jointly reach an agreement on their place of residence (Chang 2009: 131). Thus while the state monitors the whereabouts of foreign residents for surveillance, it also serves as an *external* check on the chastity of marriage immigrant women. In other words, ensuring the *chastity* of immigrant wives becomes a shared interest between the state and husbands/in-laws. Both parties act together to prevent immigrant women from deserting the home, a social phenomenon known as ‘*runaway*’. Tasked to monitor the whereabouts of the immigrants²⁸, the Police use *runaway* as shorthand for sex workers. When police officers deal with blonde-haired, blue-eyed, English-speaking foreigners, they appear *humble* and courteous (Young 2007: 58-60, 70-71). When they deal with Southeast Asian immigrant wives and female migrant workers, they become rude and impatient with the demeanour of scornful colonial masters (ibid: 53, 60-61, 63-65). Thus, after suffering discrimination at the hands of consular officers at the first gate (applying for a residency visa), immigrant women then continue to encounter condescending police officers in Taiwan, whose treatment of foreign residents is differentiated according to gender, class and ethnicity.

In addition to factually proven bogus marriages, the cessation of marriage because of divorce or a husband’s death also results in the withdrawal of a residency permit, followed by expulsion (Art. 31). If immigrants wish to continue to stay in Taiwan, they become illegal residents. If the withdrawal occurs after they have applied for naturalisation and have renounced their former nationality, they then become stateless. A similar situation also exists in South Korea, another major destination in

²⁸ In August 2003 the government launched an operation to strengthen surveillance on marriage immigrant women. Mandated with the authority to renew or reject residency permits, police officers were required to ‘visit and investigate’ an immigrant woman at her residential address at least once a month in the first three months of her first year in Taiwan. The results of the ‘visit and investigation’ of the 10th and 11th month of her first-year residency were to determine whether her residency permit should be renewed (Young 2007: 11-12). This heavy-handed scrutiny was criticised for treating immigrant women as people of high security risk (ibid: 67).

East Asia for marriage migration (Chung *et al.* 2009)²⁹. If after returning to their natal country they encounter difficulties in restoring their lost nationality, they still remain stateless, even in their home country. This is described as ‘lost a husband, lost a country’ by a report published by the United Nations Refugee Agency in 2007 (McKinsey 2007a, 2007b, 2009, 2010; Refugees International 2009: 39)³⁰.

Nevertheless, there are preset exceptions to expulsion provided by *the Immigration Act* (Art. 31). An immigrant woman is allowed to stay if a) she suffers physical or mental abuse from her husband, and has been issued with a court protection order; b) she has won the custody of her children upon divorce; c) If her divorce is the result of domestic abuse and she has juvenile children who have household registration (read: legitimately born in wedlock); d) if her departure poses a ‘grave and irreversible’ damage to her children. These exceptions show that when a marriage immigrant women’s residency in Taiwan ceases to depend on her husband, it then shifts to depend on her children. Her children, as born citizens, become the endorsers of her residency.

It is clear that these exceptions are granted on the basis of her *chastity* as a wife and her function as a mother. As a divorcee, she is allowed to stay because she is not at fault in the case of the cessation of the marriage and so her chastity as a wife is not questioned. As a mother, she is allowed to stay because the state cannot deprive its citizens (the children) of maternal care. From the perspective of the state, when her function as a marital companion ceases to apply, her function as a maternal guardian is given additional weight to legitimise her domicile. The emphasis on maternal care

²⁹ Statelessness occurs in South Korea when naturalisation is acquired by deceit and is annulled because of, for example, a faked marriage.

³⁰ To address this issue, in 2009 the Vietnamese government amended the nationality law and now the law permits dual nationality (McKinsey 2009, 2010).

makes children the legal endorser for an immigrant mother's residency if they wish to stay. This in practice makes the mother and the child an integrated entity that is bounded by a shared interest. Thus, if an immigrant woman does not bear children, her domicile in Taiwan is at greater risk³¹.

2. Employment

In 2003 and 2008, the Ministry of the Interior conducted a nation-wide census and survey. The results revealed that the protection of working rights is the top concern for marriage immigrant women (MoI 2004a; 2009a). As foreign residents, whether or not they are allowed to work was regulated by *the Employment Services Act*, the law that was brought into being partly to legalise the employment of foreign labour. *The Employment Services Act* originally required foreign spouses on residency permits to apply for a work permit (EY 1999b). This requirement was removed in 2003 (LY 2002). Foreign spouses are thus given the right to work once they are issued with a residency permit (Art. 48; Yu 2003). The changed government stance is a retreat from negatively seeing the right to work as inviting bogus marriages to actively acknowledging the contribution of the immigrants' employment to their family economy. However, once a residency permit is withdrawn, the right to work is also threatened because the right to work is also hinged on the maintenance of the marriage. To widely inform the society, in February 2010, the central government notified local governments, advocacy groups, trade unions, industrial associations and business chambers about the rights and entitlements of foreign spouses with regard to

³¹This may happen to a woman who marries a homosexual man who uses their marriage to fend off social pressure and conceal his sexuality. In my fieldwork, I met such a divorced Vietnamese wife who faced deportation after the divorce was initiated by her homosexual husband.

employment (CLA 2010). In spite of these efforts, immigrant women's right to work is still not well known in Taiwan.

The gendered legislation sends a clear message to immigrant women. That is, if they prefer to reside in Taiwan with their children, a residency permit dependent on marriage does not guarantee security and predictability for domicile and employment, which is indispensable for a stable life in a foreign country. This right is not only largely controlled by the husband, but also partly at the discretion of the state. That is, they will need a guarantee from the state for an uninterrupted permanent residency in Taiwan.

3. Naturalisation

This aspiration is to be realised by acquiring citizenship through naturalisation. Naturalisation is the second gate to cross with which to be accepted as a member of the national community. Conceptually, this is the occasion when membership of the immigrant categories begins to be overlapped with membership of the Taiwanese category. At a personal level, it is taking a step forward along the *rite of passage* towards citizen status. Smith notes that immigration policies in western Europe and the US show favouritism towards immigrants who claim *kinship* with local citizens; they do not need to prove they have more 'civic' credentials to be awarded with citizenship than those without any kinship links (Smith 2002: 110). Marriage with citizens is one such occasion where favouritism is offered and in the past a woman automatically acquired her foreign husband's nationality. However, since WWII this has been repealed in most European countries to be in line with gender equality and to prevent fraudulent

marriages (Weil 2001: 28)³². The government of Taiwan followed suit in 2000 and accordingly adjusted the legislation on naturalisation (Chen 2009: 302-303).

As naturalisation is the indispensable transition to admit an *outsider* into the national community and consequently changes the legal relationship between the outsider and the state, it legitimises careful scrutiny to ascertain the qualification of the candidates. The examination is boundary-making to distinguish the perceived difference between the immigrant category and the host Taiwanese category. The legislation controlling naturalisation is *the Nationality Act*. First promulgated in 1929, the law stipulated that a foreign *wife* automatically acquired ROC nationality through her marriage with an ROC citizen (Art. 2). In June 1999, the KMT government amended *the Nationality Act* and abolished the automatic awarding of ROC nationality (EY 1999c). The reformed law was promulgated in February 2000, the last month before the change of the government from the KMT to the DPP, and the law now stipulates that foreign spouses – male and female – may acquire ROC nationality through naturalisation (Art. 4). In other words, marriage becomes one of the means by which a foreign national can be awarded with ROC nationality.

To deal with the growing number of requests for naturalisation, the legislation was amended several times after 2000 during the two DPP administrations (see Table 4.1). The legislation was utilised as an instrument for implementing the integration scheme. On the one hand, the legislation scrutinises the request for inclusion made by undesired and unwanted immigrants. On the other hand, it aims to acculturate the immigrants to make them become *like us*. The law-making effort is thus an example of

³² This was the case in Sweden in 1950, Denmark in 1951, Portugal in 1959, Italy in 1983, Belgium in 1984, Greece in 1984, and Israel in 1996 (Weil 2001: 28).

banal nationalism (Billig 2009: 6) in the sense that through intervening in marriage and family life it actively distinguishes *us* from *them* but reluctantly builds a drawbridge to permit them to cross and become one of us.

The scheme is embodied by a set of prerequisites for naturalisation eligibility. *The Nationality Act* stipulates that the active requirements, amongst others, are financial adequacy, acculturation, and a singular loyalty to Taiwan. The favouritism for foreign spouses is a shorter qualifying period of the required minimal length of domicile (three years rather than five years) (Art. 3). The requirement of proving financial adequacy is to remove the burden on the state to support immigrant-turned citizens. Under the auspices of the DPP government, the requirement was translated into a high amount of income or savings in *the Enforcement Rules of the Nationality Act* (henceforth *the Enforcement Rules*) (Art. 7³³). This requirement was strongly criticised for ignoring the living conditions of transnational couples and setting a price on citizenship (Liao 2006: 104). In late 2008, the KMT government backed down and accepted any documentation showing financial situation as proof of financial independence. Besides, the properties of the husband and parents-in-law were also included as proof of financial adequacy (Art. 7, *the Enforcement Rules*). This change was not possible until the government was pushed to acknowledge that most immigrant women are not employed and rely on their husbands as the main source of family income and personal spending money, as shown by the results of the 2003 census and 2008 survey (MoI 2004a, 2009a; see Appendix B for details). An unintentional consequence of the change is that it strengthens the status of the family as an integrated economic unit within which resources are pooled and

³³ In April 2004, the requirement was laid out as a) a monthly income twice higher than the official minimum wage, or b) annual savings 24 times higher than the official minimum wage.

shared. This is particularly so for immigrant women who work for family-run businesses.

The acculturation requirement is another example of how the legislation is gendered by expecting immigrant women to perform the duties of motherhood. As Yuval-Davis and Anthias point out (1989: 7), women are incorporated into the nation-building project as biological reproducers and cultural transmitters. The function immigrant women fulfil – biological reproduction and cultural transmission – pushes the state, no matter how reluctant it may be, to admit immigrant outsiders to become *us*-members. It strengthens the bond between a mother and her children and makes them an integrated entity of common interest. The only problem is that immigrant mothers are not seen as capable of performing this critical duty because of their presumed lower level of education. Thus the legislation is tasked to induce immigrant women's acculturation and proactively prevent the underclass immigrants from holding back Taiwan's economic competitiveness and posing a threat to *national security* (NSC 2006: 61).

A presumed lower level of education compounded by the lack of the Chinese language ability is flagged up as the root of the questionable quality of their motherhood. Thus the proficiency of the Chinese language is underlined as *the* remedy and it is the responsibility of the state to provide language training. In 1999, the legislature authorised funding for the Ministry of the Interior to provide orientation and language training courses to foreign spouses (Wu 2005: 43-44). The funding was aimed at a) realising the protection of immigrant women's human rights and *improving Taiwan's international image*; b) maintaining the family function and promoting social stability; c) ensuring the quality of the human resources and reinforcing Taiwan's competitiveness

(Wu 2005: 44-45). Upholding ‘improving the international image’ as a goal once again highlights how immigration is appropriated to the nation-building purpose.

Thus, in 2005, an additional prerequisite for naturalisation eligibility was made by the DPP government. That is, naturalisation applicants have to present proof of Chinese language ability or knowledge of the local way of life (Art.8, *the Enforcement Rules*). Although this prerequisite applies to all categories of naturalisation applicants, the government clearly stated in the draft bill that enhancing an immigrant mother’s ability to care for and educate her children was one of the goals behind its introduction (EY 2005). Proof of Chinese language ability and knowledge of the local way of life can be obtained by two different means. One is to attend publicly-funded language/orientation courses or to enrol at any formal educational institution. The other is to pass *the Test of Basic Language Abilities and Knowledge of Rights and Duties of Naturalised Citizens* (基本語言能力及國民權利義務基本常識測驗) (henceforth *the Test*)³⁴. It is assumed that by acquiring the language ability in a formal schooling environment immigrant mothers will be able to care for their children and assist their early learning at home, thereby achieving cultural transmission. On the other hand, the content of *the Test* displays a presentation of knowledge and values (mostly about the democratic system) that are deemed fundamental to the local way of life. It is hoped that naturalisation will familiarise an immigrant woman with a set of government-sanctioned values which are presumably representative of the national community. It is further hoped that this will induce them to identify with Taiwan.

³⁴ This is similar to *the integration test* required of foreign spouses of Dutch nationals (de Hart 2006a: 196) and *the Life in the UK* and *English for Speakers of Other Language* (ESOL) tests required of applicants for permanent residency and naturalisation in the UK (Home Office 2007).

The last active requirement is for immigrants to demonstrate a singular loyalty towards the national community (Art. 9, *the Nationality Act*). A singular loyalty is seen as the foundation for social cohesion and the demonstration of this is achieved by renouncing a former nationality. Although before 2000 foreign *wives* were automatically granted dependent nationality, they in fact would not acquire it until they presented evidence of having relinquished their former nationality as demanded by an administrative procedure. While the automatic awarding was abolished, relinquishing the former nationality was made into a legal requirement. This is a contradiction of the fact that *the Nationality Act* tolerates ROC citizens acquiring dual nationality³⁵ (Tseng Wen-chang 1999: 31; CY 2010). Thus *the Nationality Act* in effect operates a double standard for Taiwan-born citizens and naturalised foreigners. It turns a blind eye to the dual nationality of Taiwan-born citizens without questioning where their loyalties lie and whether it is fair to use nationality as an access to the collective resources of the emigrant country. At the same time, it demands an *expressive exclusive* loyalty of naturalised foreigners and legitimises this as the price paid to be entitled to the potential benefits reserved for citizens.

Losing the original nationality is as significant as gaining a new nationality. While acquiring a new nationality is seen as building a bond with the residing country, losing the previous nationality is seen as severing ties with the originating country, or even as treason (Hammar 1990: 89). Also lost are all of the substantive rights one used to enjoy as a member of the polity. Thus, in a singular nationality system, the new one

³⁵ Acquiring a second nationality is pursued by some, including politicians, for multiple purposes: a safety valve against the possibility of war between Taiwan and China, a convenience to facilitate business travel around the world, as access to social welfare of other countries, and a chance of having a better life and quality of education for their children (Tseng Yen-fen 1999; Beal and Sos, 2001: 134-140; Chee 2003).

is gained at the expense of the original one. When an immigrant woman is unable to restore the lost nationality, she becomes stateless. The statelessness of immigrant women in Taiwan is noted by United Nations Refugee Agency, which pointed at Taiwan's legislation for causing this legal limbo (McKinsey 2007a, 2007b, 2009, 2010; Refugees International 2009: 39). In 2010, the government amended *the Nationality Act* and now permits divorced or widowed immigrant women to apply for naturalisation as spouses – provided they are the custodians of their juvenile children (MoI 2010). The reason given by the Ministry for this amendment is unexceptionally gendered – divorced or widowed women who are responsible for their children's well-being have performed motherhood well and their performance shows their 'sincerity' at seeking integration into the host society (MoI 2009b).

4. Citizenship

The last gate to cross to be accepted as a member of the polity is to apply for citizenship. In technical terms it is to apply for household registration. As mentioned above, household registration is the watershed between a national and a citizen. Under *the Immigration Act*, a naturalised person is not a citizen but a *National without Household Registration in the Taiwan Area*. (Art.3(5), *the Immigration Act*). Visits to Taiwan by such persons require *prior* written permission, and their residency is still term-specified and dependent on the endorsement of their families (Art. 8-17). For a marriage immigrant woman, the endorser is her husband. If her marriage comes to an end, the government has the power to cancel her residency permit (Art. 11). Thus, the key to defeat the conditionality is to apply for citizenship and secure uninterrupted residency. The application for citizenship can be made after a naturalised person has

resided in Taiwan for a specified period of time³⁶. This in effect commences a probationary period, which once again underlines the gendered characteristics of the immigration legislation. That is, if a marriage comes to an end because of divorce or the death of a husband, the immigrant woman may still be eligible to apply, provided that she has juvenile children born of this marriage and provided that she is be capable of exercising guardianship for the children. On the other hand, if her marriage is proved to be fraudulent, her application will be denied (Art. 10). When the review of her application is completed, she is required to register herself within her husband's household and afterwards she is issued with her ID Card. At that juncture, she is finally confirmed as a member of the polity with the authoritative identity documentation to prove her legal and formal membership. By law, citizens are required to carry the ID Card at all times to prove identity (Art. 56, *the Household Registration Law*), and it is required as *the* proof of identity in everyday life³⁷. The authoritativeness of the ID Card is such that it takes much persuasion to convince members of the general public that an Alien Residence Certificate (document issued to foreign residents) and foreign passports are of equivalent legal authority.

³⁶ It may be a full year of uninterrupted residency, two years during which applicants reside in Taiwan no less than 270 days per year, or five years during which applicants reside no less than 183 days per year in Taiwan (Art. 10, *the Immigration Act*).

³⁷ The occasions requiring the presentation of ID Cards occur in private as well as in public spheres. Based on interviewees' experiences, they range from joining a Karaoke singing contest, signing up to a mobile phone service contract, booking train tickets online, collecting registered mail at a post office, children filling in forms containing parents' information, claiming lottery prize money, hiring a car, lodging at a hotel, signing a lease, opening a bank account, buying private insurance, applying for a credit card, investing in the stock market, buying a property and casting a vote.

Table 4.1 Evolution of Citizenship Legislation for Southeast Asian Immigrants

Govt	Legislation Gates safeguarding citizenship	Requirements for citizenship
KMT	<i>The Nationality Act</i> (1929-Jan 2000) foreign <i>wives</i> automatically acquiring citizenship	None
KMT DPP	<i>The Nationality Act</i> (Feb 2000 onwards) foreign <i>spouses</i> acquiring citizenship by naturalisation	1. 2004: financial adequacy (savings/incomes of a high amount) 2. 2005: language ability/Naturalisation Test 3. 2000: renunciation of former nationality
KMT	2008 onwards	2008: liberalising the evidence for financial adequacy
KMT DPP KMT	<i>The Immigration Act</i> (1999 onwards) residency (3)→naturalisation (1)→household registration	continuation of marriage

Source: EY 1999c, EY2005.

Note: Numbers in brackets are the minimum years of residency required for eligibility for citizenship or Permanent Residency.

4.3 The Legislation for Chinese Immigrants

As analysed in the previous chapter, Chinese immigrant women are imagined as materialistic, amoral, seductive, politically inferior, and posing a threat to Taiwan's

social order, political stability, *de facto* independence and sovereignty. These images derive from Taiwan's interaction with China over the past three decades. However, the perceived threat to independence and the impact on Taiwan's partisan politics was given particular attention during the DPP era. Their images are projected by the roles of wife-mother and citizen. Thus, the direction of the legislation is dictated by two divergent tendencies and as a result the legislation entails internal contradiction. Seeing them as wives and mothers, one tendency is to release rights and entitlements so that they can better perform the duty of wives and mothers. As a sound performance is premised on a stable and secure dwelling, which is ultimately obtained by acquiring citizenship, the gate for citizenship should be opened. However, anxiously anticipating them to become citizens, the other tendency is to impose rigid restrictions on citizenship eligibility to prevent them from becoming an inserted 'enemy within' and a collective force with which to disturb electoral politics. The dual tendencies are encapsulated into a policy guideline as '*loose on living, tough on citizenship*' (shenghuo congkuan, shenfen congyan, 生活從寬, 身分從嚴). The guideline has been in place since the KMT administration in the 1990s (Chen Hsiao-hung 1999: xi) and the consecutive DPP and KMT governments after 2000. Driven by the internal contradiction, *the Cross-Strait Statute* has been significantly reformed since 1992, particularly after the government changed hands twice in 2000 and 2008³⁸.

1. Entry Interview

³⁸ The package of the regulations includes *the Rules of Entry of People of the Mainland Area into the Taiwan Area* (thereafter *the Entry Rules*), *the Rules of the Interview of People of the Mainland Area Who Apply for Entering the Taiwan Area* (thereafter *the Interview Rules*), *the Rules Governing Settlement or Residency of People of the Mainland Area in the Taiwan Area* (thereafter *the 2001 Residency Rules*), *the Rules Governing Dependent Residency, Long-Term Residency, or Settlement of People of the Mainland Area in the Taiwan Area* (thereafter *the 2004 Residency Rules*). *The 2004 Residency Rules* are the successor of *the 2001 Residency Rules*.

An entry clearance interview is the very first gate to cross to enter Taiwan (Art. 10, *the Cross-Strait Statute*). The requirement was not introduced until September 2003 under the DPP administration (NIA 2009: 15). A failure to pass the interview results in denial of entry (repatriation), or conditional entry subject to further interview. The failure rate of interviewees – average 12.67 percent between 2003 and 2010 - is seen as an effective deterrence to bogus marriages (NIA 2011c). In addition to an interview, from 2005 onwards it became compulsory that Chinese entrants were subject to have their finger prints and photograph taken at the entry port (Lin Kun-yuan 2005: 33; Art. 10, *the Cross-Strait Statute*).

After entering Taiwan, Chinese immigrants are then subject to interviews when they apply to extend their residency permits or apply for citizenship. If, through an interview or other means, the marriage is proven to be factually fraudulent, an application will be denied and expulsion may ensue (Art. 19, *the Entry Rules*). Although the publicised purpose of interviewing is to deter bogus marriages, prevent illegal employment, and detect human trafficking, it is also laden with an overarching security concern. Thus, ‘the implication of impeding national security and/or social stability’ is listed in the legislation as a reason to deny entry (NIA 2006: 1, Art.14, *the Interview Rules*). Not surprisingly, under the influence of loaded imaginations about Chinese immigrants, immigration officers are found to be patronising, condescending and discriminatory (Chao 2005: 46, 54-55).

2. Residency

The residency legislation was one of the heavily criticised restrictions on the rights of Chinese immigrants as wives and mothers. Between 1992 and 2004, in spite of their intension to settle, Chinese immigrants were granted *visitation* permits to stay for a maximum of six months in one year (extended to a full year in 1999) (Chen,

Hsiao-hung 1997, 1999). After four months of residency in Taiwan, a Chinese immigrant was covered by the National Health Insurance programme (BNHI 1998). After they were married for two years or become pregnant, they were permitted to apply for two-year residency.

Similarly to foreign spouses, Chinese immigrants are required to register their residential address with the government, which is their husbands' address. By law, a husband endorses his wife's residency, making a husband legally responsible for the well-being and whereabouts of his wife (Art. 17, 18, *the 2001 Residency Rules*; Art. 5, *the 2004 Residency Rules*). A surveillance scheme designed to monitor discharged serious crime offenders was imposed on Chinese immigrants to ensure political stability (Chou 2006: 17-18). If they departed Taiwan, they were required to submit their Residency Certificate to the government's care (Art. 25, *the 2001 Residency Rules*).

After March 2004, under the auspices of the DPP government, the intention and rights of Chinese immigrants to dwell as wife-mother was recognised. The dwelling of Chinese immigrants was formulated into a three-stage transition: *Family Reunion*, *Dependent Residency*, and *Long-term Residency*. Long-Term Residency permitted indefinite staying and was promoted as an alternative to citizenship (MAC 2006: 12-14) (further discussed below in the section relating to citizenship).

The residency legislation between 1992 and 2004 is an example of the above-mentioned internal contradiction. Seen as wives and mothers, Chinese immigrants were permitted to *visit* their family in Taiwan. However, seen as a collective surrogate of China in Taiwan, their intention to settle was declined and their residency was disrupted by forced frequent departures. In 1998, the Chinese immigrant community (immigrants and their husbands) organised protests to call for reform and their appeal was precisely to treat Chinese immigrants as wives and mothers entitled to

an undisrupted family life rather than being seen as secret agents dispatched by the PRC government (Chang 2004: 58-60). As in the case of foreign wives, the state also forges an alliance with Taiwanese husbands to discipline Chinese immigrants to be chaste wives. What is different is that the surveillance scheme for Chinese immigrants is also politically oriented to prevent them from implicating security.

3. Employment

From 1992 to 1997, Chinese immigrants were not allowed to work until they had acquired citizenship. This ban was made to discourage Chinese immigrants from seeking employment and using marriage as a cover. However, this restriction also meant that it became the sole responsibility of Taiwanese husbands to financially support their Chinese wives. Seeing this responsibility as ‘the burden of Taiwanese’, in 1997 the ban was *partially* lifted and Chinese immigrants who had acquired a residency permit were then allowed to work (Chen Chsiao-hung 2007). Since 1997 the employment legislation has been changed several times but the threshold remains the same: a Chinese immigrant would not be allowed to work until she acquired a residency permit³⁹ (CLA 1998). This means a Chinese immigrant would not be allowed to work for up to four years and this was extensively criticised (Chen Hsiao-hung 2007).

Nevertheless, there were exceptions. Between 2000 and 2009, a Chinese immigrant was allowed to work before acquiring a residency permit if a) her family was registered as a low-income family⁴⁰; b) her husband was beyond the age of 65 years,

³⁹ A minor change was whether a Chinese immigrant needed to apply for a work permit. In 1998, it stipulated that employers were required to apply for a work permit on behalf of the immigrant employee (CLA 1998). This was dropped after 2000 and only those who were *exceptionally* permitted to work on the status of Family Reunion (between 2000 and 2003) and Dependent Residency (between 2004 and 2009) were required to apply for a work permit.

⁴⁰ A survey of work permit applications between 2001 and 2006 shows that amongst a total of 36,195 applicants, 62.34 percent of them applied on the grounds of being a low-income family (Chen Hsiao-hung

critically ill, or registered as a physically or mentally disabled person; c) she suffered domestic violence and was issued with a protection order by a court; d) she has juvenile children (Yu 2003; Chen Hsiao-hung 2007). These preconditions illuminate that the ban on employment would not be partially lifted unless an immigrant wife's wages were crucial to the survival of the family.

From 1997 to 2009, in order to curb bogus marriages and protect local labour, the legality of employment remained hinged on the acquisition of residency permit. The above-mentioned surveillance scheme, the success of which was partly reliant on the cooperation of the husband, was deployed as a way to prevent immigrant wives from deserting the home ('*runaway*') for waged employment or to engage in sex work. However, in June 2009, the restriction on employment was completely lifted. From then onwards, Chinese immigrants who are permitted to enter are automatically granted a residency permit and hence the right to work. Under a more accommodating KMT government, which claimed to protect the human rights of Chinese immigrants, the rationale behind the liberalisation was to remove the image of materialistic Chinese sex workers from the ordinary homemakers and illuminate their contribution to families and society (MAC 2009). The image of caring homemakers as *good wives and virtuous mothers* is projected to the public in a 90-second film⁴¹. By promoting them as diligent '*Daughters-in-Law of Taiwan*', a bridge connecting their private roles (wife and mother) with the public is thus built.

4. Citizenship

2007: i-ii).

⁴¹ The film is available at <http://www2.mac.gov.tw/mac/VideoView.aspx?VideoID=17> (accessed on 23/02/11).

Citizenship is the last gate to cross in order to join the national community and its inherent political polity. Once accepted, an immigrant-turned citizen is endowed with the rights and duties *nearly* equal to those enjoyed by Taiwan-born citizens. Hence citizenship is not only a legal, formal and nominal recognition of one's belonging to the national community, it is also the access to substantive rights and entitlements. Therefore, due to the potential political and economic consequences, Chinese immigrants' acquisition of citizenship is a concern shared by both the KMT and DPP. As discussed in the previous chapter, the DPP government was particularly concerned that Chinese immigrants may destabilise the equilibrium of electoral politics in terms of the ethnic divide, vote share of political parties and the orientation of Taiwan's China policy. In aggregation, this *external* disturbance may affect the prospect of the ultimate negotiation between Taiwan and China. Hence, safeguarding the gate for citizenship is a policy goal upheld throughout the consecutive KMT and DPP governments, and is one of the most contested issues between Chinese immigrants and the state of Taiwan.

The bedrock of the consistency was laid by the KMT government in 1992. Unlike foreign nationals acquiring citizenship *by naturalisation*, Chinese immigrants acquire citizenship *by domicile*, that is, to establish a territorial link with Taiwan that is assumed authentic and committing. The required length for citizenship eligibility is decided by law. Besides, the government was mandated with the power to impose an annual cap on the number of citizenship awarding to slow down the increase of the Chinese-immigrants turned citizens in Taiwan. The evolution of the residency formula for citizenship eligibility is shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Evolution of the Citizenship Legislation for Chinese Immigrants

Govt	Period	Length of qualifying period	Gates safeguarding citizenship
KMT	1992-99	Up to 11 years	Visitation (2)→Residency (2)
DPP	2000-03	Up to 8 years	Visitation (2) →Family Reunion (1-3)→Residency (2)
DPP	2004-09	No less than 8 years	Family Reunion (2) →Dependent Residency (4) →Long-Term Residency (2)
KMT	2009-onwards	No less than 6 years	Dependent Residency (4)→Long-Term Residency (2)

Source: Chen Hsiao-hung 1997: 5-11; MAC 2009.

Note: Numbers in brackets are the permitted years of stay. The *Long-Term Residency* grants an indefinite stay. Those who wish to apply for citizenship are required to be on *Long-Term Residency* for at least two years.

Between 1992 and 1999, under the KMT government, it was straightforward to progress from the status of visitation (two years) to residency, and after another two-years' of residency or bearing children, Chinese immigrants were eligible to apply for citizenship. However, the imposition of the annual cap in effect prolonged the waiting time for citizenship approval to 11-12 years (Chen Hsiao-hung 1997: 5-11; 8-6; 9-4).

In 2000, the DPP government undertook its first attempt at prolonging the qualifying period for citizenship eligibility. This was achieved by inserting *Family Reunion* as a transitional stage between visitation and residency after the initial two years of staying (valid for up to three years). After staying in Taiwan for another two years or bearing children, an immigrant was eligible to apply for a residency permit and

was then allowed to work without prior permission. After another two-years' in Taiwan, an immigrant was eligible to apply for citizenship. Altogether, it would take no less than eight years to acquire citizenship. As an administrative measure, after an immigrant was granted citizenship, her PRC passport would be destroyed (Art. 26, *the 2001 Residency Rules*).

Under the DPP's strained relationship with China, the most significant amendment to the citizenship legislation was initiated in September 2002, but was not completed until March 2004. The DPP government made it clear that the attempt to prolong the qualifying period to 11 years was to reduce the number of Chinese immigrants acquiring citizenship (Chao 2005a: Footnote 16). The DPP-TSU alliance also attempted to postpone the granting of voting rights of Chinese immigrants-turned citizens to ten years after acquiring citizenship (see Chapter 3 for their arguments). To pass the bill the DPP government engaged in a two-front battle. In the legislature it wrestled against the parliamentary majority KMT; in the public forum it intensively negotiated with social organisations of Chinese immigrants and their husbands⁴². Supported by KMT legislators, the organisations mobilised street rallies in 2002 and 2003 (Chang 2004: 60). In public they employed political languages such as declaring their 'love for Taiwan' (Chao 2005b) and in private they refrained from making statements that indicated specific political affiliations (Chang 2004: 104). Their protests were received by the DPP and TSU as a timely alert for the potential political and social resources that Chinese immigrants and their Taiwanese husbands might manoeuvre (Chou 2006: 2; Lin Miao-ling 2005: 40-56). In response, the DPP government asserted

⁴² The two major organisations are *the Association of Chinese Cross-Strait Marriage Coordination and Promotion* (中華兩岸婚姻協調促進會) and *the Association of Care for Cross-Strait Families* (兩岸家庭關懷協會). They are transformed from online virtual communities *Cross-Strait Family Forum* (兩岸家庭論壇) and *Cross-Strait Park* (兩岸公園) to formally registered social organisations.

that Chinese immigrants did not enjoy the freedom of assembly and organisation before they acquired citizenship. Some TSU legislators thus argued that their participation violated the law and that they ought to be expelled (Chao 2006: 97-98). The citizenship legislation debate was closely covered by three national newspapers, the stances of which demonstrated how they drew the boundary of the Taiwanese national community. For the pro-independence *Liberty Times*, Chinese immigrants were inferior and hostile PRC citizens, and they should be excluded from the national community. For the pro-unification *China Times* and *United Daily News*, Chinese immigrants were unnecessarily excluded, and their rights as wives and mothers should be protected (Lin Miao-ling 2005: 40-56).

In the end the DPP government failed on both attempts. What it succeeded in doing was to restructure the residency formula into a three-stage transition, namely *Family Reunion*, *Dependent Residency*, and *Long-Term Residency*. Immigrants on *Family Reunion* were covered by the National Health Insurance (NHI) after staying in Taiwan for four months, two years earlier than under the previous legislation. *Long-Term Residency* granted indefinite domicile and all immigrants on this status had the right to work⁴³. To strengthen security control, immigrants on *Long-term Residency* who stayed in China for longer than three months had to submit a criminal clearance issued by the PRC upon their return to Taiwan (Art. 26, *the 2004 Rules*).

In line with the policy guideline ‘*loose on living, tough on citizenship*’, the amendment was to rein in the growing scale of Chinese immigration. On the one hand, by releasing the right to work and entitlement to NHI coverage, it claimed to untie the

⁴³ Immigrants on *Dependent Residency* were allowed to work if they met preconditions (see above discussion on employment).

knot of entitlement and citizenship. The amendment was also publicised as an effort to equalise the legal treatment for Southeast Asian immigrants and Chinese immigrants (EY 2002b: 61-63). On the other hand, it pronounced the reluctance to embrace Chinese immigrants as citizens. As a safeguarding measure, the DPP government began to require Chinese immigrants and their husbands to be interviewed. In addition, they were asked to present evidence of financial sufficiency⁴⁴, and to submit documentation showing the cancellation of their household registration in China (Art. 17, *the Cross-Strait Statute*; Art. 30-32, *the 2004 Residency Rules*). The latter is a step further than merely destroying PRC passports. In nature it is the same as requiring foreign immigrants to renounce their former nationality and declare their singular loyalty towards Taiwan⁴⁵. As a statutory power, it now demands people who cross the Strait and reside permanently on the opposite side to formally declare where their political allegiance lies.

In June 2009, a year after the change of ruling power from the DPP to the KMT, the citizenship legislation was significantly revamped again. The coming of a new government in March 2008 was accompanied by an intensive campaign of the cross-strait couples' organisations to equalise the legal treatment of Chinese and Southeast Asian immigrants (Yang 2010: 48-49). Supported by the KMT, they appealed

⁴⁴ The financial sufficiency requirement was translated into a minimal amount of an aggregated income, savings or value of property of an immigrant, her husband and/or her parents-in-law (Art 32, *the 2004 Rule*). In March 2004, the required amount was set at either a monthly income twice the official minimum monthly wage (NTD 31,680, approx. £630) or the estimated value of property and real-estate exceeding NTD 5 million (approx. £100,000). Being heavily criticised for overlooking cross-strait couples' financial difficulties, the required value of property was abolished and replaced with savings and/or value of property exceeding 24 times the minimum wage (the same requirement for foreign spouses). In March 2008, vocational certificates issued by the government were also accepted as evidence of financial independence.

⁴⁵ The DPP government stressed in the draft bill that the PRC also maintained a similar requirement: the Chinese government will cancel a citizen's household registration once he/she permanently resides abroad (EY 2002b: 54-56).

to the mother-wife image, and their efforts were corresponded by legislators introducing no less than six initiatives between April and November 2008 to liberalise the employment and citizenship legislation (LY 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2008d, 2008e, 2008f). The end result was multi-fold. Whilst retaining the power to adjust annual caps and inheriting the security measures including interviews, criminal clearance, and cancellation of household registration in China, the KMT government shortened the qualifying period for citizenship eligibility to six years. The new formula stipulates that *Dependent Residency* permits two-year stay and *Long-Term Residency* permits an indefinite length of stay. After four years on the *Long-Term Residency* status, an immigrant is eligible to apply for citizenship. Chinese immigrants are allowed to work without precondition immediately after they enter Taiwan. The requirement to prove financial sufficiency was moderated to accept any documentation to show receipt of income. In June 2009, the requirement was abolished (MAC 2009).

It is necessary to point out that whilst the KMT government improved the legal treatment of Chinese immigrants, the tighter gate-keeping relating to citizenship is still in place. In other words, the tendency to view Chinese immigrants as wife-mothers is given more consideration, but the caution against Chinese immigrants becoming citizens has not yet diminished. The differentiation of Southeast Asian and Chinese immigrants is maintained to continue the ‘*neither foreign nor domestic*’ characterisation of People of the Mainland Area and to demonstrate the *de facto* independence of Taiwan.

4.4 The Legislation for Overseas Chinese Immigrants

As discussed in Chapter 3, the citizenship legislation relating to the Overseas Chinese was not conceived until 1991. Before 1991, imagined as an *internal* but *temporarily absent* population, their desire to settle in Taiwan (acquiring citizenship) was

accommodated by lax administration. Since 1991, Overseas Chinese have begun to be conceptualised as an *external* population who have no given right to enter, reside or to settle in Taiwan. As *Nationals without the Household Registration in the Taiwan Area*, their ROC nationality alone does not render them citizenship until they are permitted to register with the government their permanent residence within a household. In other words, while nationality is awarded by the extraterritorial principle of *birth*, citizenship is awarded by the territorial principle of *domicile*. The principle of domicile is written into *the Immigration Act* and forms the basis for the legislation controlling entry and residency of the external population to Taiwan.

In retrospect, Overseas Chinese wives in Taiwan as a whole have acquired citizenship in various ways. As outlined in the previous chapter, the change is partly the embodiment of how Overseas Chinese are imagined to be linked with Taiwan, whilst gender is also a binding concept. Divided by whether one can prove the inheritance of ROC nationality and the time of arrival, the citizenship applications for Overseas Chinese women can be summarised into four patterns (see Table 4.3):

1. For those who proved they inherited ROC nationality and entered Taiwan before 1991, their application of entry, residency and citizenship was straightforward as long as their husbands endorsed their application. Seen as nationals and an internal population, they had no gate to cross and their application was often granted without complication. They could preserve the non-ROC nationality they might have, as *the Nationality Act* tolerated dual nationality (CY 2010: 26).
2. For those who proved they inherited ROC nationality but entered Taiwan after 1991, they were regarded as *Nationals without Household Registration*.

They had to cross the gate of household registration to be granted citizenship.

They were permitted to retain their non-ROC nationality.

3. If they could not prove they inherited ROC nationality and had entered Taiwan before 2000, they were treated as foreigners (Art. 20, *the Regulations of Foreign Passport and Visa*). Under *the Nationality Act* of 1929-2000, as *foreign wives*, they were granted citizenship automatically, although they were required to renounce their former nationality. There was no requirement for citizenship eligibility.
4. If they could not prove they inherited ROC nationality and entered Taiwan after 2000, not only were they treated as foreigners but they also had to cross the gates of residency, naturalisation and household registration to finally be granted citizenship. Hence they are required to meet the preconditions for citizenship eligibility, including financial adequacy, Chinese proficiency and a singular loyalty.

In my fieldwork, out of a total of 20 Indonesian-Chinese interviewees, there was only one woman who followed the first pattern, eleven women evoking the third pattern and eight women following the last pattern. The pattern of citizenship acquirement has a significant impact on their self-identification with Taiwan in relation to Indonesia (see Chapter 7).

Table 4.3 Evolution of Overseas Chinese Immigrant Women's Citizenship Application

ROC Nationality	Entry	Legal status	Citizenship application	Dual/single nationality
Yes	before 1991	Nationals	straightforward	dual
	After 1991	Nationals without Household Registration	tightly controlled	dual
No	before 2000	Foreigners	automatically awarded	singular
	After 2000	Foreigners	required to meet eligibility preconditions	singular

Source: the author.

4.5 Summary

In the previous chapter, I analysed how immigrant women from Southeast Asia and China are categorised into Southeast Asian, Chinese and Overseas Chinese categories. In this chapter, I discussed how the categorisation is translated into legislation which governs the crossing of residency, naturalisation and citizenship. The categorisation and legislation clearly demonstrates that they are *othered* by class, gender and ethnicity for their foreignness and presumed poverty and inferiority.

Perceiving immigrant women as undesirable and inferior, the state uses legal tools to safeguard each crossing to filter out questionable immigrants and control the final advance to citizenship. The contempt of poverty and inferiority is particularly enacted by state agents (consular, immigration and police officers) when they conduct

gate-keeping duties. Although the legislation has been liberalised in terms of the right of immigrants to work and prerequisites for naturalisation, safeguarding gate-crossing is nevertheless a consistent interest guiding the consecutive DPP and KMT administrations.

The shadow of the gendered legislation is strongly felt in the private family domain. The categorisation and legislation is gendered by the expectation on immigrant women to become chaste wives and capable mothers. Overwhelmed by the stigmatisation of *runaway* and its association with sex work, the gendered legislation is undercut by a shared interest between the state and the Taiwanese family (husbands and in-laws) to ensure their chastity. As the legality of immigrant women's residency is entirely dependent on marriage and more importantly on motherhood, their interest is integrated with the one of their children. The chance of employment, the well-being of children and the quality of family life are holistic elements of whether immigrant women achieve betterment in their migration destination and therefore their identification with Taiwan.

Citizenship is one of the key areas where the gendered legislation overshadows the public domain and public sphere. During the process of gate crossing, foreign and inferior immigrant women are disciplined and moulded to finally become acceptable citizens. Their becoming is intertwined with their role as mothers. Paying central attention to their reproduction ability, the state requires immigrant women to meet a language requirement to ensure that their motherhood is sufficient to transmit the national culture and contribute to their children's competitiveness.

For Chinese immigrant women, in addition to falling under similar discrimination underlined by gender, class and ethnicity, they also endure politicised discrimination. They are imagined as the personification of a hostile PRC and they are put under surveillance to prevent them from conducting espionage. Their presumed political

inclination (supporting the KMT and unification), coupled with their large numbers, is treated with caution due to their potential to affect electoral politics and thus Taiwan's position in relation to China. They are feared as an enemy within.

Influenced by this politicisation, the legislation governing Chinese immigrants is defined by the competing perspectives of seeing them as wives-mothers and citizens. This is conveyed by the policy guideline '*loose on living, tough on citizenship*' throughout the consecutive KMT and DPP governments in the past two decades. The restriction on their residency and employment has been liberalised to ease their lives as wives-mothers. However, the gate to citizenship is under tighter control in the form of a longer qualifying period of residency. Unlike Southeast Asian immigrants who are required to cross the gate of naturalisation, the naturalisation gate does not exist for Chinese immigrants due to their ambiguous constitutional status. Being defined by the KMT government in *the Cross-Strait Statute* as nationals but not citizens, they are *neither foreign nor domestic*. Their commitment to becoming members of the national community is gauged by domicile, a dedication to be rooted in Taiwan.

For Overseas Chinese immigrant women, the legislation has undergone a significant revision as discussed in the previous chapter. Depending on whether they can prove they inherit ROC nationality, their citizenship application may be processed by two different sets of rules. The duality demonstrates the gradual re-categorisation of Overseas Chinese in the national community from *internal but absent* nationals to *external* nationals.

The discussion of the legislation clearly demonstrates the perceived distance between the host and immigrants. The distance visualises the difference between the outsiders and the host society. The distance, categorisation and legislation is integral to Taiwan's nation-building project to reassure society as to who Taiwanese people are

and how to transform the outsiders to become *like us*. Thus, the poverty of Southeast Asian women is in contrast to Taiwan's prosperity, the politicisation of Chinese immigrants is to highlight Taiwan's democracy, independence and separation from China, and the *externalisation* of Overseas Chinese is to boost Taiwan's *endogenous* nationhood. None of these groups are wholeheartedly embraced as citizens, but the criticality of motherhood for nation-building overcomes the state's reluctance and transforms the reluctance to active moulding. In addition to being appropriated to Taiwan's nation-building project, an overlooked fact is that immigrant women's naturalisation is arguably also unintentionally strengthening Taiwan's claim of sovereignty. Given that the governments of Southeast Asian states permit their citizens to relinquish their citizenship in order to acquire ROC citizenship, it has to be delineated that they have pragmatically recognised ROC citizenship as *de facto* citizenship and the Taiwanese government on behalf of the state of ROC is in effect able to protect people who are ROC passports holders. Were this not their tacit understanding, their permission to allow their citizens to relinquish their former citizenship would have made them stateless. This is arguably an unintended divergence from their formal stance of regarding Taiwan as a province of China.

In the following three chapters, I will examine how immigrant women respond to Taiwan's nation-building efforts wrapped in social categorisation and legislation. Each chapter is dedicated respectively to Chinese, Southeast Asian and Overseas Chinese immigrant women. Their identification with the natal country is a combined result of state construction through compulsory education curriculum, primordial sentiment derived from culture, and socialisation within and outside the family. However, after migration, contrasted by the new living environment, some sources of identification show greater strength than others. In the case of Chinese immigrants, the most obvious

influence derives from state indoctrination, an element of which is subjecting Taiwan to China as a secondary and subordinate unit. In the case of Filipino and Vietnamese immigrants, without systematic induction about Taiwan prior to migration, they themselves are primordialists who announce the longevity of their Filipino and Vietnamese cultural heritage. For those who are deprived of primary education, they may show a lack of acculturation of the nation's 'high culture' (Gellner 2002: 35-38). In the case of Indonesian Chinese, they are in-between ethnic others in Indonesia because of their Chinese ancestry and the Indonesian state's assimilation policy.

Each chapter begins by recalling their motivation for migration, an aspect that is often overlooked and taken for granted. Their motivations are critical to understanding their reaction to their living environment which is circumscribed by the three interactive clusters of variables, namely citizenship legislation, the facility in the Chinese language, and the childrearing experiences. This is to show how they perceive and interpret the nation-building project through interactions at home, in the workplace and in the public sphere with family members, colleagues, neighbours, teachers, police officers and even strangers. Whilst developing an in-between identity with Taiwan and the natal country, they take similar as well as different paths to integration.

CHAPTER 5: BRIDGING ACROSS OR SANDWICHED BETWEEN: THE CHINESE IMMIGRANTS WHO CROSS THE TAIWAN STRAIT

This chapter analyses the formation of the in-between identity of 39 Chinese immigrants. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first introductory section begins with a portrait of two Chinese women, who personify the differences amongst Chinese immigrants. In this section I will examine how Chinese immigrants are motivated to take marriage migration as an option. Their motivations, or their imaginations about Taiwan, are grouped into two clusters: pursuing betterment and satisfying a nationalistic curiosity. The pursuit of betterment is analysed through how four different types of ‘messengers’ spread the image of an affluent Taiwan in China. This explains how women of different age cohorts and socio-economic backgrounds are attracted to marriage with Taiwanese men or approached by people who are connected with Taiwan. Their Chinese national identity highlights the enduring strength of state construction. Along ethnocentric lines, the state indoctrination not only instils the citizens with a sense of pride in and glory of the nation, but also includes Taiwan as an indispensable part of the ‘Motherland’. This creates a nationalistic curiosity about Taiwan as well as a contradiction. On the one hand, Taiwan is seen as a part of China. On the other hand, there is also an awareness that Taiwan is in fact outside the PRC’s jurisdiction. This contrast also creates a ‘*neither foreign nor domestic*’ contradiction which strengthens Taiwan’s mystical lure.

The second section of the chapter looks at the interaction between these Chinese immigrants and the state and society of Taiwan. In this section I will discuss how Chinese immigrants cope with the citizenship legislation, the linguistic complexities and the fulfilment of motherhood. Their response involves their interaction with the state,

the society and the family, and their response is a *rite of passage* from an outsider to a citizen. Younger immigrants additionally experience the *rite of passage* from being a daughter to a mother. This chapter reaches the conclusions that although betterment is a common positive source for generating identification with Taiwan, younger immigrants are more likely than older immigrants to develop the in-between identity towards Taiwan and China. Older immigrants adhered to the firm belief that Taiwan is a subordinate part of China, thus as ROC citizens they did not identify with what Taiwan is now: the ROC on Taiwan as a state separate from and independent of the PRC. They encountered more difficulties in adapting to the local linguistic environment. The absence of motherhood experiences in Taiwan meant that they did not have the sense of rootedness which generated a sense of belonging towards Taiwan. In contrast, younger interviewees are more likely to acknowledge the reality that Taiwan and China are separate entities. As citizens, they could identify with Taiwan as it is now. In addition, they were more adaptable to the new linguistic environment and becoming a mother in Taiwan gave them a sense of rootedness. However, their primordial ties with China and the sensitivity in Taiwan to the Chinese Mandarin accent situate them in between Taiwan and China. The difference between older and younger immigrants is most manifested by their reaction to an imagined war between Taiwan and China. In that scenario, whilst the older immigrants expressed their clear preference of returning to China, the younger immigrants pronounced their fragile agency. They recognised the dilemma of being sandwiched between both sides of the strait, but narrated an alternative conception of bridging across the strait to overcome the difficult situation.

5.1 A Portrait of the Older and the Younger

Thirty-six-year-old Wong Hong and her 57-year-old mother Hu Hailan personify the differences amongst the Chinese immigrants. Hong was a primary school teacher in

Wuhan before she came to Taiwan. With a university degree and a reliable income, she saw herself as a middle-class urbanite. She owned a flat in a high-rise apartment and her salary was sufficient to hire domestic workers from satellite rural villages. Her mother Hailan had a high school education, lived in a smaller town and collected a pension from a state-owned factory. After divorcing from a marriage marred by domestic violence, in 1997 Hailan married a Mainlander retiree in central Taiwan, hoping to start a happier chapter of her life. Since Hailan got married, Hong frequently visited her mother and in 1999 she got to know her future husband, a police squad team officer, and got married in 2003. She now lives in the metropolitan Taipei area. Hong worked as a sales representative but has withdrawn from active employment in order to pursue a writing career. After living in Taiwan for 12 years, Hailan had worked as a waitress and caregiver, and then moved to Taipei after her husband passed away, and subsequently became a citizen.

Hailan and her peers are a minority amongst Chinese wives. They have teenage or adult children in China. Speaking Mandarin in their hometown accent often makes them stand out of the crowd. They may not have attended the entitlement claim rally, but some of them persistently took part in the anti-corruption demonstration in 2007. Hong and her peers are the majority. They gave birth and established families in Taiwan. More blended in with the local Mandarin accent, their speech is dotted with local slang and Taiwanese dialect phrases. They may be cynical about the anti-corruption appeal, but they are more connected with fellow immigrants via online communication, which became a platform for rallying support for the entitlement claim movement (Chang 2004). Hailan and Hong differ from each other in terms of their social capital, life course, locality, linguistic capacity, occupational potential, and political conceptions. This paves different paths leading to the various degrees of identification with Taiwan.

5.2 Motivations for Migration: Betterment, Nationalistic Curiosity

To explore the identification in full, it is necessary to return to their motivations for marriage migration. These derive from *how they imagine about Taiwan*, and the major elements of this imagination are betterment and nationalistic curiosity. Pursuing betterment is a shared goal by all immigrant women from China and Southeast Asia. However, satisfying a nationalistic curiosity is only found amongst Chinese immigrants. I will now discuss the betterment motivation by outlining the different types of messengers who transmit the image of an affluent Taiwan to different stratum of Chinese society. The messengers themselves sometimes also initiate the introduction of the marriage.

5.2.1 Betterment

Chinese immigrants are more exposed than their Southeast Asian counterparts to the disparity between Taiwan and the natal country. The *imagined affluence* of Taiwan is captured by the ubiquitous citation ‘Taiwan is one of the *Four Asian Tigers* (*‘Little Dragons’* in Chinese). This exposure can be attributed to four different types of ‘messengers’ who deliver or strengthen the image of the affluent Taiwan. They are a) the Mainlander returnees, b) Taiwanese investors, c) brokers, suitors, and marriage immigrant women, and d) cultural products and consumer commodities. Each messenger appeals to and reaches out to different receivers, who may be attracted to marriage with Taiwanese men or be approached by people who are related to Taiwan. In other words, these messengers embody potential channels of introduction to marriage with men in Taiwan. They also indicate different aspects of betterment that may be realised by migration to Taiwan.

1. Mainlander Returnees

One of the early messengers of the affluent Taiwan is Mainlander returnees. When they returned to their hometown in China in the late 1980s and early 1990s, most of them were stunned by the level of the impoverishment and they showered their families with US dollars, watches, gold jewellery and electronic appliances. Some of them purchased property, built houses or invested in business. Some chose to stay for comfort, luxury and esteem, which they were denied in Taiwan, but which their pension could afford in China. Some were asked by their relatives for financial support. For Jiang Derong, this sowed the seeds of the *materialistic* image of Chinese people in Taiwan. In Taiwan, the publicised disparity gave rise to an impression of poor China and poor Chinese people to the extent that Yuan Panpan was asked by an elderly female neighbour ‘*Do you have toilet paper and light bulbs there?*’ To ridicule her neighbour, Panpan deliberately answered, ‘Certainly NOT! Surely we use nothing but leaves and candles!’ (01/06/09, Keelung)

Returned Mainlanders were the contact point of social matchmaking for their sons or male relatives at marriage age. Some became suitors for their own marriage. Those who were single, widowed or divorced found in China potential wives who could be carers for their later life. For Chinese widows or divorcees, a second marriage with a man from affluent Taiwan was attractive because it meant resourceful companionship for old age.

2. Taiwanese Investors and Managers

Male Taiwanese investors are at the heels of Mainlander returnees. Known as *taishang* (Taiwanese businessmen), they seem to have become an acronym for wealth but infamous for indulging in prostitution and engaging in extra-marital affairs in China (Lang and Smart 2002: 562). Allegedly their wealth is the sole attraction for Chinese women and they are said to fall prey to the latter’s seduction (Shih 1998: 295-303). Mr.

Wang, a Taiwanese man who joined my interview with Ming Xianglan, hence argued that the *materialistic and opportunistic* image of Chinese women was collateral to the misbehaviour of Taiwanese businessmen (16/03/09, Panchiao).

As the socio-economic interaction between China and Taiwan intensified, male Taiwanese managers (*taigan*) have become one of the growing semi-permanent Taiwanese expatriate communities in China (for example, employees of the IT industry, see Leng 2002: 232-4). Their managerial position, and a higher salary than their Chinese colleagues' at the same level, further strengthen the affluent image of Taiwan. Their staying or visiting increases the chances of marriage with Chinese women. This is how five younger interviewees got to know their husbands. After marriage, they moved to Taiwan whilst their husbands continued working in China for a period of time.

3. Brokers, Suitors, and Marriage Immigrant Women

Through word of mouth, Taiwan is said to be a place where employment is abundant and wages are significantly higher. This is heavily advertised by Qian Aini's broker, by Zou Zirong's would-be husband, and by Hu Hailan's friend who was a marriage immigrant woman. This message appeals to single women who thought their job prospects were not good in China, it also appeals to divorcees and widows who had fallen into hardship or had to raise children on their own. Hence betterment also means improving the life of their children who remained in China.

4. Cultural Products and Consumer Commodities

The final messenger of an affluent Taiwan is cultural products. Unlike the previous messengers whose influence mainly ripples through via *personal* contact, the influence of cultural products radiates via mass media and mass consumption. The long-running TV programme '*Across the Strait*' (*Haixia Liang'an*) on CCTV-4 is often mentioned as

one of the platforms where regular reporting about Taiwan is available. In addition to political news, the programme also reports light-hearted stories to entertain Chinese audiences. The Internet further increases opportunities to view Taiwanese entertainment programmes and political talk shows.

Highlighted by pop culture products, an affluent Taiwan is additionally given a younger and more romantic appeal. Interviewees who belong to the 1980 cohort remembered the excitement brought on by Taiwanese pop stars. Embodied by singers, film stars and celebrities, Taiwanese lifestyle, such as table manners and banquet etiquette⁴⁶, is looked up for its trendy, energetic, relaxing, comfortable, westernised, modern and civilised appeal. As romantic TV soap operas were one of the earliest cultural products appearing in Chinese living rooms, Taiwan is particularly imagined by younger women as exquisite, affectionate, poetic and even fairytale-like.

Taiwan *as a brand* is becoming more available for Chinese consumers, in spite of its higher price. The popularity of Taiwan's agricultural products rose after the signing of the *Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA)* in 2010 (Ta Kung Pao 21/01/11, 30/01/11). The image of expensive *Brand Taiwan* plus its presumed higher quality⁴⁷ also contributes to the imagination of the affluence of Taiwan. On the whole, cultural products and consumer commodities from Taiwan as an *impersonal* messenger potentially reach a wider audience at a faster speed across social sectors and geographical regions. For Chinese immigrants, betterment in Taiwan in terms of material comfort seems to be guaranteed.

⁴⁶ Advertised as a forerunner for incorporating western etiquette, table manners practiced in Taiwan are promoted as a model for the high dining culture in China (Mintz 2007, Roberts 2002; Mao 2008; Yu 2006: 154; Zhou 2008: 6, cited by Niu 2009).

⁴⁷ Tea from Taiwan became an effective bribe that Jiang Juan gave to a doctor, who, upon receiving the gift, agreed to discharge her grandmother from hospital for an intravenous drip, otherwise the doctor could charge higher fees for her grandmother's overnight staying at hospital.

Thus, betterment is interpreted and expected differently by different women. This ranges from enjoying a modern lifestyle of material comfort to obtaining a higher wage and supporting children in China from a previous marriage. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, in Taiwan pursuing betterment is distorted as ‘Chinese women come to Taiwan *for nothing but money*’ and this stigmatisation has become a constructive element of the Chinese category.

5.2.2 Nationalistic Curiosity Held as a Chinese Citizen

Whilst Taiwan is economically looked *up to and envied* as an affluent place, the island is also looked *down upon and dwarfed* in the political hierarchy. That is, Chinese immigrants position China *and themselves* in the centre and assign Taiwan and its people to the periphery. The nationalistic curiosity is a result of this *central-peripheral conceptual hierarchy*. It is nationalistic because of the firm belief that Taiwan is a part of China. It is a curiosity because whilst Chinese citizens are indoctrinated about Taiwan being inseparable from China, very few have actually visited the Treasure Island (*baodao*). Hence Taiwan seems paradoxically *close to* as well as *distant from* China. This paradox, the political sensitiveness surrounding the independence and unification dispute, and the tightly controlled entry to Taiwan altogether increase its mystique and attractiveness. Satisfying the nationalistic curiosity is *secondary* to the achievement of betterment. Nonetheless, its recurrence in interviewees’ narratives suggests its existence in the decision-making process in finally taking up this option.

The central-peripheral hierarchy is a presentation of *Han-centred Chinese nationalism*. Wong Hong’s teaching experiences, as laid out below, offer an insight to its execution. Supervised by a state-sanctioned teaching plan, ethnocentric concept of

nation, collective and *individual* are allocated in the curriculum with specific proportions in order to nurture the national identity and national pride of pupils⁴⁸. References are given to high achieving *overseas Chinese* to enhance respect for the Chinese nation. The CCP constructed historiography of writing Taiwan into this nationalism is comprised of four elements, the entirety of which manifests their Chinese national identity. They are: a) Taiwan is *historically* a part of China; b) the Han Chinese in Taiwan and China are of the *same ancestry*; c) no one in Taiwan, except the Indigenous Peoples, is entitled to claim themselves as *native*; d) *plurality of ethnicity* is not an obstacle for national unity – there are a total of 56 ethnic minorities (*shaoshu minzu*) in China, yet they are still members of the Chinese nation altogether under Han domination. In this conceptual hierarchy, China is the main and *ultimate* category which contains Taiwan as a *sub-category*; China is the root whereas Taiwan is a derivation. Central to this conceptual hierarchy is the CPP's indoctrination about Taiwan. This conceptual hierarchy is given a boost by the pride in China's rise as a great power, the expansion of the Chinese economy, and the continuing international non-recognition of Taiwan as a sovereign state.

Before 1979, Taiwan was demonised as a crony of the American imperialists to be militarily liberated and this was incorporated into the content of a high school textbook⁴⁹. Connections with Taiwan were liability which might result in political persecution during the Cultural Revolution. Thus, older interviewees' perception of the Taiwan-China relationship is framed around the conflict across the strait. For example,

⁴⁸ An example can be found in the *Curriculum Planning (kecheng jihua)* issued by the National Education Commission. The *Curriculum Planning* states that the goals of compulsory education are to cultivate students' love for the country, people, labour, science, and socialist thoughts. At primary school pupils are educated to love the Motherland, the Chinese Communist Party, people, and the collective (Kao 1993).

⁴⁹ An essay entitled '*Tens of Thousands of Shells Shock Jinmen*' by Liu Baiyu in 1958 is included in the high school textbook.

Fujian-based Zhong Meiling remembered that her village was within the range of KMT propaganda packets fired from Kinmen. The packets contained clothing with ROC flag prints, banknotes, and pamphlets which depicted Taiwan as ‘abundant for fish and meat’ and which encouraged villagers to defect. During the Cultural Revolution, people who had relatives in Taiwan were categorised as ‘counter-revolutionaries’ (Shen 1992: 27). Similar to the condemned ‘*overseas connection*’ (*haiwai guanxi*) (Godley 1989; Huang 2005: 249-274), having relatives in Taiwan put one under the suspicion of being a KMT agent, with such people being terrorised by the prospect of persecution (Huang 2005: 273). Ming Xianglan came from Hainan Island, where there were Taiwanese conscripts left behind by the Japanese military after WWII, including her husband. She cited a political doggerel which humiliated those with relatives in Taiwan⁵⁰.

The tone of this indoctrination underwent significant changes after the economic reforms since 1978. The watershed was *the Message to Compatriots in Taiwan* (issued in 1979), which announced the termination of the shelling of Kinmen and Matsu and called for visitation and investment from Taiwan (Romberg 2003: 96; Roy 2003: 147; Hughes 1997: 47). The change of the Taiwan policy saw a ‘softer’ construction of Taiwan as a part of China in the national curriculum. This is mainly where younger interviewees’ perceptions of Taiwan as being a part of China are gleaned from. From primary school to university, Taiwan as an object is *instrumental* to this curriculum and is taught in classes of Chinese literature, geography, history and political education. Hong remembered that one lesson of Chinese literature for Year 2 pupils stated ‘*Taiwan is the Treasure Island of our Motherland. Taiwan is a bright pearl glowing in the South China Sea.*’ Nationalistic sentiment towards Taiwan was cultivated by Yu

⁵⁰ The rhymed doggerel goes like this: ‘報告司令官，你的老婆在台灣，沒有褲子穿，撿到二塊布，東補西補，還要露屁股!’

Kwang-chung's poem, which depicts his affection for his mother and his homesickness for the Motherland⁵¹. Documents related to the Taiwan policy are also the teaching materials in the class of political education (Yang 2003, 2008; Liu 2004).

In the wake of the growing New Taiwanese Consciousness, the conception of Taiwan being a part of China is enhanced by the CCP's heavy-handed criticism of Lee Teng-hui and Chen Shiu-bian for their 'creeping' independence orientation (for the People's Daily report of this, see Kao 2009: 89-91). TV programme '*Across the Strait*' was utilised to air the CCP's criticism. Interviewees remembered watching news in which the PLA threatened to launch an attack. Long Yongru came to Taiwan in 2002 and was told by her father in Jiangsu about the railway transportation of tanks and other heavy weaponry. Her father believed that this was part of the deployment for attacking Taiwan and that 'Taiwan is soon to be *taken over*'. (27/03/09, Taipei) Christian Zhong Meiling remembered praying for peace and the safety of people in Taiwan at those tense moments. On the other hand, the consistent attention paid to Taiwan's politics created an unintended publicity about the democratic system operating in Taiwan. The free-wheeling democracy as selectively depicted and interpreted by the CCP, such as the physical brawling by Taiwan's legislators, left Chinese viewers with the impression that in Taiwan politics is chaotic (*luan*) and the social life was in disorder. Dong Mei remembered that her political education textbook described the change of government by election as 'a see-saw game played by politicians' and the well-being of people was at stake because of a lack of policy consistency. Nevertheless, it strengthens the perception of political difference and feeds the appetite of curiosity.

⁵¹ The poem was given an open recital by Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on 6th December 2003 when Wen visited New York and met members of the Chinese community (Tong 2003).

In spite of the indoctrination about Taiwan being a part of China, in reality Taiwan may be as *foreign* as any other country. The fact that entry to Taiwan is unilaterally controlled by the government of Taiwan drives home the message that Taiwan is outside the jurisdiction of the PRC government; Taiwan *proper* is not a part of China. For some, this is understood as ‘One Country, Two Systems’; for others, this suggests that Taiwan and China are two separate political entities, neither of which has control over the other.

The blending of the nationalistic imagination and the political distance characterises the lure of the Taiwan *mystique*. Chongqing-born An Qilan worked in Chengdu and Shenzhen for ten years before she moved to Taiwan. For her, moving to Taiwan is different from moving to Shenzhen and Hong Kong, where Cantonese is the working language. The conception is such a complex one that she could only say ‘*Because of the history behind, you know, about Zheng Chenggong, Chiang Kai-shek, all that. If you’re allowed to go to Taiwan, you’ll see it as an honour. If you don’t go, you’ll regret it*’ (23/03/09, Taipei). It is for sure that nationalistic curiosity *alone* does not pull more than 270,000 Chinese women out of their hometowns. However, the paradox of *imagined closeness* and the actual distance does add a mystique appeal.

Granny Yang is an example of the mixed motivations of betterment and nationalistic curiosity. Granny Yang was a retired senior engineer living in an allocated flat that belonged to a research institution in Wuhan. After thirteen years as a childless widow and having turned down several suitors in high positions, she accepted her high school teacher’s suggestion and married the teacher’s relative from Taiwan. For Granny Yang, the marriage was the eventual realisation of ‘searching for a companion for life’ and her husband was regarded on a par with ‘medical doctors and heads of departments of the provincial government’. Despite the fact that her husband provided a comfortable

life for them in Wuhan, she felt her *self-esteem* was impaired because of his reluctance to take her to Taiwan. After all, his link with the *mysterious* Taiwan was a strong appeal in her decision of getting married. She did not realise until arriving in Taipei that her husband lived on a meagre military pension and shared a makeshift house with a wifeless Mainlander friend. Had it not been because her husband was diagnosed with lung cancer, Granny Yang would have left Taiwan after her first six-month visitation permit expired. Nevertheless, she chose to stay and look after her husband, who later also suffered from Alzheimer's disease.

From the complex of imagination, indoctrination and consciousness of *encountering difference*, there emerges a cognitive model that Chinese immigrants hold towards Taiwan. Taiwan is economically prosperous, politically democratic, and socially open. Moving to Taiwan is unlike a domestic movement within China because of the associated nationalistic *mystique* and the different political, social and economic systems. On the other hand, it is also unlike migrating to a foreign country where one cannot speak the local language and the physical differences make one stand out. This makes Taiwan '*neither foreign nor domestic*', a cognitive complex more realistic than the belief that 'Taiwan is a part of China'. It is obvious that the central-peripheral hierarchy is in conflict with the prevalent New Taiwanese Consciousness, an element of which is the demand to be recognised as an *equal* political entity. Hence China and Taiwan are juxtaposed in two different frames. In the economic frame, Taiwan is *looked up to* for the prospect for achieving betterment. In the political frame, Taiwan is *looked down upon* in the conceptual hierarchy. It is hard to dismiss the internal tension of this bifurcation.

Holding this inherently contradictory cognitive model, Chinese immigrant women migrate to Taiwan. They encounter this cognitive challenge in their everyday

lives. Their identification with Taiwan is a function of how far the betterment expectation is achieved and how much the nationalistic mystique is modified. Both are affected by citizenship legislation, the linguistic complexities and the performance of motherhood duties.

5.3 Citizenship Legislation: Seeing Immigrants as Wives-Mothers and Citizens

5.3.1 Positive Sources for Identifying with Taiwan

In everyday life, there are multiple sources generating positive evaluation that affirm their migration decision (pursuing betterment) and leading to a general improvement of their personal living standard. At the social level, *civility* (Schak 2009), courtesy⁵², philanthropy, public sanitation, higher wages, the impartial meritocracy of the job market, the pursuit of a healthy lifestyle, the reliable and convenient public transport, the affordable and professional healthcare, and the efficiency and friendliness of frontline civil servants are often cited as examples of the higher living standards they enjoy in Taiwan. Enjoying freedom of information, including vibrant media and freedom of speech, is mind-opening. Sichuan-born Shi Yiping pointed out that had she remained in China, she would not have known from TV news about the severity of the devastating snow storms hitting Inner Mongolia. Even for weather forecasts, Fujian-born Lin Jinxia asserted ‘Over there TV weather forecasts never tell the truth. Even when the temperature soars up to 39 or even 40 degrees Celsius, the maximum they will tell you is 37 or 38’. Auntie Zhang compared this freedom of information with the CCP one-party dictatorship, particularly during Chairman Mao’s reign, under which

⁵² The most narrated experiences are receiving enthusiastic help from passers-by when asking for directions. The courteousness and politeness amongst families feels like a novelty in China.

‘No one dared to criticise the Party. You’d be arrested if you openly criticised’ (interviewed on 28/01/10, Pingtung; 01/06/09, Keelung; 25/03/09, Taipei).

A favourable impression is thus generated and becomes more pronounced when immigrants return to China. Stories of civility and the hospitality of strangers are repeatedly relayed⁵³. As applying for documentation is a constant chore, they have plenty of experiences in interacting with civil servants in Taiwan and China. In a contrast to the swift, reliable and predictable performance of the civil servants in Taiwan (applications are processed and approved by a known procedure within an expected waiting time), the progress and outcome in China are marred by unpredictability, inefficiency, irresponsiveness and a lack of transparency, which creates room for bribery⁵⁴. Thus, living in Taiwan is favourably compared and positively contributes to the sense of achieving betterment, a part of which is defined as the general improvement of living standards in material and social terms. Hence acquiring these desirable social goods can potentially generate identification with Taiwan. This is why when Gong Pingying said she aspired to ‘become Taiwanese’, the image emerging in her mind was of young, well-educated and English-speaking middle-class

⁵³ However, for the sake of *face-saving*, when speaking to a public audience, immigrants tend to amplify their positive gains and conceal their negative frustration.

⁵⁴ Jiang Juan had an unexpected encounter which highlighted the popularity of the affluent image of Taiwan and the prevalent bribery. Dressed in plain, outdated and unimpressive clothing, she went to a Qingdao municipal government office to apply for documentation. The officer was slow and provided incomplete and inconsistent information. Twice the officer asked her ‘Did you *really* marry a Taiwanese husband?’ At last, the officer asked ‘Are people in Taiwan dressed like you?’ She thought her plain look made herself unconvincing as someone who married and moved to affluent Taiwan, but her friends insisted what the officer indicated was the demand for a small bribe.

professionals, as they personify the modern, civilised, westernised and prosperous Taiwan.

However, these positive experiences are generated from *personal* contact with civil servants and members of the general public. To a large extent, these positive experiences are independent of the influence of citizenship legislation, which defines the scope of rights awarded to Chinese immigrants. Thus, these positive personal experiences have to be measured against the reception given by the *impersonal state*.

5.3.2 Citizenship Legislation: Entry Interview, Residency, Employment, Citizenship

As conveyed by the policy guideline '*loose on living, tough on citizenship*', Chinese immigrants are cautioned to eventually become citizens and the approval has to be regulated under tighter controls. It is also anticipated that they will become mothers, hence rights are conferred upon them to enable them to perform motherhood duties. I will now examine how Chinese immigrant women assessed the experience of going through the *rite of passage* from an outsider to a citizen.

1. Entry Interview

From September 2003 onwards, the entry interview was the very first gate to cross to enter Taiwan. Although interviewees who migrated before 2003 were exempt, they empathised with those who were interviewed. Rationally, the process was understood as a mechanism to filter out bogus marriages, and they had nothing to fear because of the authenticity of their marriage. Emotionally, however, it was a grave insult. It was felt that the immigration officers intruded on their privacy, particularly with questions

having sexual implications⁵⁵. The physical setting of the interview (a small compartmentalised room equipped with audio and video recording equipment) made them feel like criminals (for the police's stance on interviewing, see Lin Kun-yuan 2005: 138-139).

What they inferred from such an approach was that they were not welcome by the DPP government. A common suspicion was that this was an excuse to protect local labour, because an open gate would entice more Chinese immigrants to come. Also the willingness of Chinese workers to accept demeaning jobs that were shunned by local workers would result in a skewed preference by employers towards Chinese workers. Tong Hongying further detected a political agenda behind this mechanism: the DPP initiated and implemented this mechanism in order to put a brake on the number of Chinese immigrants, who were perceived as opposing the DPP's pursuit of independence. Although most of them were quick to point out that this was a DPP initiative, none of them commented on the fact that this excluding measure was inherited intact and then maintained by the KMT after March 2008.

2. Residency

As explained in Chapter 4, the restriction on residency was previously heavily criticised. Between 1992 and 2004, holding a visitation permit, Chinese immigrants were required

⁵⁵ My interviewees encountered the following questions: How often do you have sex with your husband after marriage? What is the colour of your husband's shirt he wore on your wedding picture? Did your husband buy you jewelry as wedding gifts? Common questions raised to detect bogus marriages include 'How did you know your husband?' 'Did you host a wedding banquet and how many guests did you invite?' 'How much money did your husband give to your parents?' Two specific questions are widely mentioned by my interviewees as examples that immigration officers' questions are non-sensible and provocative. They are: 'When your husband gets up, is it his right leg or left leg that gets out of the bed first?' and 'What was the colour of your husband's underwear on the night of your wedding day?' However, a female immigration officer asserted that the National Immigration Agency had openly clarified that these were groundless accusations (17/04/09, Taoyuan Airport).

to leave Taiwan every six months during their first two years' staying in Taiwan. Auntie Shi is one of those whose married life was deeply affected. Auntie Shi was a primary school teacher from Guangdong. She first arrived in Taiwan in 1996 for her second marriage when she was 47-years-old. Her husband was a Mainlander accommodated by the Ministry of National Defence in the dormitory for elderly single veterans. Her existence was not only a great help for her husband who suffered serious illness, but also for other residents, who were also elderly, frail and in need of care. After she moved in, a few residents also opted to marry Chinese women for the much needed company and care. Auntie Shi had doubts about subjecting married couples to separation for a long duration, particularly when their husbands were in poor health. Without prompt, she spontaneously mentioned the failed attempt of the DPP government in 2003 to prolong the qualifying period for citizenship eligibility to 11 years. However, she declined to speculate the intention of this disruptive policy. Her comment was 'This is the law of the land and you just have to obey. This is like the *One Child Policy* in China. You can't argue with it.' When asked whether she took part in protesting against this policy⁵⁶, she said 'We didn't think about *revolting (zaofan)*' (19/03/09, Taipei). Thus, despite her superficial submissiveness, the disruptive legislation was perceived as harsh and incomprehensible as the One Child Policy. She was aware that they were not welcomed by the KMT government but did not think 'ordinary people' could fight against the will of the powerful state.

Out of security concerns, Chinese immigrants are subject to a surveillance scheme, which includes registering their residential address and being under regular

⁵⁶ Two demonstrations were organised by Chinese immigrants and their Taiwanese spouses on 19th May and 2nd October 1998. The protestors demanded the right to work, NHI coverage, longer visitation duration, a higher number of residency permit awarding, and earlier citizenship eligibility (Lin Miao-ling 2005: 46).

checks regarding their whereabouts. However, in everyday practice, national security seems to be a secondary concern of the security apparatus. Describing herself as ‘well trained by the Communists’, Granny Yang regularly reported to the local police station until an officer told her that the scheme did not target ‘old ladies like her’ but was instead targeting younger women for evidence of human smuggling and prostitution (see Chen Mei-hua 2010 for a similar discussion).

For those who actively seek employment, however, the police check-up is a real pressure. Its intention is unmistakably known by interviewees as clamping down on illegal employment. Zhong Meiling, Zuo Zirong and Wu Lili came to Taiwan for their second marriage with elderly Mainlanders. Looking for jobs in order to relieve their financial stress was their main motivation. They all had the experience of being questioned by the police about their employment or absence from their registered address, and this resulted in Lili’s repatriation. Zuo Zirong worked at her step-son’s noodle shop without receiving any payment. A local police officer who was protecting a witness living next door was alerted by her Mandarin accent and thought that she was an illegal worker (see 5.4 Linguistic Familiarisation for the socio-political significance of Mandarin accent). However, because of no monetary payment involved, this was not considered as employment⁵⁷. Receiving legal advice that her husband as the endorser of her residency should financially support her, Zirong asked her husband to sign a statement specifying that she was working away from home because he could not financially support her and the family. Zirong was in line with others who argued that they were helping the Taiwanese government to cope with the pressing issue of caring

⁵⁷ The Mainland Affairs Council acknowledges that in the early years Chinese immigrants were repatriated simply because they helped out at their husbands’ noodle stalls and their involvement was harshly interpreted as illegal employment (<http://www2.mac.gov.tw/MAC/NewsView.aspx?NewsID=123>).

for poor and elderly men. She argued that when these men had been forgotten and neglected by the government, it was Chinese women who ‘picked them up’ and then looked after them. Hence, their efforts ought to be rewarded by the right to work and also to inherit their husbands’ property or pension (11/03/09, Taipei).

3. Employment

The prospect of employment in Taiwan is one of the major attractions for widows and divorcees who fall into financial hardship and for those who find their employment opportunities in China are limited. However, before June 2009, Chinese immigrants were not allowed to work until they had acquired a residency permit. Some of them therefore worked illegally in less satisfying jobs or poor employment conditions. This is how Xiao Yingran found herself working as an unlicensed nanny (a less desired job) and claimed ‘All Chinese women who work as nannies are working illegally because they don’t have a work permit or ID Card’ (15/03/09, Taipei).

Even if one is not in a difficult financial situation, it is still perplexing why a healthy adult at a productive age was forced to be idle for up to four years. Challenging the gendered presumption that women relied on husbands, Chinese immigrant women protested that without some form of personal income there was no security or independence. Furthermore, having both husbands and wives working has now become the mainstream way of life in Taiwan. The cost of living and childrearing has created the necessity of obtaining double income. As mothers who were responsible for their children’s well-being, they criticised the government for impeding their right to work.

As shown in the cases of Hu Hailan and her daughter Wong Hong, older and younger interviewees had different employment prospects. Older interviewees were mostly confined to manual labour jobs. Younger interviewees tended to find jobs in the

retail industry. For older interviewees, the hardship of a job was directly compensated by the monetary rewards, which could be translated into property ownership in China and to improving the lives of children left behind. For younger interviewees, achieving self-fulfilment was as important as receiving material rewards. Employment also raises self-esteem. Both older and younger interviewees expressed the pride that their diligence and endurance won positive recognition from local employers. Ironically, they were also aware that this was because they were willing to take jobs shunned by locals and did not make demands on their employers to improve their working conditions. In that sense, their vulnerability in the job market is also their niche.

Thus, the significance of employment goes beyond betterment defined purely in monetary terms. It enables an immigrant to build up her social contacts and network with fellow immigrants and local people, secure financial adequacy for herself and her children (in China or in Taiwan), fulfil her potential, raise her self-esteem, entitle her to labour insurance coverage and a state pension⁵⁸. This is potentially conducive for developing identification with Taiwan.

4. Citizenship

Citizenship is embedded with formal, symbolic and substantive values and is the pivot of a stable and secure life in Taiwan. Symbolised by the ID Card, citizenship formally recognises the belonging of a citizen to the national community, endows her with the right to jointly make decisions with all other citizens for public affairs and give her access to rights within the welfare system. Lacking citizenship means that she remains a target of the government's surveillance scheme. She is not allowed to cast a vote, join or

⁵⁸ However, on a residency permit Chinese immigrants are not covered by occupational insurance and cannot join the state pension. These will be available when they acquire citizenship (CLA 2009: 16).

set up a registered organisation, invest in the stock market, own real estate, inherit her husband's property or his pension, enrol at educational institutions, attend national examinations for professional certificates, participate in the national pension scheme, be included in the occupational insurance scheme and sponsor her children born to her previous marriage to reside in Taiwan. Even if she is not concerned by these issues, without citizenship, she cannot have a secure life in Taiwan because her residency is entirely hinged upon marriage and motherhood.

Thus, the desirability of citizenship is understated as 'making life easier'. However, fundamentally, citizenship is understood as the symbol of acceptance, recognition, inclusion, equality and fairness. Hence interviewees commonly criticised the DPP's citizenship legislation as being draconian, discriminatory, excluding and differentiating. This incites a stronger distrust towards the DPP. The awareness that the restrictive citizenship legislation impairs their well-being encouraged some interviewees to take part in the entitlement claim demonstrations. Long Yongru went out to the street with other protestors, whereas Wong Hong disseminated information about the protest and encouraged her mother and others to join the rally. For those who did not join the rally, they were nevertheless well versed about the differentiated legal treatment of Chinese and Southeast Asians, including the unequal eligibility for receiving Shopping Vouchers issued by the KMT government in early 2009. This is perplexing because in the Chinese immigrants' worldview, they and the people of Taiwan are of the same race, culture and ancestry. Therefore, some claimed they sat at the bottom of society under the Taiwanese-speaking Hoklo, Mainlanders and Southeast Asian immigrants.

Few interviewees pointed out that the reluctance to admit Chinese to be ROC citizens was a consistent policy carried out by both the KMT and DPP administrations. Granny Yang pinpointed the difference as that the KMT was implicit and covert and the

DPP was explicit and overt. Zhang Jinhua articulated that the KMT was concerned about Communist penetration and the DPP was anti-China. For Long Yongru, the anti-Chinese animosity was exemplified by a comment made by DPP presidential candidate Frank Hsieh. During the presidential election campaign in early 2008, Hsieh likened Taiwanese men who married Chinese women to those of prostitute clients. Yongru criticised that this comment deeply offended Chinese immigrants and their husbands (interviewed on 13/03/09, 10/03/09, 27/03/09, Taipei).

Under such circumstances, Chinese interviewees articulated a revised worldview with which to assert their rightful membership of the national community of Taiwan. This worldview is to place Taiwan's national narrative within the central-peripheral hierarchy. As discussed in Chapter 3, the national narrative is themed by immigration and multiculturalism. It characterises the differences amongst the constituent groups as a matter of time of arrival and this warrants an equal status for them within the Taiwanese category. Capitalising on this immigration theme, the multicultural appeal and the claimed equality, Chinese interviewees elaborated that they were the latest arrival and should be treated the same as those who 'arrived earlier'. Moreover, in spite of their socio-economic differences, Hoklo, Hakka, Mainlanders and Chinese are of the same *race*, thus there should be equality rather than stratification. These articulations are deeply rooted in the central-peripheral hierarchy in the sense that not only Taiwan is a secondary unit to China but also all differences amongst *internal* groups in Taiwan and China are subordinated to the ultimate unified collective entity – the Chinese nation.

Another element of the revised worldview is to interpret the aversion to the Chinese as class-biased discrimination. Socio-economic differences derived from the urban-rural divide are prevalent in China, particularly because of the strict control over

household registration (*hukou*). Thus, the disparity of standards of living between Taiwan and China is perceived along this urban-rural divide, and the discrimination towards the Chinese is interpreted as ‘better-off and sophisticated Taiwanese urbanites holding contempt towards poor and uncouth Chinese country bumpkins’. What is stressed in this appropriated perception is equality amongst the urban population in China. That is, even though the urban population is made up of people who originated from neighbouring rural areas, there is no differentiation amongst the urban residents. By locating their exclusion experiences in a familiar socio-economic context (urbanisation), interviewees were able to rebuff the unacceptable and unaccepted exclusion.

Orchestrating Taiwan’s national narrative with China’s urbanisation experiences, the revised worldview strengthens the central-peripheral hierarchy. The national community to whom Chinese immigrants imagine they belong is a Chinese nation that includes Taiwan as a constituent secondary unit. Hence, arguing that they have the right to membership of the community of Taiwan does not contradict this conceptual hierarchy. By doing so, Chinese immigrants extrapolate their origin from the supreme, ultimate, and larger unit, and place themselves above the ‘*Little Taiwan*’ and the Taiwanese people. This appropriation is in a direct confrontation with the projection of Taiwan’s national narrative. That is, the ultimate goal of the national narrative is to consolidate Taiwan as a sovereign and independent state separate from China, and the island’s culture and nation has been transformed from a Chinese monopoly to a convergence of multiple origins. Taiwan is a new nation born out of, but not restricted to, its Chinese origin.

As the pillar of the national narrative is a civic identity (subjectively sharing the same interest and destiny), and citizenship is desired by Chinese immigrants to gain

entitlement to recognition, inclusion, equality, and substantive rights, it is critical to examine whether becoming a citizen in Taiwan will arouse a civic identity amongst Chinese immigrants.

For older re-married women, this is not the case. Ethnocentrism reigns supreme. They identified with Taiwan for their betterment, including civility, modernity of public infrastructure, an efficient civil service, and a growing welfare state provided by a free democracy and a vibrant economy. However, the rigidity of the conceptual hierarchy – Taiwan being a part of China – was not shaken by acquiring ROC citizenship. Citizenship was more perceived as having access to substantive rights. In Auntie Shi's words, it was to calculate whether the loss of her pension in China would be made up by the gain of inheriting her husband's pension in Taiwan. Citizenship was also technically understood as household registration. That is, they cancelled their household registration in China and moved it to Taiwan. This in perception meant that their movement was an internal migration 'from one *province* to another'. They supported Taiwan to join the World Health Organisation because 'it's good for the people of Taiwan' but not membership of the United Nations because Taiwan is not a state. Tightly entwined with the ethnocentric conceptual hierarchy, they identified with Taiwan for its *beneficial* way of life, but they could not identify with Taiwan as it is now: a sovereign ROC on Taiwan that is separate from and independent of the PRC.

In this worldview, supporting the ultimate unification is a logical ending to the prolonged *status quo*. Nevertheless, there is no need to rush. For the time being, they argued that maintaining the *status quo* should be the top priority for both sides. The *status quo* was not understood as a static situation. Rather, it was hoped to be an intensive interaction rendering more economic exchanges and leading to co-prosperity. The aspiration for prosperity not only legitimised their migration motivation (achieving

betterment), but was also a deep reflection upon the hardship caused by futile mass political movements⁵⁹. The Chinese economic reforms were understood as the CPP learning the lessons of the futility of class struggle and lifting China from impoverishment. The interaction was hoped to further open Taiwan to the Chinese so that the Chinese could ‘see with their own eyes how freedom and democracy operate in Taiwan’.

Although they appreciated the operation of the democratic system, the fierce partisan political competition in Taiwan was cognitively analogous to ‘class struggle’ and was feared for the predictable devastation that could ensue. If the unification versus independence debate developed into a showdown with the CCP, the feared devastation was war. Having experienced ‘what the CCP was capable of’, and what war was like, they felt compelled to advise not to tempt fate with an angry giant. However, despite the acknowledgement that war was disastrous and nobody wanted a war, the ultimate unification was so internalised as *a personal belief* and destined as *the sacred mission* promised to Chinese ancestors that if everything possible failed to achieve it, Auntie Shi announced ‘war is the last resort’. At that juncture, a Chinese woman in the audience commented, ‘*Young people in China don’t really care about the Taiwan issue. China doesn’t really want to wage a war because it will also suffer*’. Granny Yang rebuffed this view. She reminded the audience gathered at Auntie Shi and her husband’s small room that the Taiwan issue was correlated to the independence of Xinjiang and Tibet. She stressed that unification also served a strategic interest for China to control the

⁵⁹ Auntie Zhang and Auntie Liu recalled the hard life they had in the wake of ‘Three Antis’, ‘Five Antis’, ‘Four Cleans’, and ‘the Blossom of A Hundred Flowers’. They forgot the name of the last movement but described it as ‘a movement specifically targeting the intelligentsia’, in which ‘the factional struggle in the central leadership mobilised and exploited innocent students’ support and resulted in countless deaths’. The Tiananmen Massacre was also mentioned as ‘a lot of people died in *June Fourth*’ (25/03/09, Taipei).

Taiwan Strait and to expand from a land power to a blue water power. Auntie Shi added that this strategic interest explained why the US supported Taiwan to keep China in check (19/03/09, Taipei).

As exemplified by this interview, indoctrinated beliefs and strategic interests are the often-heard rationality for unification. However, Granny Yang's utterance '*Teach you little Taiwan a lesson!*' after she analysed the strategic interests reveals that these fixed beliefs are also an emotional resistance with which to defeat the exclusion, discrimination, and otherness they are subjected to in Taiwan. Imaging themselves as speaking on behalf of China as a 'Great Power which stands high in the world and whose voice counts significantly' (中國肯定是大國, 它的發言權很重要, 在世界是頂天立地) (Auntie Shi, 19/05/09, Taipei), they politically dwarf Taiwan, belittle the Taiwanese people who despise them, and maintain their self-dignity.

As a contrast, younger interviewees modified different aspects of the central-peripheral hierarchy to varying degrees, and there were various ways to claim themselves as being Taiwanese. For 42-year-old Long Yun, travelling on an ROC passport abroad meant that Taiwan *should be* considered as an independent state. But what made more sense to her was that this state should be formally titled 'the Republic of Taiwan', rather than 'Republic of China'. After all, 'How can an entity strive to preserve a title that has been extinguished?' (05/04/09, Miaoli) Jiang Derong was very conscious that her worldview was revised. After enjoying the freedom of information in Taiwan for 12 years, she supported neither unification nor independence but the *status quo*. She stressed that this was a conscious deviation because she now recognised there were other options. Had she stayed in China, she 'would not know *any other options* but unification because in China education is the means of brainwashing' and it is 'as dogmatic as in North Korea' (12/06/09, Taipei).

Wong Hong's changed worldview was to recognise Taiwan as an independent state whilst still adhering to her ethnocentric view about the Chinese nation. The central-peripheral hierarchy used to be *the* guiding framework for her to interact with Taiwanese people. When she was insulted by the derogatory term *Mainland Girl* (*dalumei*), supporting the use of force to suppress Taiwan independence was her means to assert her self-dignity, as expressed in her own words, 'Let's see if you dare [to call me Mainland Girl] *when WE send troops over!*' In other words, Taiwan's stigmatisation of Chinese people adversely reinforced the conceptual hierarchy, and the conceptual hierarchy was evoked as a means of resistance and self-defence. However, her marriage to a middle-class man (a police officer in the squad team) located her in a friendlier social environment different from her mother's surroundings (a rural village in mountainous Changhua). The friendliness was conducive for her to 'gradually understand and accept that the history in the eyes of Taiwanese people is different from what we (Chinese) think' (18/03/09, Taipei).

In this modified worldview, Migrating to Taiwan is moving to another country and Taiwan is an independent state separate from China. A central element of this modification is reciprocity. That is, China should realistically admit that Taiwan's 'state machine' has been operating for decades independent of any interference from China. It is self-deceiving to insist that Taiwan is a part of China. Therefore, it becomes a pointless 'word game' for the Chinese government to *pretend* that Chinese people acquiring ROC citizenship are merely 'taking their household registration to Taiwan'. On the other hand, for Taiwan, without a formal independence declaration, the independence claim is inevitably subject to external challenges. Thus, it is futile for

Taiwan to also play a self-deceiving word game and pretend that the cancellation of household registration in China equals to the loss of PRC nationality. It is not⁶⁰.

The continuity of Hong's worldview is that people in Taiwan are ethnically Chinese. What differentiates Taiwan and China is the political system and the way of life, not ethnicity. She attributed her ethnocentric view to the education she received in China. As discussed above, the national curriculum strengthens pupils' sense of being a member of the Chinese nation. Regardless of their formal nationality, Chinese people remain ethnically and racially Chinese wherever they go in the world. Hence the people of Taiwan remain ethnically Chinese. Hong was yet to acquire citizenship at the time of interview. She stressed that acquiring citizenship was a rational calculation about what to gain in Taiwan and what to lose in China. However, she surprised herself for emotionally responding to the final passing of the legal reforms in 2009 which shortened the qualifying period from eight to six years. She realised that she was longing to be accepted, embraced and included by the collective Taiwanese society. As a would-be citizen, she could identify with Taiwan as a state but she remains ethnically Chinese.

For Zhang Jie, acquiring citizenship was sufficient for her to declare herself as being Taiwanese. Jie came to Taiwan in 1994 from Chongqing when she was 23. She worked hard, and her teenage daughter was her only family in Taiwan after her husband passed away. She anticipated that equality and inclusion should be guaranteed by citizenship and her contribution to society (she paid taxes and 'devoted her life and youth to Taiwan'). As a citizen, she asserted her right to demand good governance, and

⁶⁰ To secure her pension in China, Granny Yang found out that a cancelled household registration can be restored after a residency of four years.

this is why she voted at every election and joined the anti-corruption protest in 2007. In her mind, the corruption led to unemployment and hence impaired her prospects of having a secure and stable life with her only daughter. As a citizen, she identified with Taiwan as the place where the interests of her and her daughter are tied up along with those of other citizens. However, what is perplexing for Zhang Jie is that this self-identification does not overcome institutional differentiation. On the day of the interview, she was rejected by a caregiving training agency for lacking a high school diploma, which was indispensable to enrol her on a government-funded training programme. This was a requirement for Chinese trainees. For her, this rejection was not only perplexing but also demoralising. She was already a Taiwanese citizen. Why would she still be counted as an *outsider*? Viewed in the ethnocentric light, why would Chinese people encounter difficulties in finding caregiving jobs, whereas Filipinos would not? Would it not be better to hire *us-members* as caregivers rather than Filipinos who would *degrade* Taiwan? (15/04/09, Taipei)

For other younger interviewees who were yet to acquire citizenship, they envisaged that their future hinged on Taiwan's development and this was translated into their support for the *status quo*. What is noteworthy is that maintaining the *status quo* is not a 'second best' option. Rather, it is *the* option that excludes the likelihood of China using force against Taiwan and Taiwan declaring independence. This is because unification is perceived as 'better-off Taiwan being dragged down by a worse-off China' and declaring independence results in war. Neither is in Taiwan's interest, hence it is also not in their interest. Thus, they remain Chinese and see Taiwan as part of China but they identify with Taiwan for the prospect of realising a better life.

To sum up, the political, social and economic development of Taiwan generated a positive response from the Chinese immigrants. Those who were employed could

achievement betterment in Taiwan. However, the state itself did not induce such a positive response. The execution of the entry interview, the disruption of residency, the restrictions on employment, the reluctance in awarding citizenship, and the differentiation of Chinese and Southeast Asians are discouraging. They are the signifiers of the boundary between the Taiwanese and the Chinese categories.

For older immigrants, the boundary strengthens the central-peripheral hierarchy as a resistance to discrimination. Their worldview is revised by appropriating the immigration theme and the multiculturalism discourse to reinforce their self-defences against differentiation. They assert their membership of the national community of Taiwan, which is subordinated to the Chinese nation. Conditioned by ethnocentrism, the *rite of passage* from an outsider to a citizen does not generate a civic identity. They can identify with Taiwan for its more beneficial lifestyle, but they cannot identify with Taiwan as a nation-state. They denounce war for its feared disastrous consequences, but they do not denounce war as a last resort to achieve the scared mission – bringing Taiwan back to the Chinese nation under the leadership of the PRC.

For younger immigrants, the central-peripheral hierarchy can be modified to perceive Taiwan as an independent state, in spite of the confusion caused by its official title. The linear link between the historiography (Taiwan is a part of China) and the ultimate unification has been challenged. Supporting the *status quo* is seen as *the* option to preserve Taiwan's prosperity, upon which their personal prospects are hinged. The *rite of passage* to become a citizen enables them to claim themselves as being Taiwanese, but this does not contradict their ethnic Chinese identity. Citizenship generates a civic identity in which one is empowered to make demands for good governance. As a citizen, they can identify with Taiwan as a state. What is frustrating, in the case of Zhang Jie, is that self-identification does not guarantee the eradication of

the boundary between Chinese and Taiwanese. In other words, her in-betweenness is an outcome of institutionalised differentiation.

5.4 Linguistic Familiarisation

On the surface it may appear perplexing to suggest that language is an issue that has an impact on the formation of Chinese immigrants' in-between identity. After all, Mandarin is spoken both in Taiwan and China as the official language. Nevertheless, language is an effective *boundary marker*. This is shown in two specific contexts. The distinctive non-local Mandarin accents erect a boundary between locals and Chinese immigrants. The Taiwanese dialect further locates Chinese immigrants as being different to the dialect speakers.

5.4.1 Mandarin Accents

Mandarin is the *lingua franca* in Taiwan. It is anticipated by Chinese immigrants as a source of cohesion (unlike in Hong Kong the lingua franca is Cantonese). However, Chinese immigrants easily give away their *alien* origin because of their accents. It results in a common experience: 'Whenever I open my mouth, people know I'm from China.' This happens more to newly arrived immigrants, who are yet to familiarise themselves with the local linguistic habits. It also occurs more to older immigrants, who are less likely to acquire the local accent. When a local person questions, comments or speculates their origin, the reaction of Chinese immigrants ranges from indifference to frustration, agitation, or appreciation, depending on how the situation arises and how the local person raises the issue.

Blending in with the local linguistic habit is a way to prevent exclusion. Wong Hong was one of the younger interviewees who made the effort to learn the Chinese phonetics system used in Taiwan. Her successful adoption of the local accent, slang and

mannerisms convinced others that she was a local person, a situation with which she was comfortable and which has benefits for work. However, a sudden u-turn of locals' attitudes may occur when the origin of a Chinese immigrant is 'uncovered'. Twenty-six-year-old Dong Mei was a Cantonese speaker but spoke Mandarin with a local accent and mannerisms after living in Taiwan for four years. Her close friend significantly changed her attitudes after she found out Mei was 'actually from China'. For Mei, this underlined the reflectivity of identity. Even if she had successfully adapted to the local linguistic habits, it was still up to the locals to determine whether she was counted as one of *us*, in spite of her subjective willingness.

When the question 'Where are you from' is perceived as non-judgemental, Chinese interviewees respond with appreciation. Twenty-eight-year-old Tong Hongying was a Cantonese speaker and particularly appreciated the thoughtfully phrased question raised by her bakery employer: 'Judging from your accent, you seem to come from *abroad*?' This was warmly perceived as he considerately concealed his knowledge of her Chinese origin. Chongqing-born An Qilan had a similar experience at her shop when a customer carefully commented 'You are probably a *Mainlander* (*waishengren*)?' after a few minutes of conversation. For Hongying and Qilan, a *factual* statement or a question avoiding crudeness signifies the interlocutor's respect and empathy. This is highly appreciated and taken as a sign of acceptance and recognition.

A more dramatised response may ensue if the context is perceived as confrontational, such as involving the use of the derogatory term *Mainland Girl* (*dalumei*) or *Mainland Bride* (*dalu xinni*) by a local man or woman⁶¹. In the local

⁶¹ Although Chinese immigrants boycott these derogatory labels, in their daily life they also voluntarily, spontaneously and even unconsciously use these terms. It can be argued that circumscribed by the overwhelming public discourse, other alternatives are not available to hand. However, a key difference is

parlance, 29-year-old Gong Pingying and 60-year-old Auntie Zhang were indistinguishably addressed as *Mainland Girl* in spite of their wide age gap, but they adopted a 'let it be' strategy. However, as mentioned above, this pushed Wong Hong to evoke the use of force to safeguard her personal dignity. Similarly, 38-year-old Yuan Panpan was irritated by its explicit sexual and materialistic connotation (Shih 1998: 297-298), and finally hit a male fishmonger with her umbrella after he repeatedly called her *Mainland Girl*. For 47-year-old Long Yongru, it is frustrating that her accent revealed her Chinese origin and deprived her of employment opportunities. Experiences gained from their daily life in this regard teach them the necessity of detecting and interpreting why a local person addresses them in a certain way so that a response in proportion to the perceived friendliness or hostility can be given in order to maintain self-dignity.

Whilst discussing how a local person addressed Chinese people, interviewees often voluntarily led our conversations on accent towards the stereotyped sub-quality *made-in-China* commodity. This is another context whereby they encounter exclusion, discrimination, and denunciation. Before coming to Taiwan, Gong Pingying was reminded by her husband of the possible discrimination to be found in Taiwan. However, she did not have her first personal encounter until she was in the operating theatre ready for a caesarean operation. When a piece of equipment broke, a nurse uttered without thinking 'Must be made-in-China!' Thirty-seven-year-old Bai Ling was a shop assistant and found that not only her accent revealed her origin but it also cost her business opportunities. Her personal origin was taken as being synonymous with the origin of her products and dissuaded some customers from making a purchase in her

reflexivity. When they use these terms to address themselves, they do not subject themselves to the negative implications.

shop. Forty-two-year-old Long Yun is a public health specialist holding a doctoral degree working at a research institution. Her local colleagues also expressed doubts about the made-in-China quality, which she found difficult to agree with, given that China was capable of indigenously manufacturing high tech products, such as the high speed railway. For her, the criticism of made-in-China quality was just a lame excuse to express Taiwan's contempt of China. She argued that the discriminative language that the media used to refer to Chinese women and foreign migrant workers revealed that Taiwan was not really a civilised nation.

Nearly every interviewee who was employed had encountered unsavoury comments made by Taiwanese colleagues or customers about sub-quality made-in-China commodities, the amorality of Chinese manufactures, the materialism of Chinese women, and the universal poverty of people in China. During an election campaign, these exchanges would potentially become a heated debate and mocking about each other's political inclination towards the DPP or the KMT, and then further escalated to rows about independence and unification. Neither side would willingly back down. In these situations, the central-peripheral hierarchy was seriously challenged and might be strengthened as a shield for self-defence. The partisan politics was so strongly felt amongst locals that some Taiwanese colleagues were aware of the potential conflict caused by the presence of Chinese immigrants in the workplace. Thus, when An Qilan arrived at her new job at a department store, she was immediately advised by a good-intentioned local colleague 'not to talk about politics' with a colleague who was well known for her 'deep-green' position (23/03//09, Taipei).

5.4.2 The Taiwanese Dialect

If Mandarin accents set the *us-other* demarcation between *locals and Chinese immigrants*, the Taiwanese dialect shifts the boundary to inside the Taiwanese category,

and carves the border separating Taiwanese dialect speakers and Chinese immigrants. Along this border, Chinese immigrants find themselves in the previously unknown political terrain defined by the divide between native Taiwanese (*benshengren*) and Mainlanders (*waishengren*). In the linguistic context, for Chinese immigrants, ‘Taiwanese people’ (*taiwanren*) are nearly equivalent to ‘Taiwanese dialect speakers’. Likewise, for the Taiwanese dialect speakers, it is self-evident that Chinese immigrants are members of the *Mainlander* (*waishengren*) community. A critical issue in this boundary making is whether Chinese immigrants identify themselves as Mainlanders and whether the Mainlander community accepts them as *us*-members. This further leads to an equally slippery question: how to define so-called second generation Mainlanders.

Prior to migration, it was known amongst the Chinese immigrants that the Taiwanese dialect, or the *Southern Fujian dialect* (*minnanyu*, or Hoklo), was widely spoken in Taiwan. An effective messenger is the popular Taiwanese dialect-sung songs. For Gong Pingying, as a fan of these pop songs, the dialect was fun and gentle. What is less known, however, is the political divide between Mainlanders and the Hoklo speakers. This appears confusing as although dialect-speaking in China is common, the division between a dialect and Mandarin is not political but provincial and practical. Hence as Han Chinese, they are less inclined to perceive a linguistic issue in the light of politics and are consequently caught unprepared for the associated social and political implications to be found in Taiwan.

Post migration, it is widely noted that Hoklo is much more spoken by the older generation, in commercial transaction, and in ‘southern’ Taiwan (although it is not clear where the line is drawn to cut Taiwan into the north and the south). This has different implications for Chinese immigrants. For the younger immigrants, if their in-laws are Hoklo or Hakka speakers, they may need to acquire a degree of listening comprehension

in order to communicate or avoid being deceived. When gossipers in the neighbourhood were elderly Hoklo women who were particularly nose-y about remittances, Lu Minhan felt that she and her peers were under the intrusive watch of these *self-assigned mothers-in-law*. This was particularly agitating because she herself had no mother-in-law. As Hoklo is widely used in transactions, a common concern is that they may be cheated by Hoklo sellers. For those who are employed in the retail, service and caregiving industries, Hoklo comprehension is a social capital when their employers, customers, and patients are Hoklo speakers. Hence the potential benefit gives an incentive to learn Hoklo. For some, it is adaptation leading to identification. For example, Gong Pingying aspired to learn the dialect in order to *become Taiwanese*.

In addition to the awareness of the generational, occupational and regional differences of dialect-speaking, Chinese immigrants are also confronted with the social and political implications of using the dialect. Sixty-seven-year-old Auntie Zhang was publicly scolded by an elderly male passer-by in the Longshan Temple area of Taipei after she told the man that she could not understand his query in the dialect. The man shouted angrily ‘Learn Taiwanese!’ before he got on his bus. Forty-three-year-old Qian Aini was once a construction worker and had a heated argument with male colleagues when she suspected that they were referring to her with an indecent term in the dialect and thus verbally took sexual advantage of her. Seventy-one-year-old Granny Yang was interested in learning the dialect and went to the course provided by the non-profit organisation CARES (Chinese Association for Relief and Ensuing Services). Her Mainlander husband thought that this was futile because even if she managed to speak, her strong accent would immediately give away her origins and this revelation would invite more insults. He had warned her that Taiwanese-speaking people resented Mainlanders and he, too, had a negative personal encounter. At a hospital, a stranger

told him ‘Chinese pig get lost’ in spite of him saying that he had lived in Taiwan for more than fifty years. After her husband passed away, Granny Yang was introduced to a church by a neighbour whom she described as a second-generation Mainlander and who took pity on her. The atmosphere in the church was friendly as long as there was no talk of politics. However, she was disappointed that the fellowship preferred to chat in the dialect in spite of her petition that she could not understand and did not want to be left out. Because of their explicit political orientation (they tried to persuade her to vote for the DPP presidential candidate in 2008), she claimed that her church was a ‘pro-independence church’. Her experiences convinced her that the intelligibility of the dialect was a source of discrimination.

For Auntie Zhang and Granny Yang who migrated to Taiwan in the 1990s, speaking the dialect has evolved from an issue of social adaptation to politicisation, which is collateral to the policy orientation of the DPP administrations. Before migrating to Taiwan, they were unaware of the tension between *native Taiwanese* (*benshengren*) and *Mainlanders* (*waishengren*). After living in Taiwan for more than ten years and twice experiencing a change of the ruling party, they became well versed in the political discourse and characterised the divide between the two groups as ‘*polarisation*’ (*duili*). Drawing from their political experiences in China, the politicking of the issue was perceived as more ferocious and detrimental than the Cultural Revolution because the latter was remembered as a totalitarian regime oppressing *the whole society*, whereas the former was a partisan competition resulting in *dividing the society*. The polarisation was condemned for causing current economic stagnation.

Whilst Chinese immigrants are pushed away by Hoklo speakers, they may find accommodation within the Mainlander community. This has appeared in the political discourse whereby Chinese immigrants have been labelled as ‘*New Mainlanders*’ (*xin*

waishengren) (Song 2004: 113). Zhang Jie saw herself as a Mainlander when mentioning her participation in the anti-corruption demonstration: ‘*We waishengren* are the main components of the anti-corruption protest’ (15/04/09, Taipei). In everyday life, they may also be mistaken for Mainlanders. Depending on their age, they may be identified as those who arrived in Taiwan around 1949 (for example, Granny Yang) or the Taiwan-born second generation (for example, Yuan Panpan). Granny Yang and Panpan have lived in Taiwan for fourteen years and found ‘Mainlander’ an acceptable label with which they are comfortable to identify. For Granny Yang, being regarded as a Mainlander rid herself of the derogatory *Mainland Bride* label. The accommodation within the Mainlander community may also derive from the friendly reception. For Granny Yang, she was helped by women who she described as ‘the second-generation Mainlanders’. For caregiver Hu Hailan, she developed a warm relationship with the family of her Mainlander patients, with whom she often chatted about their hometowns in China together. This friendliness is conducive for subjective identification with the Mainlander community. The reciprocity between Chinese immigrants and Mainlanders may be expressed as *in opposition to* Hoklo speakers. Take Zou Zirong for example. On a bus journey she was told off by a Hoklo woman, who complained about her speaking loudly on the phone. The argument became heated and they accused each other as ‘*materialistic Chinese*’ and ‘*condescending Taiwanese*’. After it was over, the silent bus driver, who identified himself as a second-generation Mainlander, turned out to be Zirong’s sympathiser. He deliberately skipped the stop at which the Hoklo woman requested to get off. He complained to Zirong that he was *also* discriminated against.

However, self-identifying with the Mainlander community may not be as assuring as it appears. It is problematic as to whether *the second or third generation* should be counted as Mainlanders. For Auntie Zhang, Auntie Liu, and Lou Yingzhu,

this ambiguous and questionable categorisation arose from the relationship with their step-children. Although these step-children are children of Mainlanders and mainly speak Mandarin, their Taiwanese-ness is not different from that of the broader Taiwanese category. They are born and bred in Taiwan, show hostility towards China, uphold the same condescending attitude towards Chinese immigrants, despise made-in-China products and reject food brought back from China by their Chinese step-mothers. Their inheritance of their fathers' Mainland origins is nothing but nominal. 'Aren't they *also* Taiwanese?' asked Auntie Zhang. At that juncture, Auntie Liu raised the doubly-rejected and in-between positioning of the 1949 refugees: 'The old men have lived in Taiwan for more than sixty years. They are *Mainlanders (waishengren)* in Taiwan, but they are *Taiwanese Compatriots (taibao)* in China. They belong to nowhere!' (25/03/09, Taipei) Her witty comment brought about loud laughter and the identification with the Mainlander community remained unsettled and contested as the laughter died down.

The linguistic contexts involving Mandarin accents and the Taiwanese dialect show that language is not only a boundary *marker* but also a boundary *maker*. While it excludes Chinese immigrants as outsiders, it also includes them if they are able to adapt to the local linguistic habits and thus cross the boundary. Therefore, there is room for agency. If they acquire the local accent and mannerisms like Wong Hong, Yuan Panpan and Dong Mei, or speak the Taiwanese dialect, they can more easily blend in with the local society. In spite of the autonomous agency, however, the reflexivity of boundary making means that it is largely up to the host society to determine whether they have crossed the boundary or have been recognised as *us*-members. The existence of Chinese immigrants in Taiwan offers an outlet for people in Taiwan to *vocally* and *verbally* express their suspicion towards, and resistance, to a rising China. Thus, Chinese

immigrants' subjective identification is contested by the local society, and there is a tug-of-war between self-identification and ascribed categorisation. On the other hand, the experiences of Chinese interviewees in coping with speaking Hoklo also reveals the internal tension within the Taiwanese category, an aspect that the national narrative frankly acknowledges.

5.5 Fulfilling Motherhood Duties

As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, a significant difference between older and younger interviewees is that the latter became mothers in Taiwan. In other words, while both went through the *rite of passage* from an outsider to a citizen, younger immigrants additionally experienced the transition of becoming a mother in Taiwan. This means motherhood as a path leading to the in-between identity is only taken by younger immigrants.

Having lived in Taiwan for 15 years and single-handedly raising her only daughter after the death of her husband, Zhang Jie described her *rite of passage* as 'devoting my life and youth to Taiwan'. Describing herself as a believer that women moved to live with husbands after marriage, she asserted that she was Taiwanese because she had married a Taiwanese man. As a mother, all she hoped for was to 'protect my family in Taiwan'. Acquiring citizenship enabled her to claim herself as being Taiwanese, an identity also derived from the fact that her home and family were in Taiwan. Nearly identical with Zhang Jie is Hainan-born Ming Xianglan. Her marriage to a Taiwanese man is sufficient for her to claim herself both as Taiwanese and as a daughter-in-law of Taiwan. When she arrived with her husband and three children in 1994, she desired nothing but a stable life. She later gave birth to two more children in Taiwan. Taiwan is her home because her children were born and bred in Taiwan. Hainan becomes a natal home (*niangjia*). As Taiwan is home, she claimed she

must (and did) learn the local culture, etiquette, language, taste, and education. Becoming a mother means putting down roots in Taiwan.

Becoming a mother changes the equation of betterment. Betterment used to be defined as the improvement of well-being of self and their parents. After becoming a mother, betterment was re-defined as ensuring and protecting the well-being of their children. In the case of Zhu Yongli, whose marriage was marred by an indifferent husband, a materialistic mother-in-law, and an abusive sister-in-law, her children's well-being as well as her longing to stay with the children convinced her of the necessity of applying for citizenship. Thus, under the gendered legislation which links citizenship to motherhood, citizenship itself becomes a means to achieve betterment.

On the other hand, putting down roots in Taiwan does not negate their identification with China. In addition to the ethnocentric sense of being Chinese, the primordial ties with China are sustained, and China is seen as the *hometown* (*guxiang*) where they were born and bred. This creates a typical 'here and there' in-between complex. As experienced by Dong Mei, Bai Ling, and Jiang Juan. The complex is that they miss China in Taiwan, and they miss Taiwan in China. They miss China as an ethnic Chinese person because of the primordial ties and the socialisation in which they are brought up. They miss Taiwan as a wife and mother, as well as the life they established for themselves. However, their primordial ties may not be appreciated at home. Mi Yuping's husband reminded her in a semi-serious tone: 'Don't talk about Mao Zedong or the Five-Star Flag (the national flag of the PRC) with *my* son' or 'Don't teach *my* son *your* hometown dialect' (05/05/09, Taoyuan) shows that Chinese mothers' cultural heritage is politicised. The boundary between the Taiwanese and Chinese categories is erected at home.

The most dramatic demonstration of their identification is where immigrant women would choose to be in the case of war. For older interviewees, they would prefer to leave Taiwan and stay with their children in China because there was no doubt that the PRC would crush Taiwan. In fact, even without a war scenario, they did not plan to stay in Taiwan after their husbands pass away. They did not presume that their step-children would look after them. For younger interviewees, whose affection with Taiwan grew out of their family ties, they were reluctant to envisage the possibility of war. In Jian Juang's words, she imagined that they were the bridge to maintain the flesh-and-blood relationship between China and Taiwan. This comment was inspired by her friend's projection which linked the political development in China and Taiwan to their family relationship across the strait:

'Perhaps in the future, the Chinese central leadership will be born to a family whose *female* relatives have settled in Taiwan. Perhaps in the future, the Taiwanese central leadership will be born to a family whose mothers are originally from China' (16/03/09, Taipei).

The metaphor of 'bridge' and the positive imagination vividly demonstrate how family ties generate a *relational* identity (Knop 2001, see also Chapter 2) linked to both sides. The perceived link with both sides is Jian Juan's very narration of the in-between identity. Nevertheless, the in-between situation does not only give rise to a positive imagination. For Ming Xianglan, who experienced the terror and irrationality of the CCP regime through her suffering during the Cultural Revolution, she visualised herself in a war scenario as squeezed in between. She imagined that not only would she be suspected by Taiwan of being a Communist agent, she would also be distrusted in China as being a sympathiser of Taiwan. She would be disowned by both sides.

To sum up, Chinese mothers' sense of motherhood duties is an example of what Liamputtong defines as a 'moral career' (Liamputtong 2006). It is a personal realisation of the gender norm that mothers are responsible for children's well-being. As an immigrant mother, fulfilling this moral career becomes integral to the materialisation of betterment. It also generates a sense of being rooted in Taiwan. This is the defining difference between older immigrants and younger immigrants, and the difference is highlighted by their reaction to a war scenario. For the older immigrants, despite their strong disapproval of the war devastation, they do not refrain from talking about war. They would choose to return to China at that dramatic moment. For younger immigrants, their family ties discourage them from contemplating war and they would choose to stay in Taiwan. The war scenario facilitates a stage on which to demonstrate their in-between identity. For some, the in-betweenness is perceived as a positive force to overcome hostility across the strait. For others, the in-betweenness is caught by the tension created by the governments on both sides.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter illuminates the formation of the in-between identity of Chinese immigrant women. Their *rite of passage* is traced back to their motivations for marriage and migration. Imagining Taiwan as an affluent place, they see migration to Taiwan as giving themselves the opportunity of realising betterment. Attracted by the nationalistic *mystique* created by the CCP's indoctrination, migrating to Taiwan is valued for satisfying a nationalistic curiosity.

The higher living standards in Taiwan induce a general satisfaction of betterment. But the advancement is conditioned by the availability of employment, and employment is controlled by citizenship legislation. The legislation is perceived as excluding and they see this exclusion as being backed up by a political agenda. This

exclusion is designed to prevent Chinese immigration from being a disturbing force for domestic politics as well as the Taiwan-China relationship. For some, this exclusion is more evident in the DPP's pursuit of independence; for others, this is a consistent policy of the KMT and the DPP. The difference is that the KMT is more concerned about CCP penetration and the DPP is more cautious about the influence of the PRC over the direction of domestic politics.

For older immigrants, the *rite of passage* from an outsider to a citizen does not lead them to deviate from the central-peripheral hierarchy which anchors their views of the Taiwan-China relationship. Their nationalistic curiosity is satisfied as a *self-evident* prophecy. Taiwan is seen as being different from China in terms of its free democracy and open society. Nevertheless, older immigrants' unchanged belief in ethnocentrism led them to stick to the concepts that the people of Taiwan are members of the Chinese nation, and that one nation forms one state. Thus, the subordinate Taiwan remains to be united by the PRC and this unification puts a missing piece back to the inclusive concept of China. Therefore, they do not see Taiwan as a separate unit from China, and the civic identity promoted by the *Understanding Taiwan* textbook cannot compete with their belief in ethnocentrism. In their daily life, the conceptual hierarchy is not only guidance for cognition, it is also *internalised* as a personal belief to the extent that it is evoked as self-defence to counter the overwhelming discrimination. The conceptual hierarchy is strengthened by absorbing the immigration multicultural elements of the national narrative of Taiwan, so as to advocate their equal status within the Taiwanese category. They become citizens of Taiwan, but citizenship is understood as allowing access to substantive rights and household registration rather than the membership of the national community. This worldview is in conflict with the national narrative in that it does not recognise the claim that the ROC on Taiwan is a sovereign state separate

from, and independent of, China. In other words, as a citizen, they cannot identify with what Taiwan is now. Their willingness to resort to force in order to bring Taiwan back to the Chinese nation does not lay a civic path with which to identify with Taiwan.

The linguistic challenge is also discouraging for developing self-identification with Taiwan. The sensitivity of the host society to non-local Mandarin accents and their unfamiliarity with the Taiwanese dialect erects a social boundary. They may find some accommodation within the Mainlander community, but it remains contentious for them to define who Mainlanders are. Thus, the linguistic challenge also reveals the internal division within the Taiwanese category.

The experiences of younger immigrants are in contrast to the experiences of older immigrants. For younger immigrants, the *rite of passage* from an outsider to a citizen induces varying degrees of deviation from the central-peripheral hierarchy. While adhering to the ethnocentric view that people of Taiwan are ethnically Chinese, as citizens, they can identify with Taiwan as for what Taiwan defines itself now. However, this reality remains challenged because of the tested official title of the state, or lacking formal declaration. In addition, citizenship generates a civic identity towards the island republic. As citizens, they demand from the government sound governance as their interests are shared with those of all other citizens of the island state. As mothers, they see themselves rooted in Taiwan because of their children. For some, being a citizen as well as a mother mutually reinforces this self-identification. Nevertheless, as shown in the experience of Zhang Jie, her self-identification with Taiwan is contested by the institutional differentiation. On the other hand, they remain ethnically Chinese and their identification with China is sustained by primordial ties. This situates them in a state of in-betweenness. In peaceful times, the in-betweenness is imagined as a bridge across the

Taiwan Strait built by their family relationships with both sides. In times of war, this is imagined as being squeezed, distrusted and excluded by the governments on both sides.

In terms of linguistic familiarisation, younger interviewees have a higher degree of adaptation, which is conducive for developing identification. Nevertheless, the self-identification is also subject to the sensitivity of the host society to non-local Mandarin accents and its resultant contestation of their subjective identification. Motherhood is the most significant difference between older and younger women. For younger immigrant mothers, motherhood lays the gendered path to the in-between identity.

On the whole, the interaction between Chinese immigrants and Taiwanese society shows that the Taiwanese category as being prosperous and democratic is strengthened by their realisation of betterment goals and recognition of the free democracy. The younger immigrants' in-between identity in the aspect of being ethnic Chinese persons as well as Taiwanese citizens is a practice of the civic identity promoted by the New Taiwanese Consciousness. On the other hand, the lived experiences of Chinese immigrants reveal the internal division of the Taiwanese category. Their in-between dilemma, as dramatised by the war scenario, underlines the boundary between the Taiwanese and Chinese categories. The fact that some of them do not recognise Taiwan's independent statehood remains an external challenge to the success of the nation-building project.

CHAPTER 6: CLINGING TO ENGLISH VERSUS ADOPTING MANDARIN: OLDER FILIPINOS FROM TOWNS AND YOUNGER VIETNAMESE FROM VILLAGES

In this chapter I will discuss the shaping of the in-between identity of 13 Filipino and 26 Vietnamese immigrants. Unlike Chinese immigrants whose Chinese national identity includes a central-peripheral hierarchy to subordinate Taiwan to China, in the lived experiences of Filipino and Vietnamese immigrants (except Vietnamese Chinese), in their Filipino and Vietnamese national identity, there is no inbuilt conceptual framework with which to compare Taiwan and their natal country. Although the state-sanctioned construction is also a source of their national identity, in Taiwan's living environment they themselves are primordialists in the sense that they vocalise the sustainment of primordial attachments deriving from culture and socialisation. This is particularly pronounced in the self-claimed difficulty of adaptation to the Chinese language by Filipino immigrants.

This chapter begins by tracing and comparing their motivations for migration. Although both are motivated by the betterment of self and parents, younger Vietnamese women are more influenced by their parents in making their decision to migrate. This chapter then moves on to examine the reactions of Filipino and Vietnamese women to their living environment as defined by the citizenship legislation, the facility of the Chinese language and the fulfilment of motherhood duties. Their reactions are viewed as experiencing dual *rites of passage*. That is, from an outsider to a citizen, and from a daughter to a mother. During their *rites of passage*, the composition of betterment changes from improving the living standards of self and parents to securing a stable life with and for their children.

The relationship between the host state and the immigrants is multi-dimensional and must be viewed in entirety. Through examining the daily experiences of immigrant women, I argue that the citizenship legislation is perceived as being excluding with regard to entry interview, residency, employment and citizenship eligibility. Nevertheless, citizenship is also desired for securing a stable and unconditional residency in Taiwan. In this sense, the state is the provider of the desired stability and security. Citizenship is also desired for the purposes of inclusion, equality and substantive rights. Thus, acquiring citizenship and exercising political rights is conducive for identifying with Taiwan. However, their renunciation of the former nationality creates the in-between situation where they are related to both Taiwan and the originating country. The facility of the Chinese language is conducive for developing identification with Taiwan and this is more evident amongst Vietnamese immigrants. For both groups, mother-child intimacy is diminished by the pressure of speaking Mandarin. The in-between identity is most evident in their fulfilment of motherhood duties. Thus, betterment, acquiring citizenship, adopting the Chinese language and carrying out motherhood are paths leading to self-identification with Taiwan. In the meantime, there are forces which challenge or obstruct this self-identification and result in the in-between identity. They are the competing daughterly duties as experienced in the renunciation of the former nationality, the diminished mother-child intimacy caused by the pressure of speaking Mandarin, and the lack of support from husbands and in-laws for performing motherhood duties. Their in-between identity demonstrates the strength of their primordial ties, territorial links and instrumental gains in shaping national identity.

6.1 Motivation: Pursuing a Better Life for Self and Family

6.1.1. English-Speaking Filipinas from Big Towns in the Philippines to Quiet Villages in Taiwan

'Going to Taiwan is the same [as working abroad], it's just you're married.'
(Annabelle, 27/01/10, Pingtung).

Unlike the stereotype, the 13 Filipino interviewees who I met in metropolitan Taipei, industrial Taichung and agricultural Pingtung are not young, poor and uneducated. They all attained education beyond the secondary level. Most of them had already migrated from provincial towns to metropolitan Manila to look for work. Some of them previously worked in Taiwan as domestics and factory workers. They did not see their overseas marriage only through rose-tinted lens. They decided to marry abroad for pragmatic reasons, and this decision was not out of desperation or being forced by anyone. It was to pursue a better life for themselves, parents, siblings, or children of a previous marriage. This was an option not too different from seeking overseas employment⁶² and it was particularly considered by those who were beyond the age of 25, the customary age for marriage (del Rosario 2005: 257). Thus, the conception of betterment crosses a wide range from a desire to go abroad, an ambition to defeat (relative) poverty, an escape from a broken relationship, to a rational move after calculating the risk and cost.

For them, Taiwan seemed to be the place where betterment could be expected⁶³. Taiwan was perceived by some as a *'small but rich'* country. The cross-border marriage was imagined as obtaining an opportunity to move to a country where employment was abundant and wages were higher, thus *'grasping an opportunity'* was the reoccurring

⁶² However, there is a significant *social* difference between working and marrying abroad. Annabelle prudently delivered this point after a discussion with other interviewees: *'If you lose your virginity, they don't consider you're a woman anymore.'* That is, by working abroad they run the risk of being speculated about for having lost their virginity, hence their prospect of getting married may be diminished.

⁶³ Taiwan was imagined through the scant information of various sources. Chinatown in Manila, an Australian colleague who worked in Taiwan before, a neighbour's description and news reports in *the Manila Times* were mentioned by interviewees as how they got to know about Taiwan.

theme in their narratives. They understood they had to work hard to realise betterment. This down-to-earth mentality defies the stereotype that they expect to achieve betterment solely based on their husbands' wealth.

Nevertheless, Filipino women are stigmatised as being materialistic. In local people's imagination, they *consciously chose* Taiwan as the place with which to fulfil their gold-digging dream. The fact was that they did not *intentionally* pick Taiwan for their destination. In fact, marriage migration to Taiwan is on a considerably smaller scale than to Japan, Australia, North America and Western Europe (CFO 2010). Even for overseas employment, in 2005 Taiwan was only the 4th most popular market (Congressional Planning and Budget Department 2006). The destination of their marriage migration is largely decided by professional brokers, whose profit is built on country-specific social networking. This is captured by Jo's comment, 'If one was considering [marrying a foreign man], one would *somehow* be introduced to a broker' (29/01/10, Pingtung). Peggy reflected that 'We didn't go to [an] agency, *they (brokers) came to us*. They brought Taiwanese men to see us. *This is a big business*. There can be as many as 300 men eager to look for wives' (27/01/09, Pingtung). Clinging onto every possible business opportunity, brokers often exaggerated the wealth of their male customers and bombarded women into considering a marriage that was more pursued by the male customers than by the women themselves. To Annabelle, this kind of business practice was simply 'lying'. In this sense, for those who did not use a pen pal service or dating websites, the marital destination was largely decided by the brokers' business network.

If marriage migration offers an opportunity, it is also associated with risks. At the Pre-Departure Orientation Seminars (PDOS)⁶⁴ in Manila, Peony received verbal warnings of domestic abuse, and they were specifically referred to Pingtung where she was moving to. The verbal warning was aided visually with victims' photographs⁶⁵. When the marriage arrangements did not live up to the previous expectations because of being misinformed by brokers, there was readiness to *compromise*. The quality of marriage no doubt is a contributing factor to whether one is content with her life in Taiwan. However, the quality of marriage and family life is *holistically* considered, as Andrea contemplated:

‘We didn’t know much about Taiwan. I didn’t know what kind of language they speak. I was wondering what kind of face they have (how Taiwanese people look). ...*Tradition, communication, language, culture, attitude, these are different.... We need more understanding and patience. This is a part of our life, particularly with our husband*’ (27/01/10, Pingtung).

Andrea’s reflection reveals that the private home is where they straddle across two identities. Home is where all of the differences encountered in the intimacy between couples, parents and children, wives and in-laws surfaces. Negotiating the tension and fusion of the encounter is integral to their daily lives.

⁶⁴ PDOS is a semi-official briefing provided by non-governmental organisations to Filipino spouses who marry foreigners. It is hoped that giving *country-specific* information may smooth out the transition to reside abroad (Siddiqui *et al.* 2008: 44).

⁶⁵ Similar warnings were also given to Filipino women migrating to South Korea. French anthropologist Gwenola Ricordeau conducted observations of the PDOS in her fieldwork in the Philippines. She noticed that reminding Filipino women of the dubious reputation of domestic abuse by Korean husbands was made a feature of the briefing. For those who were departing for Japan, they were reminded of not signing any document printed on ‘green paper’ because it was a divorce agreement (my discussion with Ricordeau, 02/07/10, at the Conference on *Citizenship and Beyond: Feminism and the Transformation of Belonging*, Birkbeck College, London, 30th June -2nd July).

6.1.2. Young Vietnamese Women from Rural Villages to the Four Corners of Taiwan

'We didn't have electricity. Our house had to be raised to avoid flooding. Our stove was also raised. We didn't have much furniture. Every year from September to December we had terrible flooding but it abated after December... A day's labour in Taiwan can buy enough food for a day here; a day's labour in Vietnam isn't enough to buy food for a day there. Over there we had no employment, hence we had no food ... I heard there were Vietnamese women marrying to the US and South Korea. I can't say where is better. Everywhere is the same. You must work hard to earn a living and everyone's life is different ... There's no guarantee we'll have a better life here [in Taiwan]. I might have one, others might not'. (Hò Huyen Anh, 28/01/10, Pingtung)

Vietnam is a country experiencing streams of female marriage emigration over the past few decades. Before the trend of marriage migration to Taiwan, Korea, Malaysia and Singapore caught up (Seol 2006; Hugo and Nguyen 2007: 367, 371⁶⁶), there had already been marriages with overseas Vietnamese men (male *Viet Kieu*) in the US and Australia (Thai 2008). As Vietnam is the major originating country of marriage immigrant women within East Asia, it is necessary to pay more attention to the social surroundings which facilitate this unique type of migration. For this purpose, Nguyễn Thi Minh Thu's reflections are insightful for understanding how cross-border marriage is unanimously viewed as a channel for individual and familial betterment, regardless of the actual destination.

Minh Thu was a secondary school teacher who also speaks Russian, English and Chinese. She resigned from the teaching job and worked for a Taiwanese company as

⁶⁶ It is estimated that the number of Vietnamese marriage immigrant women in Singapore was 3,000 (Dang 2003; cited by Hugo and Nguyen 2007: 371), and the number in South Korea was 4,675 in 2005 (Seol 2006: 34). It was reported in 2006 that Vietnamese women were 'sold' as wives in Malaysia at the price up to 30,000 ringgit (\$8,427) (AFP, 19/12/06).

an interpreter. At a social occasion she was introduced to her husband and then was married in 1996, but stayed in her hometown Hué because of her pregnancy. At about the same time, a friend of hers was engaged to a Vietnamese man in the US. *As soon as* the details of the marriage were settled, the lifestyle of the friend and her family changed dramatically. They began to drink fresh milk⁶⁷. Minh Thu's point was 'Without a fridge one can't keep milk fresh!' The friend did not have a fridge before, but the family changed their lifestyle to match the one in the US. Minh Thu also had a relative who married a Vietnamese man in the US. The husband remained in the US but sent several hundred US dollars every month to Vietnam to support his wife and child. This family enjoyed using imported goods. One day Minh Thu saw a neighbour's twin daughters playing outside their home. She praised the girls' prettiness and being well looked after by their parents. Minh Thu's relative's reaction was 'Their living standard is nowhere near like *ours*!' Because of Minh Thu's marriage to a Taiwanese man, her relative automatically elevated Minh Thu to the same level as hers in the class stratification.

Minh Thu's reflection contextualises the social imagination surrounding female marriage migration. Without physically crossing the border, migration started when the decision to migrate was made. Not only the immigrant but also her family expected to achieve betterment as a result of the marriage. Changing lifestyles was such a social 'norm' that when Minh Thu did not abide by this, she was considered odd. Wearing Vietnamese maternity clothes during her morning strolls with her husband, Minh Thu

⁶⁷ It is difficult to date the availability of fresh milk to ordinary Vietnamese households in Hué. However, Stephanie Fahey's discussion of the changed image and consumption of middle-class Vietnamese women in Hanoi gives a suggestion of how fresh milk is related to Western consumption. Fahey noted that in 1990 in Hanoi 'very few Western products were available on the street'. In 1995, 'Butter in the guest house bore little resemblance to butter sold in the West and milk was only of the condensed type', but by 1995 in Hanoi 'fresh milk was available daily' (Fahey 1998: 227).

was spotted by her acquaintances and was gossiped about: ‘Why on earth is she still wearing the *same* clothes, isn’t she married to a Taiwanese man?’ Minh Thu’s marriage was stereotyped and examined under the public gaze to the extent that when her male university friend saw her queuing to apply for documentation for her migration, he criticised her to be ‘joining the crowd’ (27/05/09, Tainan).

Enwrapped in this social imagination, interviewees and their parents saw marriage migration as a solution to perennial poverty or a sudden collapse of a family-run business. A survey conducted by the National University of Ho Chi Minh City showed that a combination of motives - helping the family, having a better life and pleasing parents – was the driving force for taking up this option (Hugo and Nguyen 2007: 79)⁶⁸. Although there were adventurous daughters who made the decision on their own and were willing to take a risk, the role played by their parents was more significant than that of Filipino interviewees’ parents. Arguably, this was because of their younger age, lower education, and higher involvement in the home-based family livelihood (rather than engaging in waged employment outside the home).

As mentioned at the Philippine PDOS, Taiwan also has a dubious reputation in Vietnam. Rumours of women being sold into prostitution in Taiwan circulated in the neighbourhood⁶⁹. Abuse and forced prostitution of Vietnamese wives in Taiwan, South Korea and Malaysia was reported by the media at home (Thanh Nien Daily 11/06/06, 23/04/07) and abroad (Radio Australia 31/07/07; Asia Times 22/05/03, 18/09/03,

⁶⁸ This combination of motives is evident amongst my interviewees. Phạm Thi Phuong hoped to improve her elderly mother’s living to be ‘the same as *everyone else’s*’. Nguyễn Thi Dieu thought that a migrant daughter’s achievement was to build new houses for the parents and grandparents. After Ngô Hoàng Linh’s father failed in his business, she dropped out of an English-language teacher training programme and was married off to Taiwan.

⁶⁹ Six months after migration, Lê Ngọc Suong went home and ‘*Everyone* I met was surprised I wasn’t starving and I wasn’t sold’ (07/04/09, Taipei).

02/10/03). Taiwanese immigration officials visited Vietnam to inform ‘what happened to Vietnamese women in Taiwan’ (interview with a male immigration officer, 17/04/09, Taoyuan Airport). The media campaign launched by the Vietnamese government was ‘extremely negative and threatening’ and accused women who married abroad as deserting their duties of being good daughters, wives, mothers and citizens (Bélanger *et al.* 2007). The Vietnamese government amended *the Marriage and Family Law* and forbade brokered and bogus marriages with foreign nationals (Asia Times 22/05/03, 18/09/03). Nevertheless, out of 26 interviewees, only university drop-out Nguyễn Khanh Van from a northern province (Bah Ninh) was aware of the government’s opposition to marriage migration. As Hồ Huyen Anh pointed out, ‘I knew some women have troubles in their marriage here in Taiwan, but *over there they didn’t know*. [In spite of Taiwan’s reputation,] women still want to come’ (28/01/10, Pingtung).

Come they did. Vietnamese wives in their early twenties were left alone to deal with issues arising from intimate family relationships with a foreign man in a foreign country. However, without a visa, they could not realise the migration plan. Applying for a spouse visa at Taiwan’s consulate/embassy was the first gate to cross to realise the plan. They were to be scrutinised for their qualification to reside in Taiwan. The reception they received throughout the application process was the first revelation of how they were treated as inferior outsiders.

6.2 The Impact of the Gendered Citizenship Legislation

As discussed in Chapter 4, the citizenship legislation is gendered by an emphasis on women’s chastity and motherhood to regulate citizenship eligibility. For most immigrant women, while they cross the gates of the interview, residency and naturalisation to become citizens, they also experience the transition from a married daughter to a mother. Along with the dual *rites of passage*, they revise their worldview

in the sense of differently interpreting betterment and their positioning in relation to Taiwan and the originating country.

1. Entry interview⁷⁰

Mandated to grant or deny a residence visa, Taiwanese consular officers are preoccupied with the *runaway* scenario and quasi-criminalise Vietnamese women. Nguyễn Minh Nguyệt recounted how she was challenged: ‘Vietnamese women are afraid of being maltreated. You Vietnamese run away. Why do you still want to go?’ Minh Nguyệt’s reply was to shift the responsibility to the Taiwanese husband: ‘It depends on whether Taiwanese men are good men. *If you (Taiwanese husbands) treat others well, they wouldn’t run away, would they?*’ (29/03/09, Chinshan) Stressing the misfortune of Vietnamese wives seems to be a tactic repeatedly employed to deter applications. Hồ Huyen Anh was also asked why she wanted to go, and her reply was anchored by an imagined motherhood duty even before she became a mother: ‘I wanted to find a job abroad. *I want my children to have a better life, unlike mine*’ (28/01/10, Pingtung). Trần Phương Thảo was challenged by her interviewer for a *runaway* scenario: *Taiwanese husbands turned out to be poor, thus Vietnamese women ran away back to Vietnam*. For Phạm Thị Phương, Taiwanese officer’s ‘advice’ felt like a scolding and she wondered why she was treated with a lack of respect. Her paraphrasing of the interview questions resulted in her recounting her motivations in tears:

‘*They told us off. They talked about nasty things. They said how silly I was that my husband was many years senior to me and I didn’t know much about his*

⁷⁰ Amongst 13 Filipino interviewees, only Daisy, who entered Taiwan in 2006, encountered the tightened visa interview. Thus, the following discussion focuses on Vietnamese interviewees’ experiences. Prior to the interview, Daisy was given a booklet to prepare herself; at the interview she and her husband were separated. Details about this booklet were unavailable. However, it was not impossible that the interview questions were repeated and thus anticipated.

family. I said I saw people coming here had a good life. My sister is here, too, so I wouldn't be too scared. They said we should really think it over and *they're concerned what if we didn't have a good life* ... I said I wanted to help my parents, otherwise they'd have to work even harder. It broke their (parents') hearts that we got married so far away' (21/03/09, Nantou).

As discussed in Chapter 3, not only immigrant women but also their Taiwanese husbands are excluded from the Taiwanese category because of being stereotyped as poor, uneducated, abnormal, traditional, and irrational. However, Taiwanese husband Wang Li-lung rebuffed this exclusion. Taipei-based Li-lung was a 25-year-old university graduate and his Hakka father ran a prosperous but labour-intensive business. He blamed his break-up with his previous *Hoklo* girlfriend on the latter's disapproval of his Hakka heritage and class background. The point he made was that he was completely normal and affectionate, unlike the above-mentioned stereotype. Being sensitive to any ethnicity- and class-based discrimination, he criticised the red tape of the visa application procedure and the interview as discriminatory, and likened the interview setting (particularly the audio and video recording facilities) to a criminal interrogation. Evoking an all-inclusive category that 'We're *Residents of the Global Village, we're Earth People*', he condemned the racial and class discrimination towards transnational couples and criticised Taiwanese people's lack of empathy: 'Taiwanese are discriminated against *abroad*. Why do they discriminate against people from Southeast Asia *at home*?' (05/05/09, Taipei)

In contrast to Li-lung's 'normality', Wu Chi-kuang in Pingtung seems to match the stereotype of *abnormality*. Mr. Wu was a mango farmer who received a secondary education. He did not get married until nearing 50-years-old, some 24 years senior to his Vietnamese Chinese wife, and they had a one-year-old baby son. Mr. Wu did not

dispute that *most men* who sought wives in Vietnam were unattractive partners (*'they are handicapped, old, or poor'*), and he himself was one of them. In Vietnam he was given eugenics advice by male Taiwanese officers, including when his wife should get pregnant. He agreed with the officer that the quality of future generations would become a concern, given that *'One third of new born babies are born to transnational marriage couples; we are degrading the population quality'* (29/01/10, Pingtung)⁷¹. Disagreements did not rise until when the officer doubted his intention in the marriage, but he asserted his sincerity. Thus, unlike Li-lung criticising the stereotype, Mr. Wu acknowledged it but emphasising his good intentions.

Taiwanese officers also lectured husbands on monetary issues. *'A regular monthly allowance to your wife is reasonable, and the promise should be kept so that she won't want to work.'* The attention of immigration officers to these issues persisted after Vietnamese wives settled in Taiwan. Remittances were such an explosive issue amongst family members⁷² that immigration officers would ask Vietnamese women at interview *'Does your husband give you money every month? How much does he give?'* La Ngọc Thu explained that that the rationale behind the advice was to prevent Vietnamese wives from seeking employment outside the home and then falling under malicious influences, which duped them into sex work. If they were given a regular allowance, they will not enter a remittance race with other immigrant women, hence they would not want to

⁷¹ Citing the birth rate of children born to non-local mothers has become a common practice amongst all walks of life to stress the seriousness of the problem. The fact that the rate cited by people often over-inflates suggests that the figure is not neutral but loaded with negative implication. The peak figure appeared in 2003, which was *'one in eight infants was born to non-local mothers'* (13.37 percent) but it declined to 9.6 percent in 2008 (<http://sowf.moi.gov.tw/stat/week/week9843.doc>). The rate cited by Chi-kuang highlights the degree of exaggeration.

⁷² Wang Li-lung's experience is a case in point. After moving to Taiwan, his wife worked with him everyday for the family business. Li-lung sent \$100 every month to his in-laws in Vietnam. This became a rift between Li-lung and his father, who initiated his marriage and scolded him *'You are not married to her family, are you?'*

work outside of home (26/03/09, Taipei). If these were achieved, they would not *run away*.

To sum up, Taiwanese officers are biased by class, gender and ethnicity. Acting on behalf of the state, they expressed their disapproval of receiving underclass women from ‘backward’ countries. At this occasion, Vietnamese women became aware of their exclusion and discrimination. Although the Taiwanese officers formed an alliance with Taiwanese husbands to discipline immigrant wives and monitor their chastity, they also excluded Taiwanese husbands from the Taiwanese category because of the latter’s perceived *abnormality*. In response, Vietnamese women defended their motivations and disputed the money-mongering presumptions. Nguyễn Minh Nguyệt shifted the blame of *runaway* around and clarified that maintaining a marriage was not their *unilateral* responsibility. Taiwanese husband Wang Li-lung defended his *normality* by exposing the internal divide (Hoklo vs. Hakka) and class stratification of the Taiwanese category as well as appealing to an all-inclusive identity to eradicate discrimination. Wu Chi-kuang, however, submitted himself to the overriding stereotype but stressing his sincerity in the marriage.

2. Residency: From Pursuing a Better Life to Aspiring a Stable Life

After passing the interview, immigrant women entered and resided in Taiwan. The majority of them gave birth within the first few years of their residency in Taiwan (Hsia 2000: 84). Amongst my interviewees, all Filipino (except re-married Virginia) and Vietnamese women became mothers in Taiwan. The *rite of passage* from a daughter to a mother triggers a change of the cognition of what betterment means. As a daughter, betterment is defined as improving the living standard of self and parents. As a mother, the consideration of their children’s interests becomes a decisive factor with which to revise their worldview; betterment is gradually redefined as *stability*. That is, an

unchallenged right to reside in Taiwan in order to look after their children. As discussed in Chapter 4, an immigrant wife's right to reside in Taiwan is entirely hinged on sustaining her marriage. When her marriage ceases to exist, her motherhood function becomes the pillar to legitimise her residency. In this light, the gendered legislation has a conflicting impact. When a marriage exists, an immigrant wife's interest is in line with the gendered legislation; when it ceases to exist, her interest is threatened by the gendered legislation unless she is proven to be a victim of domestic violence or she obtains custody of her children.

In Ellie's experience, when her marriage was threatened by her husband's affair, the law enforcement agency failed to execute its power and protect her marriage. As a result, it endangered her right to reside in Taiwan. Although Ellie and her husband were constantly short of money, her husband had an affair with a Taiwanese woman, who later moved into their crumbling house. When she was beaten up by the pair, the police took her to a hospital but she left next morning because she could not pay the bill. Her Filipino friend had faith in the police and encouraged her to report the case. Reacting to Ellie's tip-off, in the middle of the night, police officers came and witnessed her husband and the mistress sleeping together. Nevertheless, the police dissuaded Ellie from bringing the case to the court because they had no 'photo evidence' of the witnessed adultery and she 'couldn't afford the cost of a law suit, anyway'⁷³ (29/01/10, Pingtung). She sought help from her pastor, who later found her a job at a piggery and filed her application for an allowance for domestic violence victims.

⁷³ A similar case of a Vietnamese wife can be found at the website of the Vietnamese Migrant Workers and Brides Office, an organisation founded by a Vietnamese Catholic missionary in Taiwan. Details of the case are available at http://www.tauwanact.net/article.php?id_article=5.

In our meeting, Ellie asked a straightforward question: why did she suffer such humiliation and inaction? She gave an expected answer: because she was a foreigner, a Filipina, she was despised by her neighbours *as well as* by the police; hence none of them would come forward to help. Because of the affair and the inaction by the police, she planned to return to Manila with her son. However, six months after our meeting, I was told by her pastor that she decided to stay because she was convinced that staying in Taiwan was better for her son.

When a marriage ceases to exist, the gendered legislation becomes the battlefield in which an immigrant mother fights to protect her interests and those of her children. This is what Phạm Thanh Van was trying to achieve after her divorce. After more than ten years of marriage, Thanh Van and her husband divorced, but she was able to stay in Taiwan because of her Permanent Residency (PR) status. She fought for the custody of her only son but her husband accused her of child abuse and claimed that she had committed a fraud felony in lodging her PR status application. In other words, she was accused of not being a good and virtuous mother. Both accusations were quashed, but she only won the right for a weekly visit to her son. Having a high proficiency of the Chinese language, Thanh Van used to work as an interpreter at a social organisation aiming to assist immigrant women in cases similar to hers. Because of her job, Thanh Van became familiar with legal issues and also knew her local police station well. Thus, she was surprised that both her police friends and her former colleagues turned against her in court. She understood that her husband's occupation (a journalist of a national newspaper) significantly disadvantaged her in their legal war, but the changed attitude of the police officers led her to a conclusion similar to Ellie's: because she is Vietnamese, she is discriminatively judged by both the law and the agents of the state.

The collaboration of the state and husbands in monitoring immigrant wives is exemplified by the narratives of Ngô Thi Cuc's husband, Chung Min-he. Min-he asserted that it was necessary that the government was not only actively informed about the whereabouts of immigrant wives but was also able to actually locate them. His argument was that '*I know absolutely that my wife will not run away*, but people may have doubts about what exactly the wives are up to, *such as the Mainland Brides*' (09/04/09, Taichung). Min-he's comment reveals that from a male perspective, registering a residential address manifests the authenticity of the marriage and is an external check on an immigrant wife's chastity. At the same time, Min-he's assertion also underlines his normality (hence his wife will not run away), and shifts the denunciation from Vietnamese women to Chinese women, whose motivations were thought to be more dubious.

Ellie's experience shows that the local police force, acting as agents of the state, not only betrayed the trust of an immigrant, but also failed to execute their mandated power to protect her marriage, her interests and the interests of her son (see also Hsia 2005c: 352). Similarly, Thanh Van, who requested protection of her interests and those of her son, also felt she was not fairly received by the police. The gendered legislation thus has in practice a double standard. When the focus is on an immigrant wife's chastity, the state-husband alliance cooperatively determines whether she fulfils her marital obligation or not, and whether she can then continue to reside in Taiwan. When the focus is on the Taiwanese husband's marital obligation, law enforcement personnel turn a blind eye. Thus, both the legislation and the state's agents are biased by gender and ethnicity. Under such circumstances, immigrant women, whose rights are impaired by the law and the state's agents, cannot develop a positive identification with Taiwan.

3. Employment: Achieving a Stable Life

Unlike Chinese women whose right to work was not liberalised in legislation until June 2009, Filipino and Vietnamese women were permitted to work from 2003 onwards. Most Filipino and Vietnamese interviewees actively sought employment, unless they were pregnant, minding young children, or caring for ageing parents-in-law. Employment was the major means to achieve betterment for self, parents and children. This is exemplified by Phạm Thi Mai Huong and Nguyễn Thi Xuân Mai. Both of them married young, lived in Taiwan for ten years and now have school-aged children. In a tearful interview, Mai Huong said that she worked hard to support her children and hoped they would ‘do well at school and have a bright future unlike their mother’s’ (31/03/09, Chinshan). Employment was also a matter of survival for those whose husbands were unemployed (Ellie) or had a lower or unstable income (Trần Phương Thảo). It is more so for those whose husbands died and consequently they were shunned by their Taiwanese in-laws (Peggy).

In spite of the legal liberalisation, the residency legislation, including the requirement of residing at their husbands’ residential address, continues to confine them within homes and restrict their waged employment outside of the home. The key factor connecting monitored residency and restricted employment is the *runaway anxiety*, as seen in the above quoted comments of Chung Min-he, as well as in the questions persistently raised by consular and immigration officers. The ‘runaway anxiety’ shared by the state and the husband is rooted in immigrant women’s alleged materialism and amorality.

For Filipino women, they are more associated with a materialistic image. As Ellie simply put it, ‘*Taiwanese people think Filipino [women] want nothing but money*’ (29/01/10, Pingtung). Without denying it directly, Annabelle gave a contextualised

explanation. The inability of fulfilling their caring duties as a wife and mother was the route leading to the final decision to leave home. She condemned the brokers for lying about the wealth of potential husbands and for not conveying to their Taiwanese in-laws that Filipino women ‘came from a poor country and needed a *stable* life’. Their in-laws did not realise that most of the fees they paid to brokers stayed in the brokers’ pockets, rather than into the Filipino women’s purses. As a wife, they wanted to get a job, have independent income and cover daily living costs. If they did not own such independent income, they went to their mothers-in-law but their requests were turned down because the latter did not empathise with their duties to feed their family in Taiwan and support their family in the Philippines. Annabelle stopped at this point and concluded: ‘Many Filipino women ran away’ (27/01/10, Pingtung).⁷⁴

In contrast, Vietnamese women are more related to an amoral image filled with sexual implications because of their alleged engagement in sex work⁷⁵. As a contracted interpreter for the police, Vietnamese Chinese Hoàng Minh Suong had personal contacts with runaway wives and workers. Minh Suong asserted that if Vietnamese wives were treated with *respect*, they would not voluntarily leave home. After all, they married in the hope of having a stable life, and children were their hope for the future. However, the route to leaving home was built on the accumulated dissatisfaction with marriage and family life. Vietnamese women who were not allowed to work outside of

⁷⁴ *Runaway* also exists amongst Filipino wives in Japan. In Central Kiso, *runaway* as a talking point features in Filipino wives’ gatherings. While Filipino wives endeavour (and enjoy) to play the role as a good wife, mother and daughter-in-law as required by the Japanese tradition and their Catholic belief, runaway is a means with which to deal with the dissatisfaction of marriage and life in Japan (Faier 2008: 633, 640).

⁷⁵ Ming Suong explained that due to the lack of a supporting network and social contacts outside the home, Vietnamese women could not make an independent living. This was how Taiwanese crime syndicates or individual gangsters lured Vietnamese women into sex work. For those who were determined to return to Vietnam, it was the final desperate attempt to earn money before they were caught and then expelled from Taiwan (02/06/09, Chinshan).

the home might ‘cook and attend children of the extended family for many years’. At the same time, her Taiwanese sisters-in-law had waged employment and enjoyed virtually free childcare. The poor financial, physical or psychological treatment (verbal abuse) by husbands and in-laws estranged Vietnamese women. She noted that even if they reported their cases to the police, the police would not intervene. For those who did not have children, leaving home might be a means of *resistance* to set themselves free. Divorce was in this sense a *legal* runaway. However, in Minh Suong’s tearful analysis, losing children was the most unbearable price to pay for the uncertain freedom gained. In most cases, they endured and stayed for the sake of their children (02/06/09, Chinshan).

To sum up, employment facilitates stability and security for the self and the children. It may also contribute to remittance and hence achieve the goal of helping parents. The sense of affordability is crucial to the satisfaction of fulfilling the motherhood duty. The potential for fulfilling the migration plan and the assurance of a stable life may induce identification with Taiwan. Unlike Chinese immigrants whose chance of achieving these was partly impeded because of the restrictive legislation, Filipino and Vietnamese immigrants encountered more obstructions within the family. Not only were they expected to be fully responsible for domestic work, they were also confronted with the *runaway* accusation. As discussed in Chapter 3, women are the boundary markers between the Taiwanese and Southeast Asian categories, and the boundary between *us* and *them* is erected right inside the home - modernised Taiwanese women pursue waged employment in the labour market, whereas traditional immigrant women are confined to homemaking. More importantly, this boundary is purposefully maintained by the in-laws in order to reap their free labour. As articulated by Lan (2008:

834), and Piper and Roces (2003: 5-8), behind this boundary the role of immigrant women as wives, mothers and carers are blended into one.

Having the right to work is not equal to actually securing employment. The 2008 survey found that lacking an ID Card was the major reason for being rejected by employers. Other reasons were having a lower Chinese language proficiency, and possession of an accent (MoI 2009a). I will now turn to discuss the ID Card issue, and analyse in the following section the linguistic challenge faced by Vietnamese and Filipino women.

4. Citizenship: A Tug-Of-War between Conflicting Duties

Seeking citizenship is the last gate to cross to become an accepted member of the national community. On average, it was 8.6 years of living in Taiwan that Filipino interviewees acquired citizenship; it was 7 years that Vietnamese interviewees reached this status. By the time they became citizens, they had already become mothers with school-aged children. The hope of having a secure and stable life is the fundamental driver for seeking citizenship. Daisy's testimony speaks for the changed perception of betterment from pursuing a better life for self and parents, to a stable life shared with children. Her desire for citizenship was to have unconditional residency with which to bring up her children in Taiwan:

'I wanted to apply for citizenship only for security, because I have children. My husband and some Taiwanese [people] said if you don't have ID [Card], they (Taiwanese people) look down on you ... they don't see you as the same. When you have quarrels, they (Taiwanese husbands) will say, 'Go back to the Philippines!' You're not secure if you don't have an ID [Card]. That's why Filipinos here want to have ID ... It doesn't matter to give up my Philippine

nationality because *they (husband and children) are my own family, they need me here*' (27/01/10, Pingtung).

This sense of responsibility and of seeing children's interests as their own interest is encapsulated by Jennifer's elaboration. After living in Taiwan for 15 years and bringing up three sons, safeguarding her sons' interests is the axis of her worldview. After carefully studying the social benefit brochure (printed in English), Jennifer became aware that the government provided a monthly allowance and tuition fees to children of low-income families, and that this provision could continue up to their university education as long the children perform well in their academic studies. Jennifer's two sons received this allowance, which was critical to their family finances. For her, this kind of help was '*very beautiful*' and she saw her sons' futures as being in Taiwan. For her, the state was a generous philanthropist who assisted her motherly duty:

'I want to have [an] ID Card because I have three sons The government is eager to help smart children of poor families. *If you need help, you just talk to the government ... I'm practical*; I don't want to go back to the Philippines as long as my children are fine [here in Taiwan]' (29/01/10, Pingtung).

Interpreting the value of citizenship from the perspective of motherhood and the interest of children is also common amongst Vietnamese interviewees. During our two meetings, Hoàng Minh Suong twice stressed in tears that citizenship meant a secure right to stay in Taiwan. As long as they could legally stay in Taiwan, even if they were divorced and lost the custody of children, they still had the prospect of seeing their children *one day*. 'Maybe not now [because of obstructions imposed by husbands and/or in-laws] but they could see them when they grow up' (02/06/09, Chinshan). Thus, citizenship meant an ultimate emancipation from marriage-bound residency and malicious control of husbands and/or in-laws.

On the other hand, citizenship is also desired for the inbuilt substantive rights. This is more evident amongst Filipino immigrants who have waged employment. For Jennifer, acquiring citizenship would qualify her for a lower premium for the NHI coverage. For the former primary school teacher Virginia, the benefits of citizenship had already been written into the equation of migration. Acquiring citizenship was the first request Virginia made to her husband after her arrival in 1991. It was the assurance and security she needed most for her second marriage and living in Taiwan. This is particularly because upon acquiring ROC citizenship and losing her Philippine nationality, she had lost her Government Service Insurance (GSIS) and her late Filipino husband's pension. With an ID Card, she would be entitled to 'all of the privileges' and these would make up for her losses. However, the privileges she had in mind were not social benefits as seen in Jennifer's narratives. It was the right to work, as having an ID Card was indispensable for employment before 2003. For Jo, who worked as a caregiver in addition to owning a grocery shop, citizenship is fundamentally about equality:

I wanted to be entitled to the benefits. *I wanted to get a pension, included in the health insurance and other benefits. I wanted to get equal pay.* It's not that I wanted to be like locals, it is just *I wanted to get what a citizen would be entitled to*' (29/01/10, Pingtung).

Jo's comment also pointed out that citizenship is desired for the symbolic value of equality, acceptance and inclusion. The ID Card is *the* official proof of having a personal identity in Taiwan. The fact that a foreigner is required to have an endorser for commercial transactions gives the impression of incompleteness, dependence, or even inability. Because of its legal authority, the ID Number is cautiously guarded as being the most crucial piece of personal information. Any solicitation of the number by a third person without convincing reasons is treated with suspicion. Thus, Melissa found it

difficult to get her husband's ID Number after having married and lived together for seven years, even though this request was for her daughter, who was asked by her school for this specific information. This convinced Melissa that it was necessary to acquire citizenship and avoid any differentiated and secondary treatment. Enduring a strained relationship with in-laws and encountering cold receptions at work, Nguyễn Thi Xuân Mai saw the ID Card as the symbol of her equal status. Thus, she joked to her colleagues, 'I'm Taiwanese now, don't look down on me!' (30/05/09, Yilan) A sense of equality derived from the acquisition of citizenship can easily be experienced in everyday life whenever an immigrant-turned citizen is required to present her ID Card to confirm her identity. In these practices, her citizenship is collectively and correspondingly *acted out* by herself (demonstrating her membership) and others (recognising her membership). This is conducive for growing the *subjective* identification with the society.

The desirability of citizenship is one thing, whether an immigrant is qualified to be granted is another. The prerequisite of having financial adequacy for citizenship eligibility cognitively makes citizenship an *earned* status, and this is what Ellie, who had a lowly-paid job at a piggery, understood: 'If you want to have an ID, you must earn money' (29/01/10, Pingtung). From 2005 onwards, having Chinese language ability was made another requirement for naturalisation eligibility. This gave immigrant women an incentive to enrol at publicly funded language courses. However, attending the course is not exactly 'free'. For those who work in the evening, it deprives them of potential earnings and this by nature also makes citizenship an earned status, charged on their lost income. Even if they did not work in the evening, they had to negotiate their housework as well as the objections of their husbands and in-laws.

In addition to the financial and linguistic requirements, the renunciation of the former nationality is a precondition met with emotional difficulties. Seeing nationality as the embodiment of their national identity, the process of understanding the consequences of renunciation and making the decision is where they *enliven* their national identity towards the Philippines or Vietnam. Their cognition has to be dynamically and holistically understood in their *rite of passage*. That is, while they were applying for citizenship and crossing the boundary between foreigners and Taiwanese, they were also changing from a married daughter to a mother. Although they juggled between these roles, they inevitably had to re-prioritise their resources to fulfil their role-defined duties.

The dual *rites of passage* are intertwined tracks and one has an impact on the other. Applying for citizenship was perceived as finalising their dwelling in their husbands' country of residence. This was because both Filipino and Vietnamese interviewees identified with and internalised the gender norm of *patrilocality*. That is, women live with their husbands after marriage. In this light, migration and marriage were cognately inseparable; renouncing the original nationality was conceptualised as a *private* act between the woman and her husband to execute her commitment to *patrilocality*. On the other hand, the renunciation was also perceived as a *private* act in that a married daughter departed from her parents and kin.

The formal and legal departure created a tug-of-war situation in which she was pulled by two sets of role-defined duties. At one end, it was her daughterly duties towards her parents in Vietnam or the Philippines. At the other end, it was her wifely and motherly duties towards her husband and children in Taiwan. When she became a mother, the new role required a different equilibrium of the two pulling forces, and the children's well-being was regarded as the first priority. Therefore, the renunciation was

to manifest their commitment to their children's well-being. In this new equilibrium, the relationship with parents was reconfigured, so was the relationship with the Philippines/Vietnam. In this revised worldview, the country was fundamentally conceptualised as the place where their parents were. The country was remembered in the memories of their childhood, family life, filial piety towards parents and the sharing of the responsibility of the family livelihood. Therefore, the renunciation was *loosening* but not severing ties with parents, her kin and the country. This family-oriented and duty-based conceptualisation of national identity is exemplified by Phạm Thi Phuong's self-positioning between Vietnam and Taiwan:

'My family *over there* won't be with me forever. *I belong to here since I marry to here.* Vietnam is where my mum and dad live. *I'll live here forever after having a child.* Had I not have a child, it might not be the case... I'm feeling very sad. Vietnam is where I was born and where my parents brought me up. I did it (renunciation) for my son. I could live here without the ID Card, but I did it for him' (21/03/09, Nantou).

While statements such as 'I'm born Vietnamese (Filipino), I'll forever be Vietnamese (Filipino)' are reoccurring announcements for their primordial ties with the natal country, Phuong's narration crystallises how family ties mediate and substantiate the primordial attachment. That is, while contemplating the meaning and consequence of losing Vietnamese nationality, her connection with Vietnam is filled from having been born there, and by taking responsibility for the care of her parents.

The narratives with regards to citizenship illuminate different paths with which to re-consider what national identity is, and how the identity develops into in-betweenness in their daily lives. One path is paved by obtaining substantive rights. In Schuck's metaphor, it is a club membership which generates citizens' contractual

commitment to the host state (1998: 217-218). However, parallel to the instrumental consideration, acquiring citizenship is also understood as formalising their commitment to their wifely and motherly duties towards their husbands and children. In other words, the ‘contractual commitment’, or their identification with Taiwan, is substantiated by their private duties towards their families. This role-defined identification with Taiwan is in a constant tug-of-war with their role-defined identification with the Philippines/Vietnam. The latter is mediated by their role as daughters and their responsibility to their parents’ well-being. The renunciation facilitates a formal context for them to enliven this tug-of-war.

In their narratives, national identity is less expressed as an *imagined* link with the *unknown* and *faceless* general members of the nation. Rather, it is more derived from the private family domain. National identity is more of a primordial and emotional attachment to the sense of responsibility for the flesh-and-blood human beings who live in the country. Both identifications are *relational* in the sense of attachment to family ties (parents and children), and *territorial* in the sense of stitching the family ties to the country (the Philippines/Vietnam and Taiwan). This brings about their in-between identity. The in-betweenness is embedded in their role-defined duties, which are in constant conflict, and the tension is often exacerbated by the strained relationship with husbands and/or in-laws.

However, the authenticity and motivations of the immigrants’ subjective identification is constantly questioned by the objective contestation of the host society as well as their fellow countrymen. In-betweenness is questioned by the ancient belief in singular identity. For Nguyễn Khanh Van, the challenge came from her fellow Vietnamese immigrants, who criticised her subjective identification with Taiwan as ‘thinking too *high* of herself’ and ‘*betraying* her own country’ (15/05/09, Taipei). For

Ngô Xuân Phuong, the challenge came from Taiwanese people. In an imagined sports game between Taiwan and Vietnam, she envisaged that if she wished Taiwan won, Taiwanese people would not believe her sincerity (09/04/09, Yunlin). Nguyễn Minh Nguyệt's characterisation of in-betweenees was being disowned by both Vietnam and Taiwan:

'We came from there (Vietnam) and had lost the nationality. Our government said we married to Taiwan so we were "*Daughters-in-law of Taiwan*". The Taiwanese government said we married here so we were Taiwanese, but we were actually given unfair treatment. *We were disowned there and rejected here.* It is unfair! When we went to Vietnam, they said, "The Taiwanese came back!" We came back to Taiwan, they said, "That Vietnamese is coming". Isn't this heart-breaking? Isn't it discriminative? To me, it's a Vietnamese going home; it's also a Taiwanese going to Vietnam. What I really care about going home (Vietnam) is to visit my mum and dad' (29/03/09, Chinshan).

From being passively included, the awarded citizenship can then be subsequently exercised by claiming rights and entitlements. Voting rights are the most significant rights to claim and with which to exercise one's citizenship. Filipino interviewees were more active in exercising their voting rights. There were the cases of Peony and Virginia who claimed that they carefully examined the manifestos of the political parties or the policy recommendations of individual candidates to determine whom to vote for. There were also the cases of Peony, Annabelle and Jo who thought about themselves as a specific immigrant constituency, and looked out for candidates who could improve the well-being of immigrants. It generates and enhances a sense of equality and being a member of the political polity. This is conducive for identifying with Taiwan. In contrast, except Vietnamese Chinese Ngô Xuân Phuong who strongly identified with

Taiwan's democracy and transparency, Vietnamese interviewees were generally less inclined to utilise their voting rights in the public sphere. In everyday experiences, they identified with Taiwan more for its civil service. The efficiency and integrity of frontline civil servants, including immigration and customs officers at airports, are praised, whereas those in Vietnam were heavily criticised for being inefficient and corrupted.

As the New Taiwanese Consciousness is partly built on the assertion that Taiwan is an independent and sovereign state, it is necessary to examine immigrant women's understanding of this issue. Unlike Chinese immigrants whose identification with Taiwan is overshadowed by the indoctrination of the central-peripheral hierarchy, the identification of Filipino and Vietnamese immigrants developed in their daily lives free from any preset concepts. There was no competing or overpowering perception to nullify their lived experiences that Taiwan is an independent and sovereign state, otherwise it would be a grave mistake to lose their original nationality in exchange for ROC nationality. In the words of La Ngọc Thu, 'Vietnam is a *real* state, it joined the WTO. If Taiwan wasn't a state, why would I give up my Vietnamese nationality!' (26/03/09, Taipei) However, the official stance of the Vietnamese government is that Taiwan is a part of China (Abuza 1996: 110). Thus, although Nguyễn Khanh Van put down her husband's nationality on her Vietnamese marriage certificate as 'Taiwan', the marriage registrar in her hometown changed it to 'Taiwan (China)'. After moving to Taiwan, she realised '*We are not a part of China. There's nothing in my daily life that would make me think Taiwan is a part of China. My husband doesn't think he's Chinese. Taiwanese people don't think they are Chinese, do they?*' (15/05/09, Taipei)

The fact that the statehood of Taiwan as the ROC is challenged brings up the vulnerability of the Taiwanese category, the foundation of which is safeguarding

economic prosperity and striving for international recognition. The disparity of Taiwan's economic prowess and political vulnerability is how Chung Min-he compared Taiwan and Vietnam. For him, Taiwan may be strong in the international economy, but it is weak and isolated in international politics. Vietnam may be less developed, but 'It is a *normal* state and a member of the United Nations. It has diplomatic relationships with many more states than Taiwan does' (09/04/09, Taichung). This comparison convinced him that his wife should retain her Vietnamese nationality. Min-he's rationale reveals the fragility of the Taiwanese category in the sense that Taiwan's self-identity as being an independent and sovereign state is challenged internationally and domestically.

To sum up, acquiring citizenship is a threshold of the dual *rite of passage*. After crossing the gate, an immigrant is accepted by the state as a member of the national community and the political polity. However, the relationship between the state and the immigrants is a multi-dimensional complex. The *rite of passage* is not a lineal but *liminal* transition. There are negative as well as positive sources to impede or induce the development of identification with Taiwan. The state is excluding in conducting entry interview and collaborates with the husband by implementing gendered regulations, which tie the immigrants to marriage. However, with the power of awarding citizenship, the state relieves immigrant women from the confinement of marriage. When a marriage is under threat, in the name of motherhood, the state renders help to immigrant women, but the agent of the state may be biased by gender, class and ethnicity, and may not protect the marriage or enable the continuation of fulfilling motherhood duties. Employment is a major means to achieve betterment for self, parents and children, and thus generates positive identification with Taiwan. However, the state is also in an

alliance with husbands/in-laws to prevent *runaway* and thus restricts immigrants' employment or exploits immigrants for homemaking and caring responsibilities.

On the other hand, acquiring citizenship may induce positive identification with Taiwan. Throughout the *rites of passage* of becoming a mother and citizen, the cognition of betterment changes to prioritise stability and the children's interest. This becomes an essential incentive with which to apply for citizenship. Although citizenship renders a sense of equality, acceptance and inclusion, the requirement to renounce the original nationality facilitates a context in which immigrant women experience conflicting duties defined by the roles of daughters, wives and mothers. It is in this context that nationality is seen as the symbol of national identity. National identity is then perceived as private relationships between wives and husbands, parents and daughters, and mothers and children.

Therefore, different paths emerging from the different contexts of everyday experiences lead to varying degrees of identification with Taiwan. They are primordial ties with their husbands and children, practical gains from employment and citizenship, a sense of equality and acceptance deriving from citizenship, and identification with the political system and participation in public affairs. These paths gradually develop, whilst the primordial ties with the originating countries are sustained. On the whole, they give rise to the in-between identity. The tension of the in-between identity is strengthened by the contestation of local Taiwanese and fellow immigrants. It is also reinforced by the perceived double rejection of both the state and society of Vietnam and Taiwan. Although Filipino and Vietnamese immigrants have identical experiences in developing this in-between identity, there are nevertheless divergences. Citizenship in the sense of participation was more evident amongst Filipino immigrants. Finally, the renunciation of the original nationality creates an occasion where the Taiwanese

category is under examination. While it is strengthened by the belief of immigrant women in Taiwan's statehood, their husband's doubt highlights the fact that Taiwan's fragile statehood is also domestically challenged.

6.3 Facility of the Chinese Language

6.3.1 Filipino: English-Speaking as a Boundary Marker

Filipino interviewees in Pingtung speak a degree of Mandarin and the Taiwanese dialect to communicate with their husbands, in-laws, children and people outside of the family. However, as Jo pointed out '*It's difficult for us to adjust here because of language*'⁷⁶ (29/01/10, Pingtung), a lower proficiency remains an obstacle for inducing identification. Unable to fully communicate in Mandarin or Taiwanese, they cling on to speak in English and develop a linguistic division of labour: speaking English at home and speaking Mandarin or Taiwanese outside of the home. For those who were housewives, lacking regular social contact with other people outside the home decreased their exposure to the local linguistic environment. Thus, English-speaking is useful in the beginning, but also reduces the incentive to adopt local languages. In the long run, the initial convenience subsequently becomes a hindrance for developing identification with Taiwan.

Clinging on to English is not only practical for communicating with families but also consolidates their self-esteem. As Andrea pointed out, 'In the Philippines there are *also* people who can't speak English because they didn't go to school' (27/01/10, Pingtung). Associated with *modernity* (Del Rosario 2005: 264), English-speaking marks

⁷⁶ An example of their unfamiliarity with the Chinese language is that Filipino grocery shops, such as those run by Jo and Peony, do not use Chinese-language signs (Mika 2001: 24), whereas the shop signs of Vietnamese and Indonesian eateries are bilingual.

the boundary between the educated and the uneducated in the Philippines. English in Taiwan and the Philippines is also associated with western cultures, transnational mobility, a higher social standing, and stronger job competitiveness. As mentioned in Chapter 3, Filipino domestic workers stand out from migrant workers of other nationalities because of their English ability. Speaking English is to uphold the workers' self-esteem because '*They (Taiwanese employers) have Money but I Speak English*' (Lan 2003). Thus, in Pingtung where Filipino women were looked down upon, university graduate Jennifer was hired by her husband's insurance company to give English lessons to his colleagues.

Nevertheless, In Taiwan, there is a bifurcated social imagination of English speaking. On the one hand, it is regarded as an asset for job competitiveness. On the other hand, it is strongly associated with the Caucasian ethnicity (for example, Ukrainian wives are universally assumed as fluent English speakers). When this bifurcation is located within Filipino wives' family life, the presumption of competitiveness somehow wanes. In the unequal relationship between the presumed poor Filipino women and their in-laws, Filipino women's English-speaking is not appreciated. While Caucasian mothers are encouraged to speak English rather than Chinese to their children, and their Chinese language inability is positively imagined as reducing the friction with in-laws (TVBS2003a), Filipino women, such as Annabelle, were discouraged from speaking English (and Tagalog) because of their in-laws' fear of being excluded or bad-mouthed. Nevertheless, when there was a practical value, speaking English or Tagalog might be tolerated. For example, Jo's husband accepted their children speaking Tagalog because Filipino customers who visited Jo's grocery shop enjoyed and praised the children's Tagalog comprehension.

If identification by a home-grown linguistic familiarity is limited, identification stimulated by the state's provision of language training may be an alternative route. This was the rationale behind making Chinese language ability a prerequisite for citizenship eligibility in 2005 (see Chapter 4). However, seven interviewees acquired citizenship before 2005, thus there was no incentive for them to attend the language training for citizenship eligibility. For those who embarked on citizenship application after 2005 and thus attended the language training course, the Chinese language remained secondary to their use in daily life. It is common that Filipino mothers speak English to their children, who then reply in Mandarin or Taiwanese. Peggy and Clare were keen to teach English to their children, but their children were not interested.

English-speaking, with a degree of comprehension of local languages, stumbles in the mother-child intimacy. This is further exacerbated after children attending school. Bounded by the gender norm, immigrant mothers are responsible for looking after the academic performance of their children and are required to communicate with the school. Mostly lacking Chinese reading comprehension, Filipino mothers signed their children's communication logbooks without sufficiently understanding the content. Thus, Annabelle told her daughter that she had to look after herself because her mother was unable to help. The linguistic limitations also constrained Annabelle's ability to transmit Filipino culture in full to her daughter, who needed her mother's help to complete a specific school assignment of this topic.

The constrained intimacy is particularly ironic when viewed in the context of the 'mother tongue' curriculum implemented at primary school for prompting multiculturalism. Their children were required to take Taiwanese, Hakka or any of the Indigenous languages as a 'mother tongue' subject, while at home they were not encouraged, or were unable to, speak either English or Tagalog (or Visaya spoken by

Andrea) with their mothers. When asked about this awkward situation, Filipino mothers shrugged it off and were sympathetic that their children had a heavy workload of learning Chinese, English and a ‘mother tongue’. Most of all, they felt there was no *practical* advantage in learning Tagalog. Although it was for their children’s benefit if they spoke good English, it was up to their children whether or not they would want to learn English from their mothers.

The above discussion conveys the linguistic challenge Filipino interviewees encountered in southern Taiwan. Their self-identification with English is challenged by the parents-in-law’s rejection and their children’s indifferent attitudes. This underlines the fact that the use of language is not neutral but biased by the concepts of race and class. The inability to fully communicate in Chinese language takes a toll on the mother-child intimacy and erodes the possibility of acquiring a sense of achievement by fulfilling motherhood duties. In other words, the inability to assist with children’s study reduces the chance of accomplishing motherhood duties as a ‘moral career’ (Liamputtong 2006). It is ironic that the children of Filipino mothers take any of the local languages for their ‘mother tongue’ education. However, Filipino interviewees submit themselves to pragmatism in that learning Tagalog is of no use. Although there is no denying the benefit of speaking English, it is up to their children’s own cognition as to whether they see their mothers as the source of this advantageous language. To sum up, the linguistic inability is not conducive in the family domain for developing identification with Taiwan.

6.3.2 Vietnamese: Fast Mandarin Learners

Compared to the Filipino interviewees’ on English, Vietnamese interviewees on the whole achieve a higher proficiency in the Chinese language soon after their arrival. Hồ Minh Mai’s husband argued that this was out of necessity, as there was no other

alternative for Vietnamese wives to bridge the gap⁷⁷. The other contributing factor is a higher level of enrolment at language courses as a result of their strong desire to acquire citizenship. Viewed by Trần Thi Loan's own experiences, the subjective identification with Taiwan is mediated by her empowerment gained from Chinese language ability and this leads to her in-between identity.

Loan was from Can Tho, one of the five poor Mekong Delta provinces where there was a high rate of marriage with Taiwanese men (Hugo and Nguyen 2007: 373-374). She dropped out in the second year of primary school and remained almost illiterate in Vietnamese language. Loan's husband was a police officer. He encouraged Loan to go to school rather than finding a job. Thus, Loan continuously attended evening classes for six years and earned the primary school certificate and secondary school diploma. At the beginning of the interview, I asked Loan to write down the name of her hometown in Vietnamese. It took her a while. She apologised and joked, 'I haven't used Vietnamese language for a long time. I've almost forgotten how to write. *I've become Taiwanese.*' Surprised by her comment, I asked her why. Her reply was:

'Little by little I began to prefer Taiwan because it's great in Taiwan I can continue learning and making progress. I came from a backward country, I lived in the countryside. There was nothing to learn over there. There was no substance in people's daily conversation. *I want to learn more, I don't mind earning little money. I want to be able to speak properly.*'

⁷⁷ He also argued that Vietnamese women speaking Taiwanese dialect was an indication of their wider social contacts gained either from running a family business or engaging in employment outside the home, particularly if their in-laws are not Taiwanese speakers (26/05/09, Tainan).

I asked whether she remembered the Vietnamese national flag and national anthem and what she would do if her daughter's schoolwork was to introduce Vietnamese culture. Her reply was:

'Of course I remember how to draw the flag! But I don't know the national anthem because I didn't go to school. I didn't really understand our national culture when I was in Vietnam because I wasn't educated. I wouldn't know how to present the Vietnamese culture ... It's really regrettable that I didn't go to school over there but there's nothing I could do about it. I've learned a lot in Taiwan and understand more about Taiwan. After I came to Taiwan, I started to learn Chinese. Because of that, I started to learn Vietnamese. After practicing qigong (氣功, a sect of Chinese martial art) for five years, my Mandarin is getting better, so is my Vietnamese. I want to help Taiwanese and my fellow countrymen with this skill (qigong)⁷⁸ (22/05/09, Kaohsiung).

Loan's narrative shows the impact of lacking compulsory education in the sense of creating a void of state construction as a source of national identity. The Vietnamese national culture that she did not understand is the 'higher culture' gained from education (Gellner 2002: 35-38) rather than the everyday practices. As a contrast, the language ability and the resultant education in Taiwan lead to acculturation and identification with Taiwan. It also empowered her to think of engaging community affairs and reaching out members of the general public. Most importantly, the identification with Taiwan was not in competition but *in tandem with* her Vietnamese identity. The acquired Chinese language ability empowered her to reacquaint herself with the Vietnamese language. The Chinese language ability brought about the in-between

⁷⁸ Loan was a teaching assistant for a qigong class at a community service centre.

identity. Within this in-between identity, she found her agency to help not only Vietnamese but also Taiwanese.

From the state's point of view, the relationship between immigrant mothers and their children is transformed from that of private intimacy to a channel for the transmission of national culture. In the perceptions of the Vietnamese interviewees, 'transmitting national culture' was a concept remote to their daily life. What they recognised was that in addition to the mother-child intimacy, speaking Mandarin to their children and supervising their children's homework was another aspect of their motherhood duties. In spite of their speaking fluency, reading and writing still remain a daunting task. The anxieties caused by linguistic restriction and cultural unfamiliarity are well explained by Nguyễn Thi Minh Thu, a former secondary school teacher and one of the two interviewees who were studying for postgraduate degrees in Taiwan:

'Taiwan has paid a high price for the social issues *brought by us*. Our children will affect Taiwan's national competitiveness. *This isn't because my children are born to be inferior, it's because I wasn't educated here and I couldn't give them the same help as a local mother can*. When my son was in pre-school his teacher asked to see me. I was very sensitive, and I asked my husband whether other parents were going to be interviewed. It turned out it was only me because the school thought they needed to help a "disadvantaged" family. I asked myself: "*Am I really so helpless?*" A Vietnamese sister (friend) told me she didn't supervise her son's homework because her son said, "You don't know the answers, auntie knows the answers". Her son gave all of the photos taken at school to his aunt and his aunt went to his school for parents' meetings. *My Vietnamese sister cried for days*. I wouldn't let this happen to me, so I studied with my children. I know very well what it is like when a child asks you about

something and you don't know the answer. *The child would drift away from the mother*' (27/05/09, Tainan).

Not disputing the prevailing discourse of a deteriorated population 'quality', Minh Thu's reflections defied the stereotype of incapable immigrant mothers and the imposed inferiority on their children. It was not an immigrant mother's insufficient education that prevented them from effectively helping their children and transmitting the national culture. It was the different contents of her previous education which had reduced her scope of helping her children, in spite of the fact that she speaks four languages and would go on to acquire a Master's degree once she completed her studies.

The limited Chinese language ability and unfamiliarity with local culture squeezing the mother-child intimacy is also found in Phạm Thi Phuong's experience. Phuong recalled her experiences of trying to comfort her crying baby son. She wanted to sing a nursery rhyme but she did not know any in Chinese. She could not sing a Vietnamese rhyme, either, because her in-laws had discouraged her from speaking Vietnamese. She could only cradle her son in her arms without a soothing melody. It is a common practice that in-laws discourage or prohibit Vietnamese mothers from speaking the Vietnamese language to their children. They also discourage their Vietnamese daughters-in-law from reading Vietnamese-language material. Thus, the Taiwanese editors of a locally produced Vietnamese language newspaper decided to print bilingual headlines (Vietnamese-Chinese) to reduce the fear of mothers-in-law that their Vietnamese daughters-in-law might be misled by the contents of the newspapers (22/04/09, Taipei).

The language in which a Vietnamese mother decides to communicate with her children is partly decided by how she sees her children in relation to Taiwan. There are mothers like Nguyễn Khanh Van, who thought that their children are entirely Taiwanese

because they were born in Taiwan and were fathered by a Taiwanese man. Therefore, it makes little sense for them to learn Vietnamese, except for knowing how to exchange pleasantries with their Vietnamese relatives. Their Vietnamese heritage is considerably eclipsed by the dominant Taiwanese identity. On the other hand, there are mothers like Ngô Thi Cuc, who saw her daughter as half Taiwanese and half Vietnamese. Her confidence in the daughter's mixed inheritance was supported by her husband, who suggested his wife retaining her Vietnamese nationality, and hoped that their daughter 'would remember she *is* Vietnamese', regardless of whether they resided in Taiwan or in Vietnam.

Language is the aspect in which Hồ Minh Mai explained her role-defined in-between identity. Minh Mai is the other interviewee who studied for a Master's degree course in Taiwan. She has a strong determination to transmit the Vietnamese language to her children. As a mother and as a member of Taiwanese society, she elaborated that the key to this transmission is multiculturalism. She argued that language was a critical means for identification. Thus, as a member of Taiwanese society, Vietnamese women need to speak the Chinese language to Taiwanese people. However, as a mother, they had the *right* to speak the Vietnamese language to their children. She criticised the pressure placed by the Taiwanese government on Vietnamese mothers to speak Chinese to their children and argued that this was 'failed cultural colonialism'. For her, Taiwan could win international recognition if it implemented multiculturalism in the sense of respecting immigrants and equally treating less-developed countries in the neighbouring geographical area. Otherwise, it was hypocritical that Taiwan discriminated against its less-developed neighbours, but took advantage of their lower development and invested in these countries. Because Taiwanese investors, managers, and tourists behaved like colonisers in Vietnam, they

were then cheated by the Vietnamese businessmen who sold products and services at higher prices. Using a military metaphor which resonated with the Vietnam War, Minh Mai characterised the cheating of individual Vietnamese traders as ‘Vietnamese traders don’t have the luxury of colliding head-on with Taiwanese investors, so they opted for guerrilla warfare’. For her, multiculturalism should be an element for social integration at home and multiculturalism leading to good neighbouring should be also an element of Taiwan’s external relations abroad:

‘If the government gives Vietnamese [wives and workers] assistance and treats them with respect, Taiwanese investors in Vietnam won’t be treated with hostility and won’t be cheated. The government should implement multiculturalism and respect people from outside. *Why can you respect Americans and Japanese but discriminate against people from less developed countries?*’ (25/05/09, Tainan)

To sum up, the cases of Trần Thi Loan, Nguyễn Thi Minh Thu and Hồ Minh Mai clearly show their in-between identity in the language aspect where motherhood also plays a role. On the one hand, they themselves adapted well to the local way of life, and Loan was empowered by the language ability. At the same time, they upheld a Vietnamese identity and wished to pass it onto their children. In contrast, language is not inductive for Filipino immigrants to develop identification with Taiwan. They resorted to speaking English, partly to maintain their self-esteem. However, both Vietnamese and Filipino mothers encountered similar challenges in maintaining the mother-child intimacy and this set constraints on their fulfilment of motherhood. Hồ Minh Mai argued that this was a problem created by Taiwan itself and that multiculturalism was the remedy. By appealing to multiculturalism, Minh Mai also revealed the unquestioned racial hierarchy held by the host society.

6.4 Motherhood and Family Relationship

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the media campaign launched by the Vietnamese government depicted Vietnamese women as failing to fulfil their responsibilities of being good daughters, wives, mothers and citizens (Bélanger *et al* 2007). This denunciation is in stark contrast to Vietnamese women's motivations for migration, as one of their significant motivations is to fulfil their daughterly duties and achieve betterment for their parents. Moreover, as seen in their decision of renouncing Vietnamese nationality and applying for ROC citizenship, there is a strong primordial attachment to their parents in Vietnam and families in Taiwan expressed in the vein of fulfilling the duties of daughters, wives and mothers as defined by gender norms. This primordial sentiment is also shared by their Filipino counterparts.

Nowhere else is it more evident than in motherhood that we see how an immigrant woman makes the critical decision of where to stay as home. It is driven by the sense of pursuing a 'moral career' for self-achievement (Liamputtong 2006). The *rite of passage* of becoming a mother is visualised by Hoàng Minh Suong:

'In the beginning I wanted to go back [to Vietnam], but then I saw my children gradually growing up. It's like watching the growth of a seedling; you've got to support it. Then you'd stop thinking about going back ... *My home is where my children are*' (02/06/09, Chinshan).

Same kind of commitment to staying in order to look after children is echoed by Peggy's comments 'If we didn't have family here, we'd have gone back to the Philippines' (27/01/10, Pingtung). Thus, will carrying out the duty of motherhood affect how they see themselves in relation to Taiwan? Jennifer gave an answer that elucidates the concept of *relational* identity:

‘As for now, as I’m speaking to you, *because my family is here, it’s not too much* “No, I’m not Taiwanese.” *I feel I’m slowly caring about the culture of Taiwan because of my children.*’ (29/01/10, Pingtung)

Still on a Residency Permit, Jennifer saw her life through the interest of her husband and sons. This was supported by her parents in the Philippines, who were devout Christians like herself and who advised: ‘You chose to marry a Taiwanese man, you have a family there. This is God’s choice. *You must take care of your children.*’ Whenever she got upset, her parents told her ‘Go home, because of your three children.’ She does not have brothers or sisters in the Philippines. Should her parents pass away, she would be alone there. ‘Now I have three boys here in Taiwan to look after. I may not have a very good life here, but I pray to God I must adjust.’ (29/01/10, Pingtung)

Annabelle’s narratives illustrate the clearly perceived internal conflict of the in-between identity:

‘I hadn’t gone back for four years so I felt it (hometown) looked very different, the houses, the roads ...Yes, I feel [I’m] different. I’ve stayed in Taiwan for such a long time. My family is here, my kids are here. I have my mother and brother in the Philippines and I need to support them. But in my mind I want to stay in Taiwan.’ (27/01/10, Pingtung)

Phạm Thanh Van is the only Permanent Residency Permit holder amongst the 59 Southeast Asian interviewees. Upon divorce she strived to stay in Taiwan to look after her son. During her marriage, because of supervising his homework, she increased her knowledge of Taiwan. At the same time, she insisted on teaching her son the Vietnamese language, in spite of the objections from her husband and mother-in-law. The way she positioned herself in relation to Taiwan and Vietnam after living in Taiwan

for 14 years was a clear in-between identity. This is in spite of her negative encounters with the discriminatory police and failing to win her son's guardianship:

'I don't have citizenship but that doesn't mean I don't feel Taiwanese. Actually, I feel I'm Taiwanese when I return to Vietnam. My life has been significantly influenced by Taiwan and I have made efforts to integrate, understand and adapt myself to it. I have made so much progress since I came to Taiwan. I have good contact with society, I was gradually changing. If I didn't have property in Vietnam, I'd renounce my Vietnamese nationality and apply for [Taiwanese] citizenship.' (15/04/09, Taipei)

Nguyễn Thi Minh Thu is another mother who did not acquire citizenship but still identifies with Taiwan because of having her family in Taiwan. She hoped to teach her children more about the Vietnamese language and culture. Her narrative quoted below clearly expresses her in-between identity. On the one hand, it is a conscious effort of adaptation and performance of her motherhood duties, including assisting with her children's learning, as discussed in the previous section. On the other hand, it is also a conscious effort to maintain her Vietnamese identity, including passing down her Vietnamese heritage:

'In the past I often wondered whether I'd be "assimilated". I always remind myself I won't be assimilated. *My root is in Vietnam, but my marriage gave me family in Taiwan, my children's future is in Taiwan ...* I know I've spent half of my life in Vietnam. *I won't be assimilated, but I'm integrated. My life may end in Taiwan, I will die in Taiwan ...* I'm slowly moving towards Taiwan. I haven't been back to Vietnam for some years, but I'm consciously maintaining my Vietnamese identity. It's probably not half-and-half, perhaps one-third Vietnamese and two-thirds Taiwanese. *This is a natural process.* The one-third

Vietnamese is *pure* and *natural*, and *I'm naturally integrated to become Taiwanese* ... My husband said I'm physically in Taiwan but my heart is in Vietnam. I said *sub-consciousness* is immovable ... In Taiwan, I clearly know I'm Vietnamese.' (27/05/09, Tainan)

Hồ Minh Mai's in-betweenness develops from her comparative insight to being a former migrant worker and the different life trajectories of a migrant worker and immigrant mother. The former remains an outsider to Taiwan, whereas the latter changes from an 'outsider within' (Cheng 2004: 47)⁷⁹ to internal members of the society. As a French- and English-speaking university graduate, Minh Mai initially came for a three-year contract working at an electronic factory in Kaohsiung (supervised by English-speaking Filipino forewomen). As a worker, she had limited social or cultural contacts outside of the factory except purchasing food in the market. Her relationship with Taiwanese colleagues was only work-related. However, as a wife, there was no expected return date, and there was no insulation between her and the local society. Her marriage had made her a member of the Taiwanese family and society. Thus, as a mother, her children had rooted her in Taiwan. She developed her identification with Taiwan in the absence of citizenship. This, together with her belief in multiculturalism as discussed in the previous section, situates her within the in-between identity.

Although motherhood is a source of inducing identification with Taiwan, it cannot be sustained in a vacuum. Motherhood sits in the centre of a web of relationships with husbands and in-laws, and its fulfilment is not entirely under the immigrant mother's

⁷⁹ Originally Cheng uses this term to characterise the status of foreign domestic workers in Taiwanese households. In this thesis, it is used to refer to marriage immigrant women.

autonomous control. For Peony, her adjustment in itself was not sufficient with which to perform the motherhood duties. She must enlist the help of her English-speaking husband as an ‘interpreter’ between her and her parents-in-law and children. His task was to interpret Peony’s intentions in a way that both sides could appreciate and respond to. For those who are not attentively supported by their husbands, they have testing relationships with in-laws. Husbands may be the obstacle to performing motherhood duties because of having an affair, physical abuse, alcoholism or simply being indifferent. The strained relationships with husbands and in-laws are challenges to them in performing their motherhood duties and these are not positive sources with which to induce identification with Taiwan.

The discussion of motherhood demonstrates again the significance of primordial ties for developing an in-between identity. While the identification with the Philippines/Vietnam remains, the in-between identity may develop without acquiring the formal citizenship, as shown in the experiences of Jennifer, Phạm Thanh Van, Nguyễn Thị Minh Thu and Hồ Minh Mai. It may be enhanced by language ability or the sense of self-accomplishment. These narratives converge at a point that Taiwan is now their home, or that they make Taiwan their home because of their children. The homeliness is built on the sense of responsibility and the determination to achieve a ‘moral career’ of being a good mother.

6.5 Conclusion

Life goes on, you must find your own way because there is no way back (Nguyễn Thị Minh Thu, 27/05/09, Tainan).

In this chapter I analysed how Filipino and Vietnamese immigrant women develop an in-between identity along with the dual *rites of passage*. Through examining their lived experiences as daughters, wives, mothers and citizens, I found different paths

discursively leading to the ambiguous in-between identity. On the one hand, there are positive inducements for identifying with Taiwan. They are: a) betterment - gained from employment, or the general improvement of living standards, including a reliable performance of frontline civil servants; b) citizenship –receiving the secured right to reside, having easier access to employment, being entitled to substantive rights, acquiring a sense of equality and inclusion, and participating in public affairs by exercising voting rights; c) linguistic adaptation – achieving acculturation, carrying out motherhood duties, and acquiring agency for further self-achievement; d) motherhood – developing the sense of belonging and rootedness, and achieving a moral career as a good mother. Thus, primordialism and instrumentalism have their distinctive roles to play in the formation of the in-between identity. There are variations between the Filipino and Vietnamese immigrants. The former shows higher awareness of citizenship rights including substantive rights and political rights, whereas the latter has a higher degree of success in acquiring Chinese language ability.

However, self-identification with Taiwan is constrained by obstructions, competition or contestation. These constraints are: a) restricted employment – immigrants being rejected because of lacking an ID Card, being prevented by their in-laws or husbands because of the latter's *runaway* anxieties, or their demand to fulfil homemaking responsibilities; b) citizenship legislation – immigrants feeling excluded and discriminated by the entry interview, the failure of the state agents to protect their marriage or to grant child custody, and the requirements for citizenship eligibility; c) language – the pressure of speaking Mandarin diminishing the mother-child intimacy; d) motherhood – immigrants being required to carry out daughterly duties, or lacking the support of husbands and in-laws in fulfilling motherhood duties.

The in-between identity is the cognitive equilibrium that they draw from these positive inductions and negative obstructions. The equilibrium is gradually reached through the process of dual *rites of passage*, while their worldview is revised so as to correspond to the changed living environment and the reconfigured interpretation of betterment. The renunciation of the original nationality is the formal occasion where they make the decision to manifest their commitment to *patrilocality* (residing with their husband) and fulfilling their motherly duties. This is also the occasion where they enliven the primordial ties with the Philippines/Vietnam, which are mediated by their family ties with their parents. Thus, the in-between identity is *relational* as well as *territorial*. The relational dimension is transnational and spans across the state border and connects immigrant women with both countries. The territorial dimension is mediated by their attachment to parents and children in either country. As Andrea depicted, home is where they straddle across two identities. However, in addition to the state's exclusion shown by the legislation, self-identification is constantly contested and the in-betweenness is challenged as insincere, unauthentic and disloyal. Or, it may result in being rejected by the state and society of both sides. The combined result is a complicated and layered transformation. The *rite of passage* is thus an ongoing transition and the in-betweenness will have more variations as their life goes on.

Their voluntary undertaking of gender-defined roles and duties are keys with which to understand the formation of the in-between identity. This opens a window to look into the social influence of gender norms. Their lived experiences show that they have *internalised* the gender norms as the guiding principle of their worldview. Their interest may be parallel to the gendered legislation when it stresses the stability of marriage and supports motherhood. However, their interest may also be eclipsed by the

double standards and inaction of the state agents. The internalisation of gender norms thus cannot be monolithically interpreted as a false consciousness.

Their identification experiences also create an inroad to see how outsiders interact with the Taiwanese category. The New Taiwanese Consciousness stresses a civic identity and a territorial link as providing cohesion for the national community and political polity. The experiences of the Filipino and Vietnamese immigrants show that the former demonstrates a stronger civic identity through exercising their voting rights, whereas the territorial link of both groups with Taiwan is mediated by their commitment to their wifely and motherly duties. The Taiwanese category is built on the assertion of Taiwan's independent and sovereign statehood. Although immigrant women show no objections to this assertion, some husbands reveal its vulnerability by highlighting Taiwan's international isolation. In Taiwan's national narrative, multiculturalism is promoted as a way of consolidating the national community. However, as an inward-looking discourse created to address the internal division of the Taiwanese category, the multiculturalism policy fails to recognise the differing cultural heritage of immigrant mothers. The diminished intimacy immigrant mothers experience with their children is a testimony to the inadequate multicultural curriculum which requires their children to learn any of the local languages as their 'mother tongue'. Lastly, Taiwan constructs itself as holding human rights protection as a moral mission. However, the gendered legislation, the biased state agents, and domestic abuse have made the state and the society a collective culprit accountable for the violation of immigrants' human rights. On the whole, the interaction between immigrants and the host state reveals that the state of Taiwan does not fulfil its moral mission for human rights protection and the inward-looking multiculturalism does not correspond to the changed ethnic makeup of the society brought about by marriage immigration. On the other hand, the realisation of

betterment goals achieved by immigrant women, and their recognition of Taiwan as being an independent state consolidate Taiwan's identity as a prosperous economy and sovereign state. The nation-building project may succeed in the sense that immigrant mothers make Taiwan their home and see their interests shared with the members of the society, but Taiwanese society will be continuously challenged for failing to adequately incorporate their in-between identity.

CHAPTER 7: BACK TO THE IMAGINED HOMELAND OR MAKE IT HOME: DIASPORIC AND HYBRID INDONESIAN CHINESE

This chapter is my exploration of the in-between identity of 20 Indonesian Chinese women in Taiwan. In Indonesia, Chinese ethnicity alone already generates an in-between identity. They are Chinese persons in terms of ethnicity as well as Indonesian citizens in terms of nationality. Amongst older immigrants who had received Chinese language education and hold diasporic Chinese identity, the Chinese identity may be a national identity in competition with their Indonesian identity, which is gained through everyday social practices. Amongst younger immigrants who did not receive Chinese language education and hold hybrid Chinese identity, the Chinese identity may be a sub-national ethnic identity co-existing with their Indonesian national identity, which is gained through everyday social practices as well as compulsory education curriculum as an effective tool for the state to implement assimilation⁸⁰. Thus, the exploration of their migration to Taiwan and the resultant in-between identity with Taiwan and Indonesia has to start with an overview of their changed social image in Taiwan and their *otherness* in Indonesia. The overview contours the generational change of Indonesian Chinese from embracing a diasporic Chinese identity to holding a

⁸⁰ In this chapter I did not use ‘primordial ties’ for the following reason. In the proceeding chapters, there are two streams of the meanings of primordial ties. One refers to the link generated by birth between individuals and the collective that include inherited culture, language, customs, social practices, and religion. The other refers to the parent-child relationship that is evident in the decision-making process of relinquishing the former nationality. As most of Filipino and Vietnamese interviewees (except Vietnamese Chinese) are of the dominant ethnicity of their natal country, the primordial ties in the first meaning can be argued as a source for generating Filipino or Vietnamese national identity. However, in the case of Indonesian Chinese, not only they are ethnic minority but also grow up in a rich history of ethnic tension. Primordial ties in the first meaning cannot distinguish the multiple strands of links that all generate from birth, as conveyed by the national motto ‘*unity in diversity*’. Therefore, I use ‘social practices’ to replace ‘primordial ties’ in order to avoid confusion but also underline the diversity.

hybrid Chinese-Indonesian identity. This overview builds an indispensable link with which to understand their motivations for pursuing betterment, aspiring to belong and desiring safety.

This chapter will then move on to examine how the perception of citizenship legislation, the facility of the Chinese language, and performing motherhood bring about their in-between identity. For those who held a diasporic identity and saw Taiwan as the Homeland, the legislation was expected to reciprocate their home-going aspirations. Thus an accommodating legislation was perceived as embracing and conducive for identification with Taiwan, whereas more stringent legislation was perceived as unwelcoming. Their perceptions reflect the change of Taiwan's self-identity as from being the 'real' China to being the 'ROC on Taiwan'. For those who held a hybrid identity, as foreigners, they did not engage in the citizenship legislation with relation to their Chinese ancestry. Instead, they made Taiwan their home. This was realised by their conformity to the gender norms and expressed in their gendered understanding of the renunciation of Indonesian nationality. Exercising citizenship generated a sense of belonging, and it was partly associated with motherhood duties.

The facility of the Chinese language contributes to identification with Taiwan in four dimensions. For those who upheld a strong Chinese identity, acquiring language ability authenticated their Chinese-ness. For those who were hybrid, they had experiences similar to those of Filipino and Vietnamese immigrants. That is, acquiring the ability improved their employment opportunities, raised their self-esteem, and assisted with their motherhood duties. It also contributed to their community participation. Although these generate identification with Taiwan, the possession of a foreign accent remains a boundary marker and thus contests their subjective

identification. Similar to Filipino and Vietnamese mothers, their diminished mother-child intimacy was also brought about by being discouraged to speak Indonesian at home. Finally, at home they experienced the in-between identity through the conflict of daughterly and motherly duties. Also similar to Filipino, Vietnamese and younger Chinese mothers, motherhood generates the sense of rootedness towards Taiwan and the support of their husbands is key to negotiating the challenge of the in-between identity.

7.1 Memories of Being Ethnic Others in Indonesia: *Diasporic Sentiments and Hybridity*

Via transnational links, from the late 1970s onwards, trickles of Indonesian Chinese women of various dialect groups entered Taiwan as spouses. Known as ‘*Overseas Chinese from Indonesia*’ (*yinni huaqiao*) (Yang and Lan 2006: 14), they were perceived as a part of the ‘returned’ migration of Overseas Chinese, who settled in Taiwan in the wake of the anti-Chinese movements during the 1950s-60s⁸¹ (FitzGerald 1973: 41; Li 2005), or chose to stay after they completed tertiary education⁸² (Yang and Lan 2006: 12-13). However, it can be argued that from the late 1980s onwards, the nature of their migration began to change from settlement to temporary employment. They, and indigenous Indonesians (*pribumi*), became members of the foreign labour force in Taiwan. Around the same time, via professional brokers, a great number of Indonesian

⁸¹ In 1958, the accusation of Taiwan supporting the rebellion of the *Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia* in Sumatra triggered anti-Chinese measures including arresting pro-ROC leaders, closing down pro-ROC schools and organisations, banning Chinese-language newspapers and nationalising some retail businesses. At the end of January 1960, there were 3,330 Chinese registered with KMT offices in Indonesia requesting to be evacuated to Taiwan (Hsia Cheng-hua 2006; FitzGerald 1973: 41). In 1960, the KMT government evacuated some of them to Taiwan; in 1963, there were at least 267 Indonesian Hakka persons from Jakarta and Sumatra settled in Changchi Township, Pingtung (Li Yun-fei 2005: 26).

⁸² It is estimated that in the 1950s and early 1960s, some 60,000 Chinese students left Indonesia for China (Godley and Coppel 1990). Between 1952 and 1961, the number of Indonesian Chinese students who graduated from Taiwan’s colleges and universities totaled 316 (MoE 1999: 39). The majority of those who went to China or Taiwan did not return because the Indonesian government did not allow them to return (Suryadinata 1997: 95).

Chinese women were introduced to marry local men. These Indonesian Chinese women are now collectively known as *Indonesian Brides*, sharing with indigenous Indonesians the imposed *otherness* of poverty, backwardness, and inferiority. In the legal system, they are foreigners who are regulated by immigration laws and in popular discourse they are lumped together with Filipino and Vietnamese women as *Foreign Brides*. However, at interviews, they also introduced themselves as *yinni huaqiao*. Although they could not clearly trace where and when their ancestors settled in Indonesia, they were told by their parents they were Chinese (*zhongguoren*). Some were offspring of *Peranakan*, some were later generations of *Totok*⁸³. The different degrees of subjective consciousness of being Chinese played a critical role in their national identity in relation to Indonesia and Taiwan. Thus, the exploration of their *rite of passage* begins with an overview of their generational change of being *ethnic others* in Indonesia.

The generational change of their national identity has to be viewed holistically in the history of colonialism, the nationalist movement for independence and the split of China after the Civil War. In the immediate years after Indonesia gained independence from the Netherlands in 1945, approximately 2.5 million Chinese in Indonesia found that their loyalty towards the newly established state was questioned because of the

⁸³ Chinese women were not allowed to emigrate until the late 19th century. Their biological reproduction ability established a self-sustained, unmixed, and 'pure' Chinese population in the destination countries, for their fellow countrymen no longer needed to marry indigenous women in order to continue their family lineage (FitzGerald 1973: 37; Wang 1994: 7). Thus, *Peranakan* refers to Chinese born in Indonesia, or the offspring of earlier arrived Chinese men and their indigenous wives. *Totok* refers to Chinese born in China, or the offspring of the later arrived Chinese men who intra-married with Chinese women. Historically, the former spoke the vernacular language or Dutch; and the latter spoke dialects or Mandarin (Coppel 1983: 9-10). *Totok* leaders are said to be closer to either Beijing or Taipei, but both were suppressed after the 1965 and 1958 coup respectively (Suryadinata 1997: 13). In Chinese-language literature, the former is 'born in sojourning' (*qiaosheng*, 僑生) or 'native born' (*tusheng*, 土生), whereas the latter is 'new guests' (*xinke* in Mandarin, *sinkeh* in Hokkien, 新客) (Ho 1999: 404).

possibility of acquiring dual nationality (Coppel 1983: 26-27)⁸⁴. After the 1955 *Dual Citizenship Treaty* signed between the PRC and Indonesia, which required Chinese to repudiate either citizenship (Willmott 1961: 44-69; Mozingo 1961), Chinese and their offspring lived through the consequences of the nation-building project which aimed to reduce their Chinese identity and promote their assimilation. Requiring Chinese people to adopt Indonesian sounding names (Coppel 1983: 4), and banning the use and teaching of the Chinese language (Willmott 1961: 84-87; Suryadinata 1997: 91-101) are two indispensable elements of the state-launched assimilation projects (Tan 1991; Suryadinata 2004: 81-101).

The narratives of the interviewees construct how they collectively remember their lived experiences of being *ethnic others* in Indonesia⁸⁵. They described themselves as *guests, lodgers* or *residents* of the country (Ryan 1962: 414-416, cited by Coppel 1983: 3). Or they were frustrated that this was how they were excluded as shown on their ID Card that they were *Warga Negara Indonesia Keturunan Asing* (Indonesian citizen of *foreign* descent) (Coppel 1983: 3). Historically, being Chinese was to experience linguistic cleansing, choose specific occupations (trade and business), live a socially and physically segregated life from indigenous Indonesians, have a restricted representation in the national legislature, be content with the institutional exclusion from the public sector (civil service, the police, and the military) and endure violence incited by ethnic

⁸⁴ In the late 1950s, a potential of 700,000 to 900,000 Chinese had dual nationality. Since 1993 the number of Chinese applying for citizenship had amounted to 145,070, in 2006, 96 percent of these applications being approved (Refugees International 2009: 37). In 2000 the estimated number of registered stateless Chinese totalled 208,820. To this day, interviewee Ng Siew Day's sister and her husband have not acquired citizenship, nor have their children.

⁸⁵ Coppel argues that these accounts may also be viewed as stereotypes collectively built and maintained by Chinese and indigenous Indonesians (Coppel 1983: 1-30). My intention is to use interviewees' own voices with which to convey their subjective understanding in relation to Indonesia.

tension⁸⁶. Claiming that Indonesian Chinese were occupying a superior economic position vocally depicts the racial hierarchy between the Chinese and the indigenous Indonesians (Mackie 1991; Wibisono 1995; Suryadinata 1997: 25-74) and this hierarchy applies to Chinese tycoons as well as poor Chinese hiring even poorer indigenous Indonesians to perform manual and domestic labour for meagre wages. Countering the derogatory term '*Cina*' used by indigenous Indonesians to address Chinese (Kroef 1968: 42; Coppel 1983: 72⁸⁷), Chinese address indigenous Indonesians as *huanah* (Hokkien words for *savage*) to refer to all indigenous Indonesians regardless of their ethnicity (Yang and Lan 2006: 21; Suryadinata 1986: 86-109).

The rigidity of these segregations loosened amongst younger interviewees due to the state's assimilation policies (Tan 1991). Born in the 1970s and 1980s, they acquired Indonesian nationality by birth and their ID Cards no longer carried the legend *Warga Negara Indonesia Keturunan Asing* (interview with Le Fen Fen, 30/01/10, Taipei). They inherited the Indonesian sounding names adopted by their parents (Coppel 1983: 82-85), attended state schools teaching the national curriculum in the Indonesian

⁸⁶ The *fear of violence* overwhelmingly characterises the sense of *otherness* of Indonesian Chinese. The eruption of violence may be as minor as children's bullying, or as serious as looting, killing and raping in a large-scale social unrest, or as institutionalised by the government's suppression of the Chinese language. The fear of violence and its centrality in the *ethnic otherness* was narrated by Choi Sook Ying, who was born in 1946 in Jakarta: 'When I was five or six, Indonesians forbade us to use the Chinese language. They'd inspect our house and if they found there were Chinese characters (Chinese-language materials), they'd drag us away, chop our heads off, dig a hole and bury us in the ground. I had many relatives killed like that by Indonesians ... They didn't allow us to go to Chinese-language school. But when I went to *their* Indonesian-language school, my Indonesian neighbours beat me. They were boys and girls older than me, seven- or eight-years-old. I was six. As soon as they saw us, they cried out "*Cina! Cina!*" They beat any *Cina* on sight. No one came to help me, no one stopped them ... Not everyone had such experiences, but if you lived close to Indonesians, you'd encounter them.' In March 1957, the government announced that Indonesia was in a 'state of siege', which authorised supreme power to the military. With this mandate, the military ordered to close down pro-KMT schools. This policy was later adopted by the Ministry of Education (Willmont 1961: 73; 86-87). It is unclear if Sook Ying was referring to these incidents. In the aftermath of the 1965 coup, violence was directed towards pro-PRC schools, which were later closed down (Tan 1991: 117).

⁸⁷ Coppel (1983: 71-72) argues that replacing '*Tiongkok*' or '*Tinnghoa*' (*China* and *Chinese* in Hokkien) with '*Cina*' (*Tjina*) is a sign of swelling racial sentiment in the wake of anti-Chinese violence in 1965-66.

language (Murray 1964; Suryadinata 1972), spoke the Indonesian language as the *lingua franca*, sang the Indonesian national anthem, and evaluated their relationship with indigenous Indonesians more positively. For 37-year-old Susani Halim, being Chinese means recognising the historical legacy of the ethnic clash and seeing herself as a Chinese person *as well as* an Indonesian citizen brought up within this historical legacy. At interviews, younger interviewees were more uncomfortable to be asked about the use of *huanah*. Yenny Wong, a 29-year-old university graduate, clarified that it was a stress on the indigenesness rather than savageness. Adopting equivalent terms in Mandarin, they addressed indigenous Indonesians as ‘natives’ or ‘locals’ (*bendiren*, *dangdiren*), ‘aboriginals’ (*yuanzhumin*) or ‘mountain people’ (*shandiren*). Sixty-three-year-old Choi Sook Yin noted the impact of assimilation policies on her own family in the aspect of language. She spoke Hakka and Mandarin but no Indonesian, in spite of living there for decades. Having no access to Chinese language education, her children spoke Indonesian and Hakka, but her grandchildren no longer spoke Hakka but Indonesian. In her words, ‘Chinese have become *like that*.’ What she suggested is that a generational change saw that younger Indonesian Chinese can speak neither Mandarin nor the dialect but the Indonesian language. The younger generations identify with Indonesia and their Chinese-ness is more *hybrid* than the one of their parents⁸⁸ (Handoko 2009). The remaining difference, however, is ‘We eat pork and we look different: they are dark, we are pale’ (19/05/09, Taipei).

This generational change is well captured by Yenny’s childhood memories about her hybrid identity and her uncles’ diasporic emotions. At a badminton match between

⁸⁸ In recent years there is a revival of Chinese cultural identity but it is blended with commercial and tourism interests (Hoon 2009; Chan 2009).

Indonesian and PRC players, she cheered the Indonesian athletes but was scolded by her uncles, who asked ‘Which side are you with? Have you forgotten about your ancestors?’⁸⁹ As a young child, she was wondering ‘Am I not living in Indonesia? Why on earth should I support a *foreigner*?’ At interview, her recollection turned to question whether the PRC would embrace Indonesian Chinese, and if it would not, why Indonesian Chinese should self-identify as Chinese (*zhongguoren*). Her soul-searching landed on in-betweenness: ‘In fact, they (indigenous Indonesians) don’t entirely embrace us as Indonesians, either. It’s pathetic for *huaqiao* in Indonesia that [we are] *neither entirely Chinese nor Indonesian*’ (25/05/09, Kaohsiung). A badminton match not only juxtaposed her uncles’ diasporic sentiments with her hybrid identity, but also illuminated her involuntary in-betweenness

What is distinctive amongst older interviewees is their Chinese identity in the sense of aspiring *home-going* or seeking *belonging* to *us*-members, that is, the Chinese nation. After independence and the end of Chinese Civil War, indigenous Indonesians believed that most Chinese were apolitical or indifferent, and that Chinese people who had a strong Chinese identity were communist sympathisers (Coppel 1983: 58). In fact, Indonesian Chinese who still upheld their Chinese identity were divided by their loyalty towards the Communist PRC or the Nationalist ROC (Coppel 1983: 26; Mozingo 1976: 91; Wang Gungwu 2001: 63). The split *diasporic* loyalty of the Chinese community was partly reflected by the destinations of their return migration (Suryadinata 1972: 67) and this split might occur within family or kin members. Some chose to go to China (Godley 1989; Godley and Coppel 1990; Wang and Huang 2006), whereas others

⁸⁹ For 55-year-old Ng Siew Day, there was no split loyalty because the most successful Indonesian badminton players, such as Rudy Hartono and Susi Susanti, were Chinese. Hence supporting Indonesian players was not supporting the Indonesian state but these Chinese individuals.

stayed and later went to Taiwan (Yang and Lan 2006: 22)⁹⁰. For those who attended Taiwan-funded Chinese-language schools and identified with the ROC, the *imagined Homeland* was Taiwan, not the *Communist-occupied China*⁹¹. It is partly because the Communist ideology was thought of as being inferior to the *republican* ideals of the ROC, and the PRC was blamed for causing anti-Chinese resentment and violence because of its alleged support of the PKI (Indonesian Communist Party) military coup in 1965 (Mozingo 1976: 234-249; Kroef 1968).

In spite of the generational change, *huaqiao*, as a term of self-identification, is pivotal to their national identity. For older interviewees, the term was used to stress their *otherness* to Indonesia and a degree of diasporic sentiment. For younger interviewees, it was more referring to their Chinese *ancestry*, an element of their hybrid identity. *Huaqiao* is an expression of their in-betweenness in Indonesia as ethnic others. Throughout history, there are plenty of references made to highlight this situation. Before Indonesia gained its independence, a Chinese leader described Indonesian Chinese as being caught between the Indonesians and the Dutch and unable to choose either (Coppel 1983: 25). The mixed *Peranakan* community was characterised as being practicing a ‘distinctive set of cultural traits which were neither wholly Chinese nor wholly Indonesian’ (Mackie and Coppel 1976: 5). Their straddling of different cultural

⁹⁰ This happens to some interviewees. Ng Siew Day’s elder brother returned to China and has remained in Tianjin to this day. Lai Siu Moi’s uncle went back to China but her grandparents refused to move. Chew Siu Wai’s aunt went to China and lived there for 30 years. The aunt had a hard life and then moved to Hong Kong but is now settled in Macao. Chinese immigrant Granny Yang also mentioned her Indonesian Chinese colleagues in Wuhan. She recalled that during the Cultural Revolution they were unfortunately purged because in a political study meeting they made an unintentional but fatal mistake - instead of shouting ‘Down with Liu Shaoqi! Support Mao Zedong!’ they uttered ‘Down with Mao Zedong! Support Liu Shaoqi!’

⁹¹ In an oral history study, an Indonesian Chinese woman who migrated to Taiwan stated that she was ‘in tears’ whilst listening to ROC national anthem broadcasted from Taiwan at midnight in Indonesia. (Zhu 2008: 15, a similar account at Yang and Lan 2006: 22).

heritages is described as being ‘Sons of the Yellow Emperor’ *as well as* ‘children of Indonesian Soil’ (Li 2003). Indonesian Chinese who returned to China in the 1950s-60s but fled to Hong Kong after the Cultural Revolution are described as being between the Chinese and Indonesian identities (Godley and Coppel 1990: 194). The dual *rite of passage* of Indonesian Chinese women in Taiwan is the latest example of this in-between infusion and ambiguity.

With this in the background, I now turn to explore how their in-betweenness is gradually shaped. My exploration begins with how they are motivated to migrate to Taiwan.

7.2 Motivations for Marriage Migration

Their motivations can be grouped into three clusters: pursuing betterment, aspiring belonging, and desiring personal safety. These motivations have to be understood as a whole. However, in different contexts, a specific aspect of their self-understanding and relative socio-economic positioning is more prominent than others.

7.2.1 Pursuing Betterment

‘Parents over there are poor, they can’t make a living. Marrying off to Taiwan can help them out. My husband said to me, “Look after my sons, look after my parents, we’ll have a good family life”, and he’d buy a house for my parents. I did what my husband wished me to do. I worked hard at his scooter repair shop and managed to have some savings. I bought a house for my parents. If we work hard, we’ll earn money. Some husbands give you money, that’s better; if they don’t work and have no money, we’ll work and earn money on our own, that’s OK’ (Choi Kim Chai, 05/06/09, Penghu).

Choi Kim Chai spoke clearly of the expectation of betterment and the methods of realisation. That is, either by receiving handouts from husbands or by seeking

employment, and she herself combined both to achieve her goals. Kim Chai was once in the company of eight Taiwanese men from Penghu to Kalimantan for matchmaking. She thought women in her hometown did not enjoy the luxury of being picky ‘because we were poor’. The common criteria for a good husband were honesty, hard-working, in employment, no drinking, no gambling, and most importantly, no wife-beating. Most of them did not naïvely expect to marry a wealthy man, although this was undoubtedly welcomed.

Betterment was also pursued in its social meaning. For Jakarta-born widow Ng Siew Day, coming to Taiwan for her second marriage was partly to be able to care for her elderly mother. Her wages in Taiwan enabled her to pay for the costs whilst her elder sister in Jakarta was acting as the carer. Sumatra-born Chew Siu Wai worked in Jakarta for 18 years. At the age of 35, she gained financial independence but missed the chance to get married. Thus, betterment meant getting married at an older age and elevating her social standing. This seems to be a practice adopted by women who pass the prime marriage age. Medan-born Le Fen Fen remembered in the mid 1970s that her 30-year-old ‘spinster’ neighbour married a discharged Mainlander soldier in Taiwan.

In Taiwan, derived from immigrant women’s betterment expectation is the imposed image of being poor and un-educated. This is a persistent irritation for those who do not match the stereotype but are hijacked by this stigmatisation. Lai Sui Moi was brought up in a well-to-do family in Jakarta. She and her siblings were sent to the US, Australia and Singapore for higher education. When she was studying Chinese in Taiwan, she married a blacksmith in 1989 and has resided in Yilan ever since. Speaking from her socio-economic positioning in Jakarta, she argued that the stigmatisation was biased by the *fact* that most women from Indonesia (wives and workers) were from the outer rural provinces where the living standards were much lower than in the

metropolitan Jakarta. Inserting English words and phrases freely during the interview (conducted in Mandarin), Siu Moi mentioned that she used to tell people about her study in Sydney but ‘They didn’t even know where Sydney is!’ (30/05/09, Yilan).

Jakarta-based Ang Lip Fong not only had identical experiences of being socio-economically ‘misplaced’ but also being *institutionally* discriminated against. In 1993 she was hoping to visit her fiancé Shih Chang-li in Taiwan but her visa application was rejected. A solution suggested to her by the Taiwanese consular officer was to apply for the US visa first and with the granted US visa she would be issued with a tourist visa to enter Taiwan. Her husband Chang-li explained that the reason for rejection was to prevent Southeast Asian women from abusing the tourist visa to work in the sex industry in Taiwan⁹². However, this suspicion could be overwritten by a US visa because the women’s integrity would have been ‘endorsed’ by the US. In the eyes of Chang-li, this demonstrated that the Taiwanese government discriminated against Southeast Asian states but bowed to ‘advanced’ states. Lip Fong’s visit to the US gave her a comparative perspective for her life in the US and in Taiwan. In the US, she was treated equally; in Taiwan, she was regarded as ‘stupid’, in spite of the fact that she had a university degree, spoke English well and ‘owned a big house in Indonesia’. For Siu Moi and Lip Fong, negotiating the class-biased discrimination is a constant effort of their daily life.

7.2.2 Aspiring Belonging

‘We wanted to go back to China, that’s why we came to Taiwan’ (Chong Lian Fa, 29/01/10, Pingtung).

⁹² The policy of denying entry to single women from Southeast Asia began in 1984, according to Hsia, when the government became aware of the growing numbers of ‘foreign brides’ (Hsia 1997: 3).

The *nationalist* aspiration to belong is only found amongst Indonesian Chinese interviewees⁹³. Lian Fa's statement seemed perplexing at first glance but it makes sense if located in the context of the above-mentioned self-understanding of the Chinese in Indonesia. That is, derived from the diasporic sentiments, the ROC on Taiwan became the imagined *Homeland*.

'*Taiwan was the real China; the Chinese communists stole away our country*' was how Le Fen Fen phrased her sense of belonging to Taiwan. A native to Medan, Fen Fen was the fourth generation of a Cantonese family but spoke the Hokkien dialect⁹⁴. Fen Fen joked that her nationalistic sentiment towards the ROC was 'brainwashed' by her parents, who attended a university in Taiwan in the early 1960s. However, she saw her decision to seek tertiary education in Taiwan in 1983 as '*finally I was returning to my roots, my own country! Finally, I needn't put up with fear and terror of living with Indonesians anymore.*' The fear of living in Indonesia was caused by violent ethnic clashes and the threat of rape. First told by her mother and later informed by her friends who remained in Indonesia, she narrated the violent incidents in 1965 and 1994 as:

'In 1965 there was a terrible riot in Medan. My mother went out on her own when she was heavily pregnant. She was horrified by what she saw: a group of

⁹³ Although some Vietnamese Chinese interviewees were not hesitant to express their aversion towards ethnic Vietnamese, they did not see Taiwan as the *Homeland*.

⁹⁴ Fen Fen remembered that her grandmother had bound feet, hence her ancestors 'must have come to Indonesia as early as during the Qing Dynasty'. Her grandfather was a headmaster of a Chinese school and both her grandfather and mother were leading figures of the Chinese literary circle in North Sumatra. Her aunt went to a Chinese school but later received a scholarship for a university education in Holland. Her aunt remembered that all of her textbooks were shipped from Taiwan and every morning the students bowed to Sun Yat-sen's portrait. She remained in Holland after university education. Although never residing in Taiwan except for visiting Fen Fen, she considered Taiwan as one of her 'homes' in addition to Indonesia and Holland (08/04/10, Tuebingen). Fen Fen also received some years of Chinese-language education, but at her school the portrait of Sun Yat-sen had been replaced by the portrait of President Suharto.

huanah were marching down the street, and some of them were holding chopped heads of Chinese men! *No matter how well you treated your Indonesian servants, whenever there was a riot, they opened the door and let their people come in and killed their Chinese masters.* Then they hung the chopped head to show to the public. *There's no threat to one's life in Taiwan ...* In the early 1990s, there was an anti-Chinese riot in Medan. Chinese people were killed and Chinese women were raped by Indonesian men wearing military uniforms. I was in Taiwan but my friends in Medan sent photos of the horrible incidents to me' (30/01/10, Taipei).

Her sense of belonging was also a reaction to the institutional *othering* by the Indonesian government. '*Warga Negara Indonesia Keturunan Asing*' was marked on her identification documents. She protested that 'I was born in Indonesia, I had the nationality, so why would I be any different from other Indonesians who are also born here?'

Ang Lip Fong is one of the fourth generation since her ancestors first settled in Indonesia. Her identification with the ROC is also strong and it is a contributing factor to her marriage. Lip Fong condemned Communist China and spoke about her allegiance towards Taiwan:

'My father likes my husband because he's Chinese. My father knows Taiwan very well. He told me Taiwan is Formosa and he told me things about America ... Taiwan are Taiwan, Mainland is Mainland, I didn't like the Mainland before and I still don't like it now. This is because of my childhood memories. The Mainland is the source of our suffering in Indonesia. During the presidential election campaign, it was dangerous to walk on the street because

they (Indonesians) didn't like the Mainland. But they didn't know Taiwan was different from the Mainland. Taiwan is a *republic*; the Mainland is *Communist*. Communism is bad, this is what my family told me' (29/01/10, Pingtung).

The strong home-going aspiration strengthened by political beliefs has weakened amongst younger interviewees. Instead of being kept as a personal attachment and *belief*, it now feels more like a family legend and tends to be held in the background. This is how 28-year-old Liew Siu Lian associated herself with her Chinese ancestry. She recalled a conversation with her father when she was 15: '*My father told me Indonesia isn't our country. He said he and his family fled from China and we ought to return to China or Taiwan, that's our own country. I don't know, this is what he said*' (05/06/09, Penghu). Although not sure about her father's statement at that time, three years later she did migrate to Taiwan for marriage. As the plane she was on approached the airport in Taiwan, she looked out of the window and had her first glimpse of the island. At that moment, she was caught by an unfamiliar surge of emotions and thought '*This is really the country for us Chinese!*' On the spur of moment, the oral family legend was activated as real sentiments and the physical contact with the imagined *Homeland* transformed a *dormant consciousness* into an *awakened identity*. On the other hand, her narratives show that for her generation, the distinction between China and Taiwan was not so clear-cut anymore (Suryadinata 1997: 14; Simon 1998: 65-82⁹⁵).

7.2.3 Desiring Safety

⁹⁵ Suryadinata argues that after the Chinese economic reforms and the end of the Cold War, the Taiwan-China ideological distinction was 'no longer serious'. This seems evident in Simon's study of Indonesian Chinese students who sought out tertiary education in Taiwan in the late 1980s. They chose to study in Taiwan for practical concerns, such as the unavailability of tertiary education in Indonesia and using a Taiwanese degree to apply for universities in the US, rather than based on nationalistic sentiment.

'Even if our entire family was killed, at least there'd be a daughter surviving in Taiwan' (Hoh Kim Siew, 05/06/09, Penghu).

For younger interviewees the catalyst for taking action to migrate was the anti-Chinese riot that erupted in May 1998. Interviewees aged between their 20s and 40s were mostly exempt for large-scale social unrest because of their age or place of residence (for post-1965 coup riots, see Kroef 1968). Thus the May 1998 riot was cognately internalised as a *personal* experience, even though some of them did not live close to where the riots erupted⁹⁶. The riot in Jakarta was characterised by the rape of Chinese women and it reinforced the perception that Indonesia was not a safe place, particularly for Chinese women. The horror of riot and the terror of rape are encapsulated by the dramatised narration of Pontianak-born Hoh Kim Siew:

'The anti-Chinese riot is also a reason for my marriage to Taiwan. At that time my dad thought even if our entire family was killed, at least there'd be a daughter surviving in Taiwan. The riot was really horrifying. We lived in the city so it was OK, but it was very bad in the countryside. In the countryside they targeted women, they took women to...' (05/06/09, Penghu).

Realising that her young daughter was also listening, Kim Siew stopped speaking at that point.

The threat to personal safety was so real that Susani Halim's mother, who ran a private Chinese-language tutoring business, was convinced that migration to Taiwan

⁹⁶ Before March 1998, attack and violence against Chinese people occurred in East Java, Flores Island, West Java, and South Sulawesi. On 7th May after Suharto was elected as president, anti-Chinese riots erupted in Medan and North Sumatra and lasted three days. Afterwards, anti-Chinese riots were recorded in South Sulawesi, Java, East Java, Central Java, Aceh, and Sumatra. Indonesian police recorded at least 69 riots between May and August and stated that one-third of the riots were triggered by ethnic issues (Minorities at Risk Project 2004).

was the way to assure her daughter's safety (see Chen Mei-ying 2010: 9 for a similar account). Thirty-seven-year-old university graduate Susani was brought up in a well-off family in Jakarta. She spoke no dialect but the Indonesian language and articulated her hybrid identity as '*We think we are Indonesian except we don't look like them, but they don't accept us as Indonesian*' (22/05/09, Keelung). Although the younger generations have a stronger subjective Indonesian identity, their Chinese blood and appearance still made them a target for ethnic attacks (Purdey 2006; Siegel 1998: 83-91 on Chinese in the riot and pp.91-102 on rape). For Ng Siew Day, migrating to Taiwan is to avail herself and her adult children of a safe haven in case of riot: '*I wanted stability and that's why I married a Taiwanese man. If social unrest breaks out in Indonesia, my children can take refuge in Taiwan and return to Indonesia after it's over. It's better in Taiwan because there's no differentiation of Cina and huanah*'⁹⁷ (28/05/09, Taipei).

For 34-year-old high school graduate Tan Mee Leh, the threat of rape was felt to the extent that it invoked her home-going aspiration:

'Haven't you heard about the riot of 1998? *Mountain People* killed us Chinese! We were frightened we'd be killed by them! What a poor university girl – after she was raped by Indonesians, they did all kinds of horrible things to her. Americans have publicised about it (US State Department 1999)... China said if we were to be bullied by Indonesians again, they'd dispatch boats to Indonesia and take us away'⁹⁸. *Our mothers were all very happy*, none of them would want

⁹⁷ Siew Day first went to Taiwan as a contract worker but later became an undocumented worker. In May 1998 she read about the riot in the newspaper. Her younger son told her on the phone 'Don't come back to Indonesia. If you saw what's happening, you wouldn't cope with it' (28/05/09, Taipei).

⁹⁸ Mee Leh's narration may be a circulated rumour as officially the PRC government made no statements in the nature of evacuation. On the contrary, initially the official tone was cautious and the victims were noted as 'members of the Indonesian family'. However, this careful position was heavily criticised within

to stay behind, but we didn't know if they meant it ... We didn't really know whether in the end they came or not. Perhaps they were just bluffing and were not sincere. This sort of thing happened twice⁹⁹. We Chinese should be courageous and *take all of our brothers and sisters back home* – there shan't be a third time (third anti-Chinese riot)' (04/05/09, Taipei).

Although not a Christian, Mee Leh's aspiration of 'taking our brothers and sisters back home' is strikingly similar to the mission of Moses in leading the Jews out of Egypt to the Promised Land. The hope of China's evacuation engraves the paternal image of the Chinese *State* in Mee Leh's imagination.

The above discussion shows that the *fear of rape* is given the most prominence in interviewees' narratives. The fact that it is an accusation mentioned in different periods of time and places indicates that the collective trauma is preserved in the personal consciousness. Thus, their migration is a refuge to be free from fear of attack on their virginity, dignity and Chinese personhood. In this sense, migrating to Taiwan is to go to a safe haven. Pursuing betterment, aspiring belonging and desiring safety, they migrated to Taiwan. How would they perceive themselves in relation to Taiwan? This is what the following sections attempt to answer.

7.3 The Impact and Perception of Citizenship Legislation

China and later the PRC government called for punishing perpetrators and protecting Indonesian Chinese. The issue of protecting Indonesian Chinese was raised repeatedly, including in the meeting between the visiting President Jiang Zemin and President Habibie in November 1998, in which the issue was held by the PRC as one relating to the 'long term stability of Indonesia' (Purdey: 165-166).

⁹⁹ The PRC government conducted four operations in 1960, 1961 and 1966, and evacuated 4,251 persons back to China (Kroef 1968: 32; FitzGerald 1973: 42; Huang 2005: 51-52; 428-429) (However, on Huang 2005: 428, the number is given as 4,215).

As discussed in Chapter 3, the citizenship legislation regarding Overseas Chinese has significantly changed in the wake of Taiwan's democratisation since the early 1990s. It has a profound impact on Overseas Chinese and ROC nationals who are born abroad for their rights to reside in Taiwan (CY 2010). Before 1991, legally known as *Nationals Sojourning Abroad*, Overseas Chinese were imagined as an *absent but internal* population and their requests for citizenship were accommodated. From 1991 onwards, they are regarded as an *absent and external* population with no territorial link (household registration) with Taiwan. If they can prove they are endowed with ROC nationality, their legal status is redefined as *Nationals without Household Registration*, and their request for citizenship will not be granted unless they are sponsored by family members or have made a recognised contribution to the national economy. This reform not only redefines the legal status of the Overseas Chinese but also consolidates the legal boundary of the Taiwanese category. By emphasising the territorial link with Taiwan, it asserts Taiwan's separation from, and independence of, the PRC. It also encourages a civic identity towards Taiwan, in addition to the ethnic identity derived from birth.

Located in this legal evolution, amongst 20 interviewees there is only Le Fen Fen who had proven she inherited ROC nationality from her father. All the others did not have ROC nationality and as such were treated as foreign nationals. Their citizenship application was separately regulated by *the Nationality Act* and *the Immigration Act*. Pursuant to these laws, before 2000, foreign wives were automatically awarded ROC nationality. After 2000, foreign spouses (husbands and wives) applied for it by naturalisation. Thus, for those who entered Taiwan before 2000, they acquired citizenship straightaway and with citizenship they encountered less difficulty in finding jobs. For those who entered Taiwan after 2000, however, as foreigners, the impact of

the more stringent citizenship legislation was identical with the one of Vietnamese and Filipino immigrants, including the legal restriction on employment. Being treated as foreigners gave latecomer Tan Mee Leh an ethnic context to invigorate her Chinese identity and with which she advocated that the legislation should show favouritism towards Overseas Chinese. Thus, I will use Le Fen Fen and Tan Mee Leh as two opposite cases to highlight how the citizenship legislation affects their identification with Taiwan.

7.3.1 Le Fen Fen: Embraced by the Imagined Homeland

Le Fen Fen was determined to leave Indonesia for her *own* country, the real China in Taiwan. As mentioned above, it was motivated by the aspiration of belonging and safety. It was also out of her pursuit for self-fulfilment as she had no interest in trade and business, a key area of employment for many Indonesian Chinese. The plan to realise her goals in Taiwan was plausible because she proved she inherited her father's ROC nationality:

‘Back then (in 1983) it was really easy. I showed them (the Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission, OCAC) my birth certificate and other documents and they believed me. How could they tell I was Chinese not Indonesian? Perhaps they knew we looked different. We are paler’ (30/01/10, Taipei).

Fen Fen's narratives highlight the perception of *reciprocity*. That is, her aspiration to belong was embraced by the government, which granted her educational opportunities. The lax attitude was understood as welcoming and inclusive to *home* Overseas Chinese *returnees*. This perception was further accredited to the fact that her husband – an Overseas Chinese returnee from South Korea – was awarded citizenship straightaway because his China-born parents retained their ROC nationality. Being

accepted as a *returned national*, Fen Fen enrolled at a university in central Taiwan, but after graduation her continuous stay in Taiwan was challenged by the regulations which required her to be either sponsored by an employer or be endorsed by a family member. Her marriage critically overcame this hurdle and her husband endorsed her residency in Taiwan. Later she applied for, and acquired citizenship.

After graduation, Fen Fen embarked on a successful career in the electronics industry. She travelled extensively for business on her ROC passport, which showed her birthplace as Indonesia. When she was mistaken abroad as being from *Mainland China*, she clarified that she was Taiwanese born in Indonesia. She recalled her 28 years living in Taiwan with contentment. The inclusive legislation conveyed a positive message that her return was embraced and her interests were cared for. Returning to the imagined *Homeland*, she was free from terror and scarcity. With education she had wider options for pursuing her career. In her flat overlooking the river, sipping cumquat tea served by her indigenous Indonesian maid, she vocally confirmed that she identified with Taiwan for its free democracy, economic prosperity, social mobility, personal safety and meritocracy in the job market. Taiwan as the Republic of China lives up to her expectations as a place for Chinese, of Chinese and by Chinese.

7.3.2 Tan Mee Leh: Appealing to the Parent State

Teowchew-speaking Tan Mee Leh was married in Jakarta in the mid 1990s but did not move to Taiwan until 2006. This is because her husband was discouraged by the May 1998 riots and stopped shuttling between Taiwan and Indonesia. Without proving her inheritance of ROC nationality from her father, Mee Leh's residency, employment and citizenship was regulated by the post-2000 legislation. She needed to work because her Hakka in-laws were not keen to share family resources with her, but without citizenship

she encountered difficulties in finding non-manual jobs. She wished to apply for citizenship but was then confronted with the requirement to prove her Chinese language ability. She enrolled at a language course, but found it often clashed with her work. She was so frustrated that she felt deserted by the Earth Deity she worshipped.

On the surface, Mee Leh's criticisms of the citizenship legislation were identical to those of the Vietnamese and Filipinos. However, the core of her criticisms was constructed around her Chinese identity:

'I'm an Indonesian huaqiao, not Indonesian (yinniren). Everyone in my family says we're Chinese. There's never been a moment we said we're Indonesian. In the past, China and Taiwan were having a war (the Civil War between the Communists and the Nationalists) so some people went to Indonesia from Taiwan. My granddad went to Indonesia after 1949 so we ended up there. So, in fact, my family is Taiwanese! Huaqiao are Chinese nationals (zhongguoren). The government should divide [those from Indonesia] into huaqiao and Mountain People, and give huaqiao special treatment. After all, we're people of the same country! We are Taiwanese originally. Now we're back to our own country and we should be embraced! ... If one leaves one's country in the past but now returns from abroad, this person should be embraced as a family member coming home... We're Taiwanese, we should get special treatment from the government. We're all Chinese and finally we come home – the home of our fathers. We're children [of the country] by birth not by adoption! We're coming home like brothers and sisters. We're happy to come home. We should be embraced so we'd be confident, feeling secure, and really happy... But we're not recognised. The government didn't welcome us to come home. We're not given special privileges when applying for citizenship. The government is

making it so complicated for us (financial and language requirements)! We're really disappointed. We have such a difficult life over there [in Indonesia], and now we're not recognised by *you Taiwanese*, this is even *more painful!* ... Although I don't have the ID Card, *I see myself as Taiwanese*. Taiwan is my own country; it is the safest and most comfortable place' (04/05/09, Taipei).

Perceiving the legislation as unfavourable, Mee Leh legitimised her request for privileges by resorting to her Chinese ancestry. The relationship between the state and individuals was depicted as a parent-children metaphor. In that metaphor, she asserted her right *by birth* to be recognised as a member of the national community. Although both Fen Fen and Mee Leh showed a diasporic identity, there is a difference between their perceptions. Fen Fen saw Taiwan as the China (ROC) worthy of returning, whereas for Mee Leh it did not make a difference whether this community was considered as Chinese or Taiwanese - the people of Taiwan were also from China, and hence they are also Chinese. In tandem with the previously quoted '*taking all of our brothers and sisters back home*', she charged the Taiwanese government with a moral obligation to *home* and comfort the returned children. Strongly believing in her Chinese ancestry but unaware of the legal requirements (proving inheritance of ROC nationality), Mee Leh was frustrated that her subjective consciousness was not reciprocated by the parent state. It was only when she was disappointed by this lack of active willingness that she placed Taiwan as being opposite to her and her imagined siblings. Thus, the perceived *desertion* by the Taiwanese government was 'more painful' than being suppressed by the ethnic *others* - indigenous Indonesians and the Indonesian government – in Indonesia.

7.3.3 Others: Entering Taiwan as Foreigners and Making Taiwan Home

Contrary to Le Fen Fen and Tan Mee Leh, the majority of interviewees did not enact their Chinese ancestry in their interaction with the legislation. As foreigners, for those who entered Taiwan before 2000, their application for citizenship was nearly trouble-free as there were no prerequisites except renouncing Indonesian nationality. For those who entered Taiwan after 2000, their application for citizenship was by naturalisation and they had to cross the gates of entry interview, residency and naturalisation to acquire citizenship. Thus, they had identical experiences with those of Filipino and Vietnamese interviewees, including their conception of renunciation of Indonesian nationality. That is, it is understood in the context of marriage commitments to their husbands in the form of *patrilocality*. In their perception, nationality is *also* a private matter between husband and wife, and between mother and children. Taking up ROC nationality is to honour their marriage commitment and fulfil their motherhood duty. As Susani explained:

‘Lots of people asked why I gave up my Indonesian nationality. Why did I need dual nationality? I live here now, of course I’ll see here as my priority. I’m still Indonesian. Without Indonesian nationality [it] doesn’t mean I’m not Indonesian, but now I see my family in Taiwan as the priority’ (22/03/09, Keelung).

Susani’s conception paves a *gendered* path for identifying with Taiwan. For her, nationality was conflated to being a home-bound caring duty. Unlike Le Fen Fen seeing Taiwan as the Homeland, Susani and other mother-citizens *make Taiwan their home*. It lays the foundation for the motherhood-orientated conceptualisation of citizenship (Lister 2002: 197).

Crossing the gate of citizenship illuminates another path for identification. On the part of the state, awarding citizenship means rendering formal inclusion and acceptance.

On the part of the immigrant-turned citizen, being granted citizenship means being recognised as an equal member of the national community. Some interviewees viewed citizenship mainly in the instrumental light that it made job hunting easier. However, others went further and saw the nominal equality as the legal guarantee of their membership. This is the perception as well as the sentiment uttered by Ng Siew Day: ‘With citizenship, one is a real and *complete* Taiwanese!’ (28/03/09, Taipei).

A channel for exercising citizenship is voting. Voting is perceived as performing a citizen’s duty, expressing one’s opinions about public affairs and ensuring the sound governance for the well-being of the general public and their children. Their conceptions are expressed as follows:

‘Voting is what a Taiwanese should do. We live in Taiwan so we should go to vote. I vote in Indonesia, too. It feels the same. Both are what we should do’ (Choi Kim Chai, 05/06/09, Penghu).

‘I go to vote because this is *my* vote. I’m a local person, I’m a daughter-in-law of Taiwan’ (Chong Lian Fa, 29/01/10, Pingtung).

‘With citizenship I can vote. It’s not [a matter of] whether [or not] I like it. It’s because we’ve been here for a long time. *We have family here*. We hope to have a better government’ (Chew Siew Wai, 27/01/10, Pingtung).

‘I go to vote because I want to elect a capable president. *I want to see Taiwan getting better because my children are here*. We want to give our children a better life. This is the hope shared by mothers *around the world*’ (Ang Lip Fong, 29/01/10, Pingtung).

These conceptions illuminate that citizenship facilitates a channel to participate in the public forum and becomes a part of the collective decision-making process for public affairs. This is how *republican* citizenship is conducive for identification. Exercising citizenship induces the senses of belonging, responsibility for the well-being of the national community, and entitlement to fairness and equality. What is equally noteworthy is the centrality of motherhood in Lip Fong's conception. It suggests that citizenship in its republican sense can *also* be enacted as a motherhood-oriented participation in the public forum. Thus, being a mother-citizen is a way to identify with Taiwan.

Before I move onto discussing the impact of Chinese language ability, I shall discuss how Indonesian Chinese perceive the Taiwan-China relationship and the internal divisions within the Taiwanese category. Their self-identification as Chinese is given by birth as well as cultivated by their parents. It is also strengthened by the differentiation of the Indonesian state. Thus, the ethnocentric bloodline principle is applied to perceive both Taiwan and China as Chinese countries. Whilst their Chinese identity has changed from diasporic to hybrid in the past decades, the political difference between Taiwan and China (democratic versus communist) did not register in the minds of the younger generations as it once did amongst older generations. Also distant was the competition between both sides for being the sole representative of China (Suryadinata 1997: 14; Simon 1998: 65-82). Instead, a recognised difference is that Taiwan is economically advanced. Thus, it is Taiwan rather than China that is sought as the destination for their labour or marriage migration. The tested relationship between Taiwan and China and the issue of Taiwan's statehood is seen as remote from their concerns in daily life. They did not subjectively engage in these debates, but their lived experience as citizens of Taiwan is a testimony as to how Taiwan perceives itself

now: the ROC on Taiwan. This is parallel to their ethnocentric belief that people of Taiwan, except Indigenous Peoples, are Chinese.

Regarding the internal division of the Taiwanese category, the same bloodline principle is applied. In their minds, there should be no division within the Taiwanese category. Mainlanders (*waishengren*), Taiwanese-speaking Hoklo and Hakka are all Chinese. This is a belief compounded by their experiences in Indonesia. That is, although there are Hokkien, Hakka, Cantonese, Teowchew and other dialect groups marked by their different ancestral origins, varied cultural practices, and specified socio-economic position, the inter-group differences do not divide them into *ethnic* groups¹⁰⁰. They are all Chinese as opposed to indigenous Indonesians. Thus, the fact that people of Taiwan are not institutionally differentiated by the state is particularly appreciated as it is a contrast to their treatment as ethnic others in Indonesia. This contributes to their conception that Taiwan is for Chinese and by Chinese. In the same light, the divide between Mainlanders and native Taiwanese (*benshengren*) is comprehensible, but unnecessary, as in conception they are of ‘one people, one culture’. As for the Indigenous Peoples of Taiwan, Indonesian Chinese interviewees recognised Indigenous Peoples of Taiwan as native. But this does not challenge their conception that Taiwan is a country of Chinese, for Chinese and by Chinese.

Thus, their lived experiences seem to partially correspond to the New Taiwanese Consciousness promoted by the *Understanding Taiwan* textbook. Their lived experience is evidence of Taiwan’s self-identity as an independent state and a

¹⁰⁰In fact, at a specific locality the minority group speaking the dialect of the majority is common. For example, in Medan, Cantonese speakers like Le Fen Fen speak Hokkien as the *lingua franca*, and in Pontianak, where there are Teowchew-Hakka mixed marriages, it is common to speak both dialects.

prosperous country. However, their hybrid Chinese-Indonesian identity means that they also carry Indonesian cultural heritage. Therefore, there are other dimensions where their interactions with the Taiwanese category are affected by this hybridity. The issue of acquiring Chinese language ability and fulfilling motherhood duties are to be found amongst these dimensions.

7.4 Facility of Chinese Languages

Mandarin speaking is an ethnic *marker* as well as *maker* within the Indonesian Chinese community. After the Chinese Republican revolution aroused nationalist sentiments in the overseas communities, the Chinese language ability was stressed by the successive governments as instrumental to *sinocisation* (thus funding to support Chinese-language schools were authorised). It was also prevalent amongst Indonesian Chinese that speaking Mandarin, the *National Language*, and reading Chinese, was regarded as observing the cultural inheritance and authenticating their subjective Chinese identity. However, after the Chinese language was forcefully banned, the ability was largely lost in Indonesia. It is a given fact and a defining feature of their *hybrid* Chinese-ness. They are less pressured to *vocally express* their Chinese identity. Le Fen Fen acknowledged that most of her Indonesian Chinese friends who studied in Taiwan started at a low level of Chinese proficiency. For the younger interviewees born in the 1970s and 1980s, the Chinese language has become distant to their daily living. Eighty percent of the interviewees (aged between 22 and 52) neither spoke nor read Chinese before they came to Taiwan.

Thus, with the language barrier, Taiwan as being a Mandarin-speaking country is foreign to Indonesian Chinese inasmuch as it is to Filipino and Vietnamese immigrants. In the eyes of the government, Indonesian Chinese are indeed as *foreign* as Filipino and

Vietnamese immigrants. Projecting them as mothers of the future citizens, the government sees their *inferior foreignness* as a challenge to nation-building and a hindrance to international competitiveness. A way to reduce their foreignness for the cohesion and competitiveness of the national community is to raise their Chinese language proficiency. Being the second largest group of immigrants, Indonesian Chinese are a critical target for the integration scheme.

As being linguistically foreign, Indonesian Chinese face the same challenges as the Filipinos and Vietnamese. Being able to speak a dialect (Hokkien, Teowchew, Hakka) that is more or less intelligible with the Taiwanese dialect and Hakka eases the initial difficulties¹⁰¹. Nevertheless, in the long run, it remains essential to be able to speak, read and write Chinese. I will now analyse how they interpret their linguistic experiences and how this contributes to their identification with Taiwan.

7.4.1 Authenticating Chinese-ness

As discussed above, having a facility in the Chinese language is a *marker* and *maker* of the ethnic boundary in Indonesia and Taiwan. For Choi Sook Yin and Tan Mee Leh, learning Chinese is to cross the boundary and re-affirm their Chinese identity¹⁰². Sook Yin spoke Mandarin before she migrated to Taiwan, but she could not read. When asked why she attended language classes for eight years, she explained straightaway:

‘Because I couldn’t read! In Indonesia there was a school well-known for teaching the Chinese language. Unfortunately it was discovered by the

¹⁰¹ Historically, the intelligibility between Hokkien/Teowchew and the Taiwanese dialect facilitated the oolong tea trade network between Taiwanese and Overseas Chinese merchants in Southeast Asia in the early 20th century (Lin 2001: 991).

¹⁰² This is also how Vietnamese Chinese interviewee Lru Mai Lan perceived her acquirement of a Chinese language ability.

government and closed down, so I couldn't go. I wanted to learn Chinese so I asked around where I could go [in Taipei]. Now I know how to use the phonetics system and look things up in the dictionary. I speak Hakka to my husband at home. If we spoke Mandarin, I'd speak better' (19/05/09, Taipei).

For Sook Yin, the provision of Chinese language courses made up for the lost opportunity to learn the language, and enabled her to regain the lost element of Chinese-ness. Acquiring the ability was to authenticate her Chinese-ness so that she was able to *vocally express* her Chinese identity. As Taiwan is conceived as being a place for Chinese, of Chinese and by Chinese, and that Mandarin-speaking is indispensable in daily life in Taiwan, the effort to gain the linguistic ability is to then subjectively identify with Taiwan. As for her concern about whether she could speak 'better', it is an issue of accent which I will attend to in the later part of this section.

Similarly, Tan Mee Leh also stressed the significance of acquiring Chinese language ability for asserting her Chinese identity. As the linguistic facility is required for citizenship eligibility, her narrative has to be also understood in the context of her arguing for special privileges for Overseas Chinese for citizenship eligibility. Because she evoked her Chinese identity to demand special treatment, she felt there was a need to defend her deficiency of this critical element of Chinese-ness:

'I speak Teowchew at home in Indonesia. I couldn't speak Mandarin before I came to Taiwan. The Indonesian government banned Chinese-language school. I went to Indonesian-language [state] school. My dad speaks Mandarin really well, but this wasn't passed down to us. We're born and bred there (in Indonesia); *we're educated there so we're changed* (unable to speak Mandarin) ... I'm now standing on the soil of Taiwan, I must learn. Every day I face so much difficulty

but I can't express my thoughts. I can't speak properly, so people laugh at me. I feel *powerless*. I feel I'm crawling on the ground. I've been crawling for too long' (04/05/09, Taipei).

Thanks to her Mandarin fluency, at the time of interview her job was interpreting for placement agencies between Indonesian workers and local employers. This is a significant step forward from her *muted* and *under-treated* past, which is characterised by undertaking a series of manual jobs, including sweeping the street and working at a farm, construction sites, a massage parlour, factories, and a snack stall.

Mee Leh's linguistic experiences highlight the critical role language plays in the identification with Taiwan. Her strong willingness to learn Mandarin is a vocal expression of her *home-going* aspiration. On the other hand, Mandarin is imposed on her as the medium of conveying her very existence as a human being. Constrained by the unfamiliar medium, her dignity is implicated because it restricts the range of employment available to a non-Mandarin speaker. Thus, for Mee Leh, the Chinese language is not just a subjective and objective cultural element to prove or substantiate her identity, it is also pivotal for her betterment, self-esteem and identification with Taiwan.

7.4.2 Improving Employment, Assisting with Motherhood Duties

In contrast to Sook Yin and Mee Leh, who saw acquiring Chinese language ability as the affirmation of their Chinese identity, most interviewees born after the 1970s viewed it in the light of communication, employment and motherhood responsibilities. In this sense, they had identical experiences with Filipino and Vietnamese immigrants.

Wong Poh Min is a case in point here. Born in Kalimantan in 1980 to Teowchew and Hakka parents, Poh Min spoke both dialects in addition to the Indonesian language

and had a secondary level education. Her Chinese descent and dialect speaking was not sufficient to reduce her foreignness and her mother-in-law asked her to go to a Chinese language class before coming to Taiwan. When Poh Min's first child started going to school, she went to school, too, as her mother-in-law requested, and completed the primary school curriculum within three years. Her mother-in-law's request was not for their communication. The mutual intelligibility of Teowchew and the Taiwanese dialect allowed them to communicate. Her mother-in-law's predominant concern was about her grandchildren's education. With the linguistic ability, Poh Min supervised her children's homework and signed their school logbooks. Since the logbooks were for communication between parents and teachers, checking and signing the logbook was publicly demonstrating her ability to fulfil the motherhood duty. This created a sense of fulfilment.

Beyond the private family domain, Poh Min also saw the positive effects in employment and a sense of gaining independence. Poh Min recalled the occasion when she sat down in a restaurant and was given a menu. She twice asked the waitress to tell her what was offered on the menu, but her request was met with a cold reception: 'If you are *illiterate*, go to school and learn the language!' The waitress's comment reflected a widely held presumption that having an inability in the Chinese language was equated with being *illiterate* and *un-educated*. Poh Min worked as a receptionist at a hotel that required reading comprehension. Without it, she could not escape manual jobs such as washing dishes and cleaning, nor could she make her way around, make use of public transport or travel independently. Most of all, as commented by Tan Mee Leh, being able to express herself in Mandarin enabled Poh Min to be positively received as a person of civility and good manners. The facility in the Chinese language freed her from reliance on others and allowed her to independently engage with the host

society. Betterment in the sense of improved self-esteem and socio-economic standing (because of employment) is thus achieved.

Ng Siew Day's work experiences showcase the positive contribution of the linguistic ability to employment and the sense of achievement. In 1997 Siew Day came to Taiwan for contract work after quitting her previous secretarial job at a garment factory 'owned by a *huaqiao*' in Jakarta. Without being told about the terms and conditions of her contract, she was appalled by the considerably reduced wages and the harsh working conditions at the porcelain factory she was unknowingly assigned to. Equipped with the rare ability of Chinese reading comprehension¹⁰³, she was encouraged by her workmates to *run away*. In the following three years as an undocumented worker, she worked as a nanny, as a cleaner and as a caregiver until she was finally apprehended by the police. She stressed that because she was a *huaqiao*, the police treated her well, and praised her for 'taking good care of Taiwanese people'. After returning to Jakarta, she worked for recruitment agencies to teach contract workers Mandarin and train them in caregiving. In 2003, when a diplomatic dispute between Taiwan and Indonesia resulted in a temporary ban on importing Indonesian workers, she gave Mandarin tutoring lessons to '*huaqiao* children'. After overcoming the visa complications caused by her runaway record, she returned to Taiwan for her second marriage. After receiving professional training, she was proud to be a licensed caregiver. To look back, she was content that the language ability was her indispensable resource to solve employment difficulties (ditching her contract and becoming an

¹⁰³ Siew Day's father came from Fuzhou and 'forbad' her to go to Indonesian-language school. In fact, being a stateless person, she was not allowed to attend state school. She did not acquire Indonesian citizenship until she married her first husband, who had acquired citizenship.

undocumented worker) and to broaden the horizons of her employment in Indonesia and in Taiwan.

7.4.3 Enabling Civic Participation

For interviewees who actively engage in paid employment outside of the home, the most obvious positive effect of obtaining a facility in using the Chinese language is personal betterment and expanded social contacts within and outside of the workplace. Language becomes a bridge to the public domain. For Susani Halim, a devout Christian, the linguistic ability connects her with the public domain through community participation and empowers her to serve a wider community.

Susani's husband Chiang Yi-cheng was not convinced that she could handle the challenges as a non-Mandarin speaker, in spite of Susani's university education and work experience in Jakarta. To protect Susani from being tricked by unsavoury elements, he 'did not allow' her to leave home on her own. Without a job, Susani became a home-bound full-time mother. Susani did go out, though, to attend language courses and with growing proficiency in Chinese she could better comprehend church services. Honouring his promise to Susani's Christian father, Yi-cheng went to church with Susani, but they were under self-imposed segregation because of their low confidence¹⁰⁴. When their marriage deteriorated, Susani's father paid a visit from Jakarta and asked their pastor to give them counselling. Not until Susani suggested letting their only son play outside of the flat was she permitted to spend an hour every afternoon in the courtyard. There she met mothers from Thailand and Indonesia whom she gradually invited to their flat for language tuition delivered by the pastor. Described

¹⁰⁴ Their pastor acknowledged that it was also caused by exclusion as local worshippers were reluctant to be mingled with immigrant women.

by themselves and the pastor as ‘coming out’, opening their home to other immigrant mothers transformed their marriage counselling to a platform for community participation.

Encouraged and assisted by the pastor, their ‘coming-out’ was further institutionalised and became a community centre. Affiliated with the church and receiving public funding, it provides assistance to immigrant women and their mixed family. Susani later received professional training and became a government-contracted interpreter. Having Susani as the director working with other immigrant women, the service centre is a collective utilisation of their linguistic ability. The *voluntary civic participation* of Susani and other immigrant women expands their private motherly duty performed for their own family to other families who also accommodate residents of foreign nationalities. Like her Vietnamese Chinese counterparts Hoàng Minh Suong and Ngô Xuân Phuong, who are also interpreters for the government, the language ability broadens Susani’s social contacts beyond the community level and connects her with law enforcement agencies, the local government, magistrate and high courts. This gives Susani a perspective as an *interface* between locals and foreigners. Susani, in her own way, transforms the home-bound caring duty to a motherhood-orientated exercise of citizenship (Lister 2002: 197).

7.4.4 Contestation of Identification

Speaking Mandarin using the local mannerisms and accent is a way to be included by the host society. This is partly how Kalimantan-born Hoh Foong Lian felt that she was *accepted* as Taiwanese. Born in 1971, Foong Lian attended Indonesian state school without access to a Chinese language education. Foong Lian spoke Hakka at home and Indonesian outside of home. After finishing high school, she came to Taiwan as a

factory worker in northern Taiwan where she learnt to speak Mandarin. After getting married and moving to southern Taiwan, she learnt to speak the Taiwanese dialect because her parents-in-law could not communicate in Mandarin. Being bilingual without a foreign accent makes her well blended into the local community and avoids her being stigmatised as a foreign bride.

As seen from the experiences of Chinese immigrants, the sensitivity of local people to a foreign accent is a contestation of the immigrants' subjective identification. Accent is an ethnic boundary marker in the sense that it demarcates and attaches disrespect to people who speak with foreign (thus *funny*) accents. Susani had personal experiences in this regard. Because of her Mandarin accent, at her service centre, inquirers often turned to her local friends until they were told that Susani was in charge of the centre. Susani used this as an example to raise the point of *reflectivity*, *reciprocity* and *contestation* of identification. That is, her subjective self-understanding is insufficient to stabilise her identification with Taiwan when the boundary between her and locals is still erected and maintained by the latter. For Choi Sook Yin, however, the boundary may be crossed by assuming a sub-identity. Similar to Chinese immigrants assuming Mainlander (*waishengren*) identity, as a fluent Hakka speaker, she claimed to be a Hakka person to normalise her Mandarin accent. This enables her to reduce the contestation of her subjective identification and to find inroads to enter the shielded national community.

In summary, the acquirement of Chinese language ability is a visible change taking place as part of the *rite of passage*. It is a contributing factor for identifying with Taiwan. The language ability *restores* their diasporic Chinese-ness to authenticity. Speaking Mandarin increases the subjective identification with Mandarin-speaking Taiwan. The linguistic ability also ensures better employment, leading to the realisation of betterment in terms of a higher socio-economic standing. Betterment may also be

achieved after it raises their self-esteem and empowers them to perceive themselves as being civilised members accepted by the host society. It may also lead to civic participation as a way of exercising citizenship in the public domain. As a mother, the linguistic ability allows them to fulfil their motherhood duty, which is expected by their mother-in-laws as well as the state. The expectations of both the state and the mother-in-laws converge at the junction that they see immigrant mothers as instrumental for cultural transmission and they hold their performance accountable for national cohesion and competitiveness. Nevertheless, their subjective identification is contested by the sensitivity of local people to a foreign accent. Accent is a pointer to the maintained boundary of the national community.

7.5 Motherhood and Family Relationships

The other visible change taking place as part of the *rite of passage* is to become a mother. As discussed above, wifely and motherly duties occupy the central position in the conceptualisation of the renunciation of Indonesian nationality and the exercising of citizenship in the form of voting and civic participation. In the private family domain, marriage and motherhood lead them to make Taiwan their *home*, as Ang Lip Fong stated, '*Taiwan is also my home because my husband and children are here*' (29/01/10, Pingtung) (for a similar account, see Wang 2010a: 23). Motherhood is a source of identification with Taiwan. However, fulfilling motherly duties is also in conflict with fulfilling daughterly duties towards their parents in Indonesia. It is in this conflict that the tension of the in-between identity is experienced.

7.5.1 Making Taiwan Home: As a Wife-Mother

Making Taiwan home is composed of two elements of the gender norms: *patrilocality* and motherhood. Being a foreign wife, they migrate to Taiwan and take their husband's

residence as their own residence. As a mother, they are held responsible as being the chief guardian for their children's well-being, which is defined by material comforts and their potential for development. Susani Halim embraced Taiwan as her home to the extent that if war erupted between Taiwan and China, she would stay in Taiwan to look after her family¹⁰⁵.

For Tan Mee Leh, her sense of fulfilling motherly duties is compounded by her identification with Taiwan. In reproduction and motherhood, she saw her performance of her private duties as the foundation for national development:

‘Our worry is how to make a living. Without citizenship it’s difficult to find a job. Then our life becomes unstable. *The instability is not just bad for our family and children but also for the country! If our children are hungry and not well cared for, it’ll negatively affect the national development.* Securing a good family life is most important, looking after children is most important. [Without them] the country won’t make progress. *We Taiwanese* marry foreign brides but they (foreign wives) need to work and [as a result] they can’t look after their family and children. *Aren’t their children also Taiwanese?*

Every time I was turned down [for jobs] because I didn’t have citizenship. Fortunately I can bear this. Those who couldn’t bear it became bar girls. Isn’t that terrible? I need citizenship because I have to work. I’ve kept thinking *how come nothing good has happened to me since I came back to my own country?*

The government should enforce a daily maximum of working hours. [There are]

¹⁰⁵ However, her husband thought she should return with their only son to Indonesia for safety. She considered this as an insult because she expected that in that urgent situation her in-laws would also care about her well-being.

foreigners (foreign wives) working for more than 15 hours every day. They are working themselves to death! This is bad for our children, this is bad for the country' (04/05/09, Taipei).

Mee Leh had already seen herself as a rightful member of the national community because of her birth as a Chinese person. As a mother, her relationship with Taiwan is strengthened by biologically giving birth to *Taiwanese* children and culturally being their guardian. In motherhood, she saw her private duties beyond the family domain and connected with the nation. In this position, and in the name of Taiwanese children, she found legitimate advocacy for the liberalisation of citizenship legislation.

Ang Lip Fong's migration is also underlined by her internalisation of the gender norms. Moving to Taiwan was to fulfil her marriage commitment and enabled her husband to look after his aging father to avoid repeating the regret that his mother died while he was away. Equally important is that *patrilocality* enabled their children to be educated in Taiwan. Or, in Lip Fong's words, they could 'learn to speak Mandarin'. In perception, her children were Taiwanese because of their birth to a Taiwanese father and because they were born in Taiwan. Her stress on her children 'learning Mandarin' underlines her perception that she was responsible for transmitting the culture of Taiwan to her children. Thus, they were to be brought up in the way that conformed to the local customs.

The medium of cultural transmission is the Chinese language. Thus, Indonesian Chinese mothers do not seem to actively nurture the linguistic hybridity of their children. Children speaking their 'mother tongue' (Indonesian language) is appreciated but not seen as necessary. Nevertheless, as their Filipino and Vietnamese counterparts encountered, home is not linguistically sterile. Mother-child intimacy is mostly felt

through the ‘mother tongue’ and the Indonesian language is a component of the ‘mother tongue’. Thus, while acquiring Chinese language may generate a sense of achievement for performing motherhood, it may also be a source of alienation.

The constraint on speaking a ‘mother tongue’ is exacerbated by the stratification of foreign languages in Taiwan. In the linguistic hierarchy, English, Japanese and Western European languages are advantageous and superior, whereas Southeast Asian languages receive little social recognition. Viewed in the practical vein, passing down the former is helping to strengthen their children’s competitiveness. Passing down the latter is ‘confusing’ and ‘disturbing’ their children’s early learning. ‘Refraining from speaking the Indonesian language to avoid confusion’ was exactly what Siu Moi was prescribed by a doctor as the remedy to her children’s slower development in speaking Mandarin. This contrast is highlighted by a Chinese American interviewee’s experience. While her Taiwanese husband encourages her to speak *as much English as possible* to their children, most Indonesian Chinese mothers consciously refrain themselves from teaching their children the Indonesian language because of the objections of husbands and in-laws. In this diminished mother-child intimacy, they experience the tension of the in-between identity.

7.5.2 Primordial Ties Enacted as a Daughter

The *rite of passage* is a continuum in the sense that while one becomes a mother, one also remains a daughter to her parents in Indonesia. The primordial identity with Indonesia is conceptualised through parent-child ties, as articulated by Tan Mee Leh:

‘I go home to visit my parents, this is nothing to do with [the issue of where] my country [is]. When I come back to Taiwan, *I feel everything here belongs to us, I feel safe in the street. Taiwan is my own country.* I don’t have citizenship but I

think I am Taiwanese... *Our love for mother is forever, this is different from our affection for our country*' (04/05/09, Taipei).

That is, for Mee Leh, seeing Indonesia as home as a daughter is parallel to claiming Taiwan as home as a mother and a member of the national community. The parallel induces a reconfigured worldview in which her motherly duties are prioritised over her daughterly duties, as Wong Poh Min stated, '*Here is home, Indonesia is also home. If I stay in Indonesia for a while, it'd become difficult to come back. I'd wonder: could I not come back? I didn't think much of Indonesia after I had kids*' (06/06/09, Penghu).

Although the parallel weakens their ties with her parents in Indonesia, it is not *severed*; one simply cannot cut off the umbilical ties. An occasion for experiencing the tug-of-war of in-betweenness is when their daughterly duties are called for in the form of remittances or urgent medical care for their ailing parents. The sustained primordial ties become the very source for a feud with in-laws. Sim Se Ham's mother-in-law never let her guard down to prevent her from sending remittances to her parents in Indonesia, although the imagined receivers (Se Ham's parents) neither needed nor required remittances from their married daughter. The mother-in-law's vigilance enacts the prevailing gender norms in Taiwan. That is, a married daughter shall refrain from making contact with her natal family; sharing resources with the natal family is 'stealing' from her husband's pocket or the pool of family finance.

Lai Siu Moi's experiences demonstrate the conflict of fulfilling the daughterly duties. She took her ailing mother to Taiwan for medical care and looked after her. This became ready-made gossip material for the people surrounding her. Like Chinese, Filipino and Vietnamese immigrants, Siu Moi was under the watchful eyes of in-laws

and neighbours, who are described by a Chinese interviewee as ‘*self-assigned mothers-in-law*’. The pressure of conforming to the gender norms in Taiwan regarding a daughter-in-law’s duty is reflected upon by Siu Moi as:

‘In Taiwan, once a daughter is married, she isn’t responsible for her parents’ well-being, but *we Indonesians* are different. *Although we’re huaqiao and our grandfathers came from the Mainland, we have somewhat forgotten the Chinese culture.* There’s no equivalent custom like *yours* in Indonesia. We don’t oppose mothers living with married daughters. In my family, it’s up to my mum to decide who she wants to live with. Nobody has an opinion about it’ (30/05/09, Yilan).

Siu Moi’s reflection highlights the different expectations of what constitutes appropriate behaviour for a married woman according to the different gender norms in Taiwan and in Indonesia. The difficulty she experienced was the conflicting duties of a daughter and a daughter-in-law. As a daughter-in-law, her *singular* and *exclusive* loyalty towards the Taiwanese family is required by her in-laws, hence she should refrain from making contact or giving resources to her parents. More importantly, Siu Moi elevated this differing cultural practice to an issue of cultural change for Indonesian Chinese. While acknowledging her Chinese ancestry, she argued that Indonesian Chinese had deviated from the origin, while she perceived the practice in Taiwan as being the *original* Chinese culture practice. For her, this deviation has become a boundary marker between Taiwanese and the hybrid Indonesian Chinese who have developed their *endemic* cultural practices.

In these challenging relationships within the private family domain, Indonesian Chinese women’s home-making efforts cannot be successful without the support of

their husbands. This is encapsulated by the conversation between Ang Lip Fong and her husband Shih Chang-li:

Lip Fong: 'I told my husband "Your family doesn't accept me". My husband said "Don't be bothered by what *my dad* or neighbours say about you. You can't open up everyone's mind. What matters is I care about you." Nobody treats me as an equal, *it makes no difference whether they (Taiwanese) are educated or not*. In the first couple of years I was really upset but I went through all that. He knows I was born and bred in a good family. I had a successful painting career in Indonesia, I'm a learned person. But they thought I'm stupid. He knows I'm stressed out but I didn't abandon my family. I stayed and looked after our kids. My husband said he owed me a lot. Some were treated badly by their husbands so they deserted home.

Chang-li: 'That (battered immigrant wives deserting home) is more likely to happen to a brokered marriage, but brokered marriages may also develop into true affection. Sometimes it's a matter of money. Poverty generates [domestic] violence. If your husband treats you well, you'll be able to identify [with Taiwan]. This is the foundation. If the foundation is shaky, you may abandon home and refuse to identify with the society' (29/01/10, Pingtung).

As exemplified by Lip Fong and Chang-li, the husband-wife intimacy in the private family domain is the backbone of the immigrants' identification with Taiwan. This also applies to Chinese, Vietnamese and Filipino wives. It smoothes the friction caused by discrimination and remittance feuds between immigrants and in-laws. Their support is a key to immigrant mothers' performing motherly duties and their pursuit of

learning the Chinese language at publicly-funded courses. The husbands' support is critical to overcome the challenges of the in-between identity.

Thus, home is a domain where the in-between identity is experienced and where the public interests interact with the private interests. Home-making does not eradicate their primordial identity with Indonesia. The tension arises when immigrant women are required to fulfil role-defined duties, which may be overlapped or be in conflict with each other. Therefore, home-making is not a smooth process but comprises hard efforts undertaken to meet the prescribed and ascribed duties performed by a daughter, a wife, a mother and a citizen. If supported by their husbands, home-making leads to identification with Taiwan, in spite of discrimination and linguistic alienation.

7.6 Conclusion

'In Taiwan, they say I'm Indonesian. In Indonesia, they say I'm Taiwanese' (Choi Sook Yin, 19/05/09, Taipei).

'ALF: Taiwanese couldn't open their minds and accept me as Taiwanese, they say I'm Indonesian. SCL: In Indonesia, they say she's not Indonesian but Taiwanese' (Conversation between Ang Lip Fong and her husband Shih Chang-li, 29/01/10, Pingtung).

In-betweenness is a consistent historical legacy of the Indonesian Chinese. The transgression of Indonesian Chinese women in Taiwan enriches this legacy, the precedence of which has been well set by their forbears. However, their experiences as Chinese people as well as Indonesian citizens are marginalised both in the fields of Overseas Chinese and marriage migration studies. This chapter thus addressed this critical deficiency. By centralising their self-identification as Overseas Chinese, my

exploration restored their complicated identity from the oversimplified stigmatisation of 'Indonesian Brides'.

Being sensitive to their experiences of being *ethnic others* in Indonesia, my exploration identified three motivations which prompted them to seek migration to Taiwan. The prime motivation shared with Chinese, Filipino and Vietnamese immigrants was betterment for the self and their parents. However, the contouring of interviewees' diasporic and hybrid Chinese identities pointed to other motivations that were only found amongst Indonesian Chinese immigrants. That is, Taiwan was either imagined as the *Homeland* or a safe haven for Chinese women. These imaginations nurtured the motivations for seeking belonging and desiring safety in Taiwan.

After migration, along their dual *rites of passage*, their diversified experiences show that there are different paths leading to the in-between identity. As a Chinese person, a path to identification was the citizenship legislation. An accommodating legislation realised Le Fen Fen's goals of migration. In contrast, a stringent legislation disappointed Tan Mee Leh for her pursuit of betterment and belonging, although the desire of safety was satisfied. Thus, evoking her strong diasporic Chinese identity, she argued for special privileges for Overseas Chinese. For those who were hybrid and did not link their Chinese identity with the legislation, as foreigners, the path leading to their identification with Taiwan was marriage commitment and motherhood. It was illuminated in their renunciation of the Indonesian nationality, which reflected their conformity to the gender norms of *patrilocality* and motherhood. Crossing the gate of citizenship builds another path leading to identification. In addition to perceiving citizenship as a legal membership which renders equality, their exercising of citizenship in the form of voting emanates from their caring for their children. Thus, while Fen Fen and Mee Leh uphold a strong diasporic Chinese identity and perceive migrating to

Taiwan as returning to the Homeland, others who have a hybrid Chinese identity make Taiwan their home and this is a source of belonging.

The in-betweenness is experienced in the linguistic complexity. For some, the Chinese language ability was critical to authenticate their Chinese-ness. For all, a facility in the Chinese language held the key to betterment and dignity. The higher the proficiency, the easier it was to cross the boundary and this led to greater identification. Susani Halim's experience demonstrates that language ability was an empowering resource and helped facilitate the exercising of participatory citizenship. However, the subjective identification was contested by the sensitivity of local people to foreign accents. For some, leeway for reducing the contestation was to assume a sub-identity (Hakka).

The in-betweenness is clearly found at home in the experiences of performing motherhood. Motherhood lays the foundation for exercising citizenship. The sense of fulfilling motherly and wifely duties transforms a geographical description 'my home is in Taiwan' to a characterisation underlined by the sense of rootedness '*Taiwan is my home*'. However, the fulfilment of motherhood was challenged by the limitation of the Chinese language ability, which diminishes the mother-child intimacy. The continuum of the *rite of passage* situated them to be confronted with conflicting role-defined duties. As wives, they chose to conform to the gender norms and saw it as a wifely obligation to make Taiwan their home, but the home-making efforts would not succeed without their husband's support. As daughters, their identification with Indonesia was sustained by parent-daughter ties. They remained responsible for caring for their parents, but this was in conflict with the gender norms in Taiwan, and this then becomes a source of family feuds. This exacerbates the torn between sentiments.

Thus, there are two major forces for bringing out the subjective identification with Taiwan: instrumentality because of achieving the migration goals, and the sense of belonging generated from a motherhood-oriented citizenship. They do not negate the primordial identity with Indonesia, which is conceptualised as parent-daughter affection and daughterly fidelity. The infusion of, and tension between, the Taiwanese identity and Indonesian identity drawn out of their multiple role-playing, makes them constantly in a condition of being in between Taiwan and Indonesia.

Their lived experiences not only testify to the generational change of Chinese identity but also interact with the Taiwanese category. The contrast between Le Fen Fen and Tan Mee Leh reflects Taiwan's changed self-identity from being the sole and real representative of China to only representing the people of the ROC on Taiwan. Mee Leh's frustrations inadvertently highlight the intentions behind the legal reforms to redraw the boundary of the national community. On the other hand, treating Indonesian Chinese as foreigners corresponds to the interviewees' hybrid identity. This made them a legitimate target of the nation-building project in terms of linguistic adaptation. Thus, their hybrid identity enhances, as well as challenges, the New Taiwanese Consciousness. On the one hand, without the historical baggage of choosing either side of the Taiwan Strait as the Homeland, they could identify with Taiwan as it is. This is parallel to their conception that people of Taiwan are Chinese. On the other hand, their mixed Indonesian heritage is not accommodated in the discourse of multiculturalism. In this sense they share similar frustrations with those of their Filipino and Vietnamese counterparts.

CHAPTER 8: CITIZENS FROM OUTSIDE: IDENTITY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Awarding citizenship symbolises the inclusion of an immigrant outsider into the political polity. Within the rights awarded by citizenship, political rights are those that directly consolidate the relationship between a citizen and the state. With the right to vote, assemble and organise, individual citizens jointly take part in the decision-making process of public affairs and express their opinions about issues that affect their interests and those of the general public. Induced from this participation are senses of belonging, equality, inclusion and taking charge of one's own life together with other citizens. A sense of shared interest and destiny is thus generated whilst individual rights are also protected. It is the foundation of democracy and it is also stressed as being an integral element with which to construct the Taiwanese identity. Therefore, there are two dimensions of the exercising of political rights. It generates a *civic* sense of belonging. Moreover, it facilitates a public realm where citizens' interests can be protected individually as voters and collectively as groups, sectors or constituencies of specified interests. Both dimensions are critical for immigrant-turned citizens' identification with the state and the state's integration of these citizens from the outside.

Regarding the first dimension, I have presented in the previous three chapters the circumstances as to how citizenship and voting rights generate a civic sense of belonging. I found that some Chinese, Filipino, Vietnamese and Indonesian Chinese women exercised their voting rights under these circumstances and some further saw their voting rights as an extension of their motherhood. They used their voting rights to choose a government that not only delivered desired policies for themselves but also built a sound living environment for their children and their future development. I have characterised their incorporation of private duties and public rights as that of a

motherhood-based citizenship. The motherhood-based citizenship connects the private domain with the public sphere and illuminates women's role-defined relationship with the state, in addition to seeing women passively being the biological reproducers, cultural transmitters and boundary markers (Yuval-Davis and Anthias 1989: 7).

In this chapter I will explore the second dimension, namely how immigrant voters exercise their political rights as individual voters and collective actors. This chapter begins with a review of current literature on immigrant women's political participation and its critical inadequacy in the contextual information and lack of insight of empowerment and participation. It then moves on to examine the impact of in-laws' failed attempt on immigrants' sense of independence and immigrant voters' varied political behaviours in the aspects of perception, awareness and sense of efficacy. This is followed by an examination of how the two main political parties perceive immigrant voters as specified constituencies. The last section of the chapter focuses on two specific immigrant women in examining their aspiration to establish autonomous organisations. It highlights how they transform their sense of belonging into political participation.

8.1 Some Clues: Motivation, Awareness, Influence

A number of studies have explored the issues of immigrant women's voting behaviour and their political socialisation. What they offer is a sketch rather than a detailed portrayal of this critical issue. A survey on Chinese immigrant-turned citizens in Kaohsiung found that their turnout at the 2004 general election was significantly low¹⁰⁶ and that their personal interests (for example, the right to work and citizenship acquirement) were the factors affecting their voting behaviour (Yang 2005). However, a

¹⁰⁶ In that election, 244 out of the total 1,283 eligible spouses in Kaohsiung voted. The 19.01 percent turnout is considerably lower than the national (59.16 percent) (CEC 2007) and Kaohsiung levels (57.53 percent) (Civil Affairs Bureau 2007).

qualitative study of Chinese and Southeast Asian women in Yunlin found that their willingness to go and vote was an expression of their identification with Taiwan (Kuo 2005). A survey on Southeast Asian women who attended language training courses in Taipei found that 78 percent of them did not know their husband's political inclination, and that Filipino women had higher awareness of citizenship rights and a better knowledge of the political system. It also found that immigrant women's husbands did not contribute to their knowledge, awareness or attitude towards politics (Lin 2009). However, contrary to Lin's findings, another study of Southeast Asian women in central Taiwan found that their husbands' political stance, in-laws' political inclination and socio-economic status, and TV news are contributing factors to their voting behaviour and views on political events (Yeh 2003).

Owing to their different methods, localities and sample sizes, these findings appear inconsistent or contradictory. However, instead of being rejected as nullified, these findings actually provide valuable leads with which to look into immigrant women's relationship with their families and their motivations for voting. On the other hand, the inconsistent findings also indicate that there is a lack of *contextual* understanding of how Chinese and Southeast Asian immigrant women exercise their political rights. Piper points out studies of immigrants' political participation are often measured by the levels of voter registration and turnout (Piper 2008: 253; e.g. Hammar 1990: 150-168; Togeby 2003). These descriptions lay the foundation for understanding the immigrant constituency as a whole, but they do not increase the knowledge of how political rights are exercised as a daily life *practice*. She suggests that bringing participation, agency and empowerment together will open a new window with which to look at immigrants' life in the social and political spheres (Piper 2008: 251). This is what this chapter hopes to achieve.

8.2 Exercising Political Rights in the Family Domain

Given that the family is the main domain and centre of the immigrants' life, it is not surprising that their understanding of local politics is shaped by their husbands and in-laws, as found by Yeh's study (Yeh 2003). My interviews show that the majority of immigrant women are passive voters for a number of reasons, including a lack of interest or motivation, language barriers, unfamiliarity with political issues, and a lack of information. The perception that politics is chaotic and that individual voters are powerless to influence politics strengthen their passiveness. However, does this automatically mean immigrant women entirely fall under the influence of their family members and do not make their decisions *independently*? The following cases, which are distinguished by the degree of openness of their disagreements, would argue that this is an oversimplified presumption and overlooks the complexities of the in-laws' influence and the skilful manoeuvring of the immigrants.

8.2.1 Covert Resistance

Guangxi-born Zhu Yongli grew up in a rural village. She conceived politics as a power struggle amongst elites for high offices. She showed no interest in voting because *ordinary folks* like her had nothing to do with such power struggles and could not have any real influence over its functioning. Before Yongli acquired her citizenship, her mother-in-law was mindful about her ineligibility to vote and thought it was regrettable that she could not instruct Yongli to vote. Little did she know that Yongli had been determined that she would abstain after she became eligible. Living under the shadow of her matriarchal mother-in-law, Yongli located her Taiwanese-speaking mother-in-law's pressure in the magnified context of the strife between the Taiwanese and Chinese categories:

‘Of course *they, Taiwanese*, would hope to gain one more vote. If I helped the Taiwanese, surely *we Chinese* would be upset. If I didn’t help *them* (Taiwanese), my husband and mother-in-law would be unhappy. (Q: Nobody can see what you’re doing in the voting booth.) I’d rather do nothing and upset no one. I’ve thought through [about my relationship with my husband and in-laws]; I think honesty and not lying is the best solution’ (21/04/09, Taipei).

Nguyễn Hong Phuc had a similar experience. Unlike Yongli, Hong Phuc was not indifferent to electoral politics. Instead, her conception about the operation of electoral politics developed alongside her experiences of the citizenship application process, which she characterised as by being looked down upon by some policemen and hoped that there was ‘someone to *speak up* for us’ (01/04/09, Keelung). Hong Phuc’s father-in-law was a KMT supporter and asked which party she would vote for. In a structurally unequal position, their amicable relationship did not reduce the degree of pressure Hong Phuc perceived for her expected conformity to his preference. She specified that the KMT was not her preference, but in order to maintain her independence and be *free from* any sense of betrayal towards her father-in-law, she decided to abstain.

Abstention is not the only option with which to resist uninvited pressure. Luru Mai Lan is a Vietnamese Chinese from Ho Chi Minh City. Although her Taiwanese husband’s family made a fortune by selling their rice fields and buying property, her husband was nevertheless of a lower status within his family and the family finances were controlled by Mai Lan’s brother-in-law. Thus, the brother-in-law was not pleased that Mai Lan encouraged her husband to assert his independent control of their own finances. He was particularly agitated that his power was circumvented by Mai Lan’s decision to invite her parents to stay with them in Taipei without his prior permission,

although her parents were staying in the couple's own flat. Knowing no bounds of his power, Mai Lan's brother-in-law saw Mai Lan's voting rights as a *family matter* which he was entitled to dictate, and gave an explicit instruction of which party or candidate she should vote for.

Mai Lan understood that democracy was a system in which voters supported candidates that might campaign for various sectarian interests, such as those of immigrants. However, she doubted how much such candidates could achieve to improve her own well-being. Nevertheless, her defiance of her brother-in-law's instructions did not develop from this understanding. Mai Lan walked into the voting booth and stamped her ballot against those candidates who were not her brother-in-law's favourites. For her, abiding by his instruction was to 'help him' and that was the last thing that she would want to do. What she hoped to achieve was the defeat of his preferred candidates, regardless of what the final election results were. In other words, while her brother-in-law thought her voting option was a *private* issue and he had a right to dictate, Mai Lan also perceived it as a *private* matter between her and her brother-in-law rather than a decision to support her favourite candidate. Unlike Yongli and Hong Phuc, who did not utilise the secret ballot casting for their covert *resistance*, Mai Lan knew that institutionally protected secret voting was indispensable for her clandestine resistance.

8.2.2 Overt Rebellions

Passive and clandestine resistance may evolve into overt rebellion. When personal finance is relatively secure in the family and 'defence' in the name of democracy is employed, there is less risk of disclosing disobedience. This is the transformation which Nguyễn Thi Xuân Mai experienced in her relationship with her mother-in-law, who arranged her son's marriage with Xuân Mai. Inheriting her American grandfather's

Caucasian complexion, Xuân Mai was born after her father died in the Vietnam War. Her un-married mother later married a Taiwanese man. Upon hearing that Xuân Mai's aunt was planning to introduce her to an American policeman, and hoping to keep her daughter close to herself, Xuân Mai's mother hand-picked her son-in-law who was brought up in an affluent family. Xuân Mai objected to the match strongly but eventually backed down and let her mother 'dictate her fate'. Only when Xuân Mai got married did they know that they had been deceived by the mother-in-law. Xuân Mai's husband had suffered a brain injury and needed to be on regular medication.

For Xuân Mai's mother-in-law, this son was not her favourite but arranging for him to get married was to fulfil her motherly duty. In spite of being deceitful, she looked down upon her Vietnamese daughter-in-law and thought that she should be grateful for 'marrying up'. Negotiating with her mother-in-law was a consistent source of stress in Xuân Mai's daily life but in motherhood she found her strength to overcome her suicidal tendencies. Xuân Mai's mother-in-law was mindful about her voting eligibility and instructed her to vote for her preferred candidate. Xuân Mai understood that an individual's free and independent will was the rationale behind voting in a democratic system. The change of her responses to her mother-in-law's instructions coincided with the change of her self-positioning in relation to her mother-in-law. In the beginning, she obeyed the instructions. Later, she pretended to be obedient but in fact voted for someone else. Now, obedience was impossible. She openly rebelled and criticised her mother-in-law, '*You shouldn't force me! Everyone has their own preference. You preferred that candidate but nobody liked him!*' (30/05/09, Yilan) Her mother-in-law was unhappy but her self-defence was so legitimate that she ran short of ammunition to use against Xuân Mai.

In these structurally unequal relationships, the in-laws of Yongli, Mai Lan and Xuân Mai are similar. By giving clear instructions, they consciously transformed voting as a right equally exercised by citizens in the public sphere to that of a personal token signifying their superior and advantageous position in the private family domain. For immigrant women, who were aware of their relatively weak position in the family, they also perceived voting rights in the light of private relationships and fathomed their resistance strategies in accordance with their perceived strength in the family. These strategies were employed in parallel to their understanding of the operation of electoral democracy. For Yongli, this decision was made particularly in the context of the perceived antagonism between the Taiwanese and Chinese categories and its associated partisan politics. In other words, voting is perceived as a public right *as well as* an extension of a private family relationship; the former perspective is not necessarily contradictory to the latter. On the contrary, this duality facilitates a situation for them to maintain their independence, although it is exercised at various degrees of assertiveness. As a result, their interaction is not a lineal ‘pressure-rejection disobedience’ but a discursive ‘pressure-avoidance circumvention’. Voting rights thus have become the ‘weapon of the weak’ (Scott 1985) with which to win them an occasional victory or a short-lived relief from suppression.

8.3 Exercising Political Rights in the Public Realm

As mentioned above, immigrant women also perceive voting rights as being part of the operation of democracy. In this section, in addition to discussing how they as individuals exercised their rights in the public sphere, I will also explore how they, as a constituency, were exploited by political parties and individual candidates.

8.3.1 Chinese Voters: Interest-Driven

I have mentioned in Chapter 3 that Chinese immigration is actively appropriated in the nation-building project as being the personification of a bellicose China. It is also perceived as a disturbing force for electoral equilibrium. Hence, for those who recall that the result of the 2004 presidential election was determined by a fractional margin (0.22 percent) (CEC 2010), the ratio of Chinese-turned citizens out of the total number of the electorate as of March 2008 presidential election (0.486 per cent) (NIA 2011a, CEC 2011) is an indication of its potential influence on the result of a national election. However, leaving speculation aside, there is a lack of contextual understanding of how Chinese immigrants perceive the democratic system in Taiwan and how they utilise its operation for preserving their self-interests.

This can be found in their two modes of political participation. One was to join the 2007 'Red Shirt Army' anti-corruption demonstration and the other was to take part in the entitlement improvement campaigns. Older Chinese women mentioned with passion that they went to the demonstration. Some went for days without attending their hourly-paid jobs. Granny Yang, who described her church in the neighbourhood as being pro-independent, refrained from wearing anything red to 'conceal her support'. As analysed in Chapter 5, the central-peripheral hierarchy anchors their worldview with regards to the Taiwan-China relationship. It also navigates them through the partisan politics in the sense that they perceived themselves particularly unwelcomed by the DPP government because they stood in the way of the party's pursuit of independence and its anti-China/Chinese stance. Are these sufficient explanations with which to reveal why they were enthusiastic about the protest? Answers from interviews would suggest that there were undercurrents in their motivations. In addition to showing their disagreement with the DPP, it was also a way of showing their disapproval of corruption, which was detrimental to their livelihood. As argued by Zhang Jie,

corruption impaired economic development and a weak economy resulted in unemployment, including her own unemployment. Thus, a presence at a political rally was also triggered by preserving self-interest. In other words, they utilised the democratic means available in the political system to express their concerns and protect their rights.

Two other interlinking perspectives also inform how they interpret the democratic system and potential ways of protecting their interests. It is noticeable that Chinese immigrants identify with the operation of the free democracy. However, one perspective channelled through their understanding is to see politics as *realpolitik*, irrespective of being in a socialist state or in a democracy. Granny Yang was a young engineer during the Cultural Revolution and witnessed the purge of her family and her Indonesian Chinese colleagues. In her perception, politics was fuelled by a craving for power and that Machiavellianism was the politicians' tradecraft. By nature, an elected president was no different from an emperor. These views are blended into her understanding of democracy. In a pyramid society where the powerful were few and the masses were at the same time powerless, democracy facilitated a stage for the elites to perform populist acts in order to win the votes of the masses at the bottom of society. The equal value of each ballot 'either held by the Nobel Prize-laureate Lee Yuan-tze or held by a market stall owner' gave politicians incentives for vote buying.

For former school teacher Zhang Jinhua, perceiving democracy as the means for political elites to consolidate their power base explained why their call for help from legislators failed. Having experiences in campaigning including writing to newspapers, speaking up to officials in seminars and being interviewed by the media, Jinhua was convinced that electoral democracy operated on the basis of vote maximising. The relationship between elected politicians and people was exclusively defined by whether

the people were voters. Therefore, when Chinese immigrants asked for help from a female KMT legislator, they were shunned because they could not vote. When they turned to ask for help from another KMT legislator, they were told to look for the legislator who represented their constituency.

Both Jinhua and Granny Yang recognised that Chinese immigrants and their human rights were affected by the Taiwan-China relationship. For Jinhua, a way to *depoliticise* Chinese immigrants was to support candidates who campaigned for immigrants' causes, regardless of their party affiliation. For her, this was also reflecting the reality that Chinese women are not interested in politics:

‘Once we acquire citizenship and have a satisfying life slightly better than the one in China, we’ll be quiet. We won’t be mobilised or organised to oppose anyone. Why? We’re just women who married to Taiwan. We have no political intentions. [The PRC] government won’t use us as secret agents. ...My points are: first of all, equality [for Chinese and Southeast Asians]; secondly, marriage has nothing to do with politics’ (10/03/09, Taipei).

In other words, in her view Chinese immigrants' political participation was mobilised for improving their well-being in Taiwan. Speaking in the way of a self-assumed elite leader, she argued that Chinese immigrants' non-interest in politics is often underlined by their limited education. Hence they ‘*would not, should not, and could not*’ be actively interested in electoral politics. If it hadn't been for the discriminative legislation, they'd have had a quiet life’.

Granny Yang and Zhang Jinhua's comments show that their perceptions of electoral politics have a *realist* hue. Jinhua's efforts to de-couple Chinese immigration from domestic and cross-strait politics demonstrate that Chinese immigrants are well

aware of their sensitive and vulnerable position in the area of partisan politics. Her stress on Chinese immigrants being ‘driven’ to participate in politics for their self-interests is echoed by the DPP and the KMT election strategies (see 8.3.3).

8.3.2 Filipino Voters: Dutiful Citizens

A major obstacle for Southeast Asian immigrants to understand the operation of Taiwanese politics is the language barrier. Thus, TV news is the main channel for receiving information and so political issues are visualised as being pictures of messiness, chaos, disorder, quarrel, scandal and even physical conflict by individual politicians and between political parties. Influenced by such impressions, it is not surprising that the majority of Southeast Asian interviewees (as well as Chinese) show a low interest and motivation in voting. The question ‘Will you go to vote?’ often was responded to by an indifferent answer such as: ‘I’ll go if I’m free; I won’t go if I’m busy’. The question ‘Will you support a candidate who campaigns to improve immigrants’ well-being?’ was answered with an indication of a low sense of efficacy, such as ‘Politicians never deliver their promises,’ or ‘A single ballot of mine won’t change anything.’

Although having an inability in the Chinese language is an obstacle, Filipino immigrants were able to utilise English-language information. Thus, unlike Chinese interviewees who were either cynical or excitable about politics, or Indonesian and Vietnamese interviewees who tended to be passive, Filipino interviewees did not depict in their narratives a picture of chaotic and messy politics. On the contrary, for them, it is a matter of policy presentation and the performance of political parties and candidates. This enabled them to independently develop their voting preferences different from their husband’s. The Filipino immigrants’ reliance on English leads them to support English-speaking candidates who they thought they could communicate with. In the

2008 presidential election, this preference saw some of them voting for Ma Ying-jeou. For Jennifer, who was a devout Christian, seeing Ma appearing on an English-speaking gospel programme on TV also strengthened her support for Ma, although she could not vote.

However, for Virginia, her political participation was not as passionate as it was back in the Philippines. Taipei-based Virginia used to be a teacher and political activist in the Philippines. She fought for pay rises for school teachers and one of the large-scale protests she participated in had resulted in the arrest of her colleagues. The difference between then and now was that before it was invigorated by an immediate interest, whereas now it was about exercising a right without any specific demands. She articulated the difference as *'If people rally, there are reasons. If there aren't reasons, they don't [go to the street], they don't rally'* (18/05/09, Taipei).

8.3.3 Demanding Sound Governance

Another strand of the understanding of the political system focuses on the governance of the executive branch. A common perception is that the president personifies the political system. He embodies the government: he makes the final decision and executes policies. This understanding is further conveyed by the fact that most immigrants were unable to tell the difference between the different levels and branches of elections. Thus, the major liberalisation of citizenship legislation in 2009 was perceived as a reform brought about by President Ma Ying-jeou. This can be found in Tan Mee Leh's narratives. She complained that she and others in a smaller town in northern Taiwan were not informed about the abolishment of the requirement of amount-specific financial adequacy for gaining citizenship eligibility. She attributed her information deprivation to the geographical distance between her town and the President: people in Taipei knew about it because they were *closer to Ma Ying-jeou*, but she and others in

the countryside were distant from the president, hence they ended up being manipulated by brokers.

Chinese and Southeast Asian immigrants almost unanimously praised the integrity and efficiency of frontline civil servants and immigration officers at the airport. This is a strong contrast to the practice in their originating countries where Vietnamese, Indonesian, and Philippine civil servants and immigration officers openly demanded small bribes for document applications and passport verification. However, the information disparity mentioned above prompted Tan Mee Leh to suspect the integrity of the law enforcement agencies and to criticise what she felt was the unsatisfying governance. For her, it was the government's job to effectively inform immigrants about any changes in citizenship legislation. Their failures enabled brokers who were also loan sharks to continue to prey on immigrant women and their families whose savings were insufficient for citizenship eligibility and who therefore needed to borrow money after the requirement had actually been abolished.

Furthermore, this might create room for corruption. If this did happen, Mee Leh argued that Taiwan could not be considered to be an 'advanced' country. In fact, Taiwan's image had already been tarnished after she heard about the following incidents in Jakarta partly from women who were abused and later returned to Indonesia: the government turned a blind eye to the malicious brokers using good-looking men as surrogates to deceive Indonesian Chinese women into marriages; the police did not arrest husbands who forced foreign wives to work in the sex industry; male in-laws who sexually exploited foreign wives were not prosecuted. Mee Leh did not use the vocabulary of 'human rights' with which to elaborate her accusations. However, the failure to protect immigrant women's human rights as itemised by Mee Leh was exactly how the Taiwanese government was being criticised at home and abroad (US State

Department 2006; Asia Times 02/10/03; Liberty Times 12/12/09; Radio Taipei International 07/05/10). It repudiates Taiwan's self-claimed image of protecting human rights. As seen below, this is also incorporated into the KMT's election campaign strategy.

8.3.4 Immigrant Women as a Specified Constituency

In spite of immigrant women's political inactivity, there are attempts by political parties and individual candidates to attract their votes. For Yen Yifan, a Chinese immigrant who thought herself apolitical, winning immigrants' votes was simply the mathematics of demography. When the number of marriage immigrants grew to the level that 'almost every household has a foreign/Mainland spouse' (05/04/09, Taoyuan), she reckoned that political parties and elected politicians would certainly be attracted to this new pool of voters.

Although Zhang Jinhua and Tan Mee Leh articulated their views in different contexts, their comments and observations highlight their demands to improve immigrant women's human rights. *TransAsia Sisters Association*, an organisation set up by academic activists for immigrant women, sees improving immigrant women's human rights as one of their main appeals (Hsia Hsiao-chuan 2005b). Improving human rights is also the backbone of the campaign of organisations founded by Chinese immigrants' Taiwanese husbands. The focus of their campaign is the rights of Chinese immigrants as wives and mothers. To avoid politicisation, they refrained from showing any specific political inclination (Chang 2004: 56). They ran online communication sites, established social organisations, allied with human rights advocacy groups, mobilised public rallies, lobbied legislators, and liaised with the media (Chang 2004, Lin Miao-ling 2005, Chao 2006, King 2007).

The significance of the immigrant constituency is recognised by both the DPP and the KMT. A decision-maker for the China policy of the second Chen Administration stressed that the political loyalty of Chinese immigrants and their children was a factor that might compromise Taiwan's negotiations with China or it might create distrust within Taiwanese society. The inclination of the Chinese immigrant constituency was influenced by the fluctuating Taiwan-China relationship and they were more likely to be allied with the KMT. However, as social organisations, their mobilisation and alliance was more likely to be steered by their pursuit of self-interest, such as citizenship legislation reform, rather than other general political, economic or social issues. As individual voters, whether or not Chinese voters were singled out by political parties or individual candidates as a sectarian group depended on their number and locality (20/03/09, Taipei).

Was the KMT consciously treating the immigrant voters as a potential constituency whose support was now ripe to exploit? A KMT campaign manager confirmed that although the immigration issue was not at the top of its agenda, the party liaised with social groups and academics that were keen to address it in the election manifesto. In the manifesto, the issue was presented as women's human rights¹⁰⁷. This warranted a de-coupling of rights and entitlements from the political stickiness of 'the KMT soliciting the support of Chinese voters'. By viewing both Southeast Asian and Chinese immigrants as wives and mothers whose rights were impaired by the citizenship legislation as drawn by the DPP government, it also depoliticised Chinese immigration.

¹⁰⁷ Entitled '2007 Human Rights Declaration', under the heading 'New Immigrants Have the Right to Be Real Taiwanese', the election manifesto advocated the abolishment of the requirement for proving financial adequacy, improving the implementation of the entry interview, protecting immigrants' right to work and social rights, and promoting Southeast Asian cultures and languages (<http://www.ma19.net/policy4you/education>, accessed on 24/03/08).

This served as an attack on the DPP government's self-publicised record of human rights protection. The campaign manager argued that at the national level, although the immigration issue was not given priority, Chinese voters had been identified as a specific constituency. Although he was not certain about how effective the KMT's human rights-centred manifesto was at winning over Chinese voters, he asserted that the emphasis of the DPP on 'indigenisation' (*bentuhua*) had alienated itself from the immigrant community. This was sufficient for the community to then identify with the KMT. Local politicians or factions might see immigrant voters as a reservoir of electoral support, but whether it was worthwhile to cultivate them depended on their number (29/04/09, Taipei). As a matter of fact, two weeks after this interview, a KMT local branch established an organisation for immigrant women. The organisation has since then been used as a meeting point for election candidates and voters¹⁰⁸.

The above discussions show that both the DPP and the KMT share views in common regarding the immigrant constituency. Both of them were of the opinion that the Chinese voters were inclined to be pro-KMT. The difference is that for the DPP, it was almost self-evident. For the KMT, it was the DPP's stance on 'indigenisation' (*bentuhua*) that was pushing Chinese immigrants away. Both of them were also of the opinion that Chinese immigrants' political participation in the form of campaigning and lobbying was interest-driven. The difference is that for the KMT it could be utilised to dilute the political sensitivity of receiving Chinese immigration. Both parties also converged on the strategy of exploiting the immigrant constituency. For political parties, the challenge was how to package the immigration issue into the election manifesto. For individual candidates, it did not necessarily mean that they need to campaign on issues

¹⁰⁸ Information is available at the website of the KMT-affiliated organisation <http://tw.myblog.yahoo.com/young-03332012141/articile?mid=11&prev=12&1=a&fid=5>.

related to the well-being of immigrants. The key was to establish a link and to mobilise their votes¹⁰⁹.

That candidates' attempts to establish links with immigrant voters was also found in interviewees' experiences. One channel is through language training courses. College graduate Annabelle migrated to Pingtung in 1995 but did not acquire citizenship until 2004. She recalled her first ballot was cast in the local mayoral election while she was attending a language course. Her teacher told the Filipino, Indonesian and Vietnamese students that if they voted for the incumbent mayor, the free language courses would be continuously provided. Annabelle took this message seriously and voted for this candidate. Kalimantan-born Hoh Kim Siew married a well-paid civil servant and then lived in Penghu after her marriage. When asked whether she would vote for a candidate that promised to improve immigrants' rights, she said she would. However, she was disappointed that a local politician 'always promised a lot before the election but never realised his promises.' The way he mobilised immigrants' support was actually by vote buying¹¹⁰. It was disguised through 'funding their attendance on training courses'. That is, if an immigrant attended the class, she was given £12, but they were not 'forced to vote for him' (05/06/09, Penghu).

Another channel is through the church. The significance of the church as a social organisation for immigrants is shown by the experiences of Jennifer, Ellie and Susani Halim. The church clergy was their bridge with Taiwanese society. The church is also where politicians meet and know local voters. The church clergy in Keelung confirmed

¹⁰⁹ In the recent local elections campaign, candidates began to employ immigrant women or used bilingual banners to attract immigrant voters' support (Central News Agency 12/11/09; China Times 18/11/10).

¹¹⁰ Filipino interviewees Annabelle and Beth both mentioned that their husbands 'boycotted' going to vote because they did not receive money. They did not clarify whether the candidate(s) campaigned on immigrant-related issues (27/01/10, Pingtung).

that immigrant women were pleased to be visited by local politicians as it demonstrated the politicians' 'care for them'. She argued that 'If you (politicians) take care of them, they would vote for you' (06/04/09, Keelung). This was also Jennifer's experience. Although she was ineligible to vote, she was pleased that their previous local mayor was a member of her church. When asked if she would vote for a candidate who campaigned to improve the well-being of immigrants, she said that she would and would ask her husband and sister-in-law (an Indonesian Chinese) to also vote for this candidate. If such candidate did exist, she expected that her church would invite him/her to speak to them, as this was how they were introduced to the previous mayor (29/01/10, Pingtung).

In this section, I discussed immigrant women's perceptions about politics, the politicisation of Chinese immigrants and their exercising of political rights. I also analysed that human rights was at the core of the concerns of individual immigrants, social organisations, and the KMT's campaign strategy. At local elections, individual candidates attempted to tap the pool of immigrant voters through channels that would give them access to immigrants' votes. In the following section, these aspects and their potential conflicting interests will be showcased by the experiences of two immigrant women from working for an organisation and managing an autonomous organisation.

8.4 Founding Autonomous Organisations

It has been pointed out that the participation by immigrant women in organisational activities is a source of empowerment which generates a sense of *assisted agency* (Hsia Hsiao-chuan 2005b; Lin *et al.* 2005). However, joining an organisation established by Taiwanese activists for immigrants is one thing, establishing *an autonomous*

organisation by immigrants for immigrants is another¹¹¹. The two patterns are represented by Phạm Thanh Van and Ngô Xuân Phương. In spite of their different patterns of participation, they are similar in their preference for autonomous organisations and their insight into the triangular relationship amongst politicians, organisations, and immigrant women.

Phạm Thanh Van used to work for an NGO and had a close observation of the intricate relationship between social organisations and politicians when they cooperated for the cause of improving immigrants' human rights. Thanh Van grew up in a family who had enjoyed a high social standing in South Vietnam. Before the 1975 unification, Thanh Van's father was an army commander of a regional unit and her uncle was an air force pilot. Around the time Saigon fell to North Vietnam, her uncle fled the country and after reunification her father was put in gaol. After his release, her parents migrated to the US in the 1990s. After finishing her high school, she studied Chinese and English and hoped to find a better job. After she came to Taiwan, she became a government-contracted interpreter and also a staff member of an organisation, which received government funding to provide assistance to immigrants. She is currently working at a travel agency, the owner of which is a keen supporter for improving the well-being of Vietnamese migrants (workers and wives) and strengthening the Taiwan-Vietnam relationship. Thanks to the network built by her work experiences, Thanh Van was several times assigned as the interpreter and escort for official Vietnamese delegations to Taiwan. Her work experiences were a part of her identification with Taiwan because her life was significantly changed and she 'made

¹¹¹ One such organisation was the *Filipinos Married to Taiwanese Association* (FMTA). It was founded eleven years ago by Eleanor 'Nene' B. Ho, who also publishes *The Migrants*, a monthly newspaper for Filipinos in Taiwan (Philippine Daily Inquirer, 24/02/09). Interviewee Virginia is a member of the FMTA.

progresses for self-improvement. Although in her fight for her son's custody she experienced institutional discrimination by the police, she positively identified with the democratic political system. Being a Permanent Resident, she was ineligible to vote. However, her jobs facilitated different ways of political participation and deepened her understanding of the operation of the political system.

Thanh Van saw a useful link with politicians and social organisations with which to improve the well-being of immigrants. However, she had doubts about their motivations. She observed that politicians were more interested in gaining publicity, whereas social organisations were mindful of bidding for government funding (see also Tsai and Hsiao 2006: 20-21). Politicians and social organisations raised the public awareness of the plight of the immigrant women, but this was achieved at the expense of reinforcing the stigmatisation that existed. Thanh Van protested against this kind of strategy as 'We are neither miserable nor stupid! We need help simply because we don't understand the laws. We need help but don't pity us!' (15/04/09, Taipei) For her, establishing an *autonomous* organisation was a plausible solution. There were people like her who were experienced, committed and connected with civil servants, social organisations and law enforcement agencies. However, she was aware that if immigrants worked entirely alone without any external help, their enthusiasm was constrained because of the structural limitations of human resources and funding.

What Thanh Van could not achieve (founding an autonomous organisation) was realised by Ngô Xuân Phuong with the critical help of Taiwanese academic activists. Coming from Ho Chi Minh City, Xuân Phuong's Chinese father and Vietnamese mother used to own successful businesses before the 1975 reunification. *Forced* by her Chinese father, when she was a child, Xuân Phuong went to a Chinese-language school in the afternoon after attending a Vietnamese state school in the morning. Her Chinese

comprehension gained her interpretation jobs for Taiwanese tourists, investors and her aunt's matchmaking business for Taiwanese-Vietnamese marriages. After migrating to southern Taiwan, in less than ten years Xuân opened a Vietnamese restaurant. By watching TV and communicating with her Taiwanese-speaking mother-in-law, she came to be fluent in the Taiwanese dialect.

Xuân Phuong's involvement in helping fellow Vietnamese started at her restaurant in 2005. Some of her regular customers were policemen, who utilised her language skills for interpretation purposes whenever they arrested *runaway* Vietnamese workers or sheltered battered Vietnamese wives. She was later recommended to be trained as an interpreter. Interpreting work enabled her to accumulate legal knowledge and understand the operation of government branches and the networking of local political factions. Xuân Phuong's enthusiasm for helping fellow immigrants was boosted by her strong identification with Taiwan's democratic system. Unlike most immigrant women who found TV news reports in a negative light, Xuân Phuong's watched TV news and political talk shows with an intensive learning interest and came to understand the electoral politics and the partisan competition (or, in her own words, she gradually understood 'how a politician is made'). For her, democracy was the key to national development. Without it, the Vietnamese government was plagued by wide-spread corruption. In contrast, she saw the Taiwanese government as an efficient protector for the life and rights of citizens.

With the help of academic activists, in 2006 she founded an organisation for Vietnamese immigrants. Although not all of her funding applications were successful, her organisation had been funded by the local government to conduct a county-wide home-visit project which interviewed newly arrived immigrants of all nationalities. Later, she ran an after-school tuition project which helped children of mixed parentage.

As required by the funding terms and conditions, her organisation employed Taiwanese women who were previously unemployed. To accommodate battered Vietnamese women, she also employed them to work at her restaurant.

Her knowledge of the political system and skills of networking with local government officials, elected politicians, political factions and party managers were put to the test while her organisation developed. With the local immigration authorities, Xuân Phuong kept them informed about the circumstances of immigrant women. For instance, Xuân Phuong mentioned that she was contacted by the local police about a particularly difficult case involving a Vietnamese divorcee's suicide, which prompted her to plan to host a press conference. Neither the case nor her press conference plan was known to the immigration officers who introduced me to her and who were present at the interview, thus they asked for detailed information. For local politicians and party managers, her regular contact with immigrants and their families meant a stable access to a pool of votes. In exchange for politicians' help, she informed her organisation members to vote for those who supported her work. However, she wanted to maintain her political neutrality and fended off the prospect of becoming an agent of specific factions.

Like Thanh Van, Xuân Phuong was also alerted when being approached by organisations set up by Taiwanese people. She sensed that their intentions were to use her organisation to apply for funding rather than committing to the immigrants' well-being. However, she had the vision of allying with other autonomous organisations, such as the one set up by her aunt in another county, to expand to a nation-wide organisation and increase their resources and capacities. At a social occasion with Vietnamese diplomats in Taiwan, she put forward the idea that one day an 'immigrant party' would emerge and exclusively campaign for the interests of the immigrant

constituency. She envisaged that in the future the children of mixed families will become elected politicians, just as in the US where Vietnamese immigrants held elected offices. This is a vision also shared by Indonesian Chinese mother Susani Halim and Chinese mother Jiang Juan.

Phạm Thanh Van and Ngô Xuân Phương share characteristics in common with other immigrant women who participate in social organisations. They have a higher Chinese proficiency and having participation in public affairs has empowered them (Liu 2009). However, instead of being limited within *the assisted agency*, they aspire to elevate their personal agency and expand their community participation to organisational participation. Most importantly, while they acknowledge that they need external help, they also desire autonomous and independent control of the organisation. The political system facilitates a platform for them to exercise their *autonomous agency*. Nevertheless, their insight into the divergent interests of politicians and organisations established by Taiwanese activists and the potential of being used for vote mobilisation characterises the structural limitations on immigrant organisations as well as their symbiotic relationship with politicians and political parties. Potentially, a political force representing the interests of the immigrant constituency could arise from this symbiotic relationship.

8.5 Conclusions

Continuing on from the discussion of citizenship generating a civic sense of belonging, this chapter deepened the understanding of how immigrant women exercise their political rights in the sense of having access to ways of participation. Recognising the centrality of the family relationships in the daily lives of immigrant women, I presented the experiences of four women based on their delicate negotiations under the pressure of powerful individuals within the family. The fact that *male and female* in-laws

consciously and explicitly attempted to influence immigrant voters' decisions shows that party preference and political inclination have become an inbuilt aspect of family life. In response, the immigrants' resistance sheds light on their political literacy in the operation of the democratic system and the different partisan positions. It also underlines that the public and private domains were infused into the family relationships. Their strategies contextualised why and how some immigrant women declined to vote. Behind the façade of them being passive voters, there is a complicated manoeuvring process with which to uphold their independence and freedom.

At the same time, immigrant women are also aware that their political rights are the means with which to protect their interests. Whilst Virginia did not have the same level of passion as she had in the Philippines with which to join a rally in Taiwan, Chinese women were however motivated by their political affiliations and self-interest to join in the social protest and entitlement campaigns. Thus, although being a citizen, older Chinese women did not identify with what Taiwan is now, citizenship status nevertheless facilitates the access for them with which to take part in issues that affect their interests and those of others.

Political rights can be exercised individually as a voter or collectively as in a social movement or in an organisation. In any of these forms of participation, immigrant women, as an identifiable constituency, have become a target for mobilisation by political parties or individual politicians, although it is not clear whether and how the DPP will tap into the Chinese immigrant constituency. For the 2008 presidential election, the KMT successfully exploited the discrepancy of human rights protection embodied in the immigration legislation substantiated during the DPP's time in power. The stress on human rights protection discourse highlights the fact that once again that the 'universal' value of human rights is eclipsed by the intertwined bias of gender, class

and ethnicity. This reveals the porous boundary of the Taiwanese category. The aspiration of Phạm Thanh Van and Ngô Xuân Phương for establishing an autonomous organisation shows the necessity of bringing participation, empowerment, and *agency* into the exploration of immigrant women's political and social life. Their empowerment not only derives from their identification with Taiwan, but also expands to an aspiration to utilise their political rights to help more immigrant women in need.

Given that immigrants as citizens are an under-explored aspect along with their *rite of passage*, the findings of this chapter are a critical complement to those of the previous chapters on the impact of citizenship for their identification with Taiwan. My findings provide insights into how they dynamically interacted with the state and society of Taiwan in the realm of democracy. These findings demonstrate that they in their daily life absorbed the categorisations imposed by the state and the in-laws, and that whilst confronting these impositions they either found defence in the political system or articulated their critiques of the operation of the democratic system of Taiwan. My findings also show at a grassroots level there are interactions between the immigrants and political actors, including political parties, factions, individual politicians, activists and social organisations. The words and deeds of these actors are integral to the cognition of how immigrants felt they were treated by society. In that sense, inducing or strengthening their identification has become a political resource for these actors. Considering that the operation of democracy and human rights protection are being constructed as contents as well as moral missions of the national community of Taiwan, these findings have far-reaching implications for the state's nation-building.

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION: DISRUPTION, CONTINUITY AND ACQUIRING NEW STATUSES

This thesis set out to answer a universal question that arises about immigrants' national identity and the host state's integration. In the case of Taiwan, this question was explored in three dimensions: how the citizenship legislation is shaped to integrate immigrants, how immigrants interact with the legislation in their daily lives, and how the interaction is undercut by ethnicity, class and gender. From a temporal perspective, I have demonstrated that along their dual *rites of passage*, immigrant women develop an in-between identity. This in-between identity is experienced whilst they perform the roles of daughters, mothers and citizens. Categorised by ethnicity, class and gender, Chinese, Filipino, Vietnamese and Indonesian Chinese women follow different paths leading to in-betweenness. At the same time, the boundary between the Taiwanese category and immigrant categories is reified. These findings show the dynamic, complex, and variable interaction between the categoriser and the categorised immigrant outsiders.

In this concluding chapter, I will present an overview of my key findings, discuss their theoretical implications, and suggest topics for further research. These topics not only concern Taiwan but also the countries that are *en route* in the migration of marriage immigrant women.

9.1 In-Betweenness: A Continuous Tug-Of-War

My examination shows that immigrants experience a gradual shift of national identity and results in an in-between identity. Primordialism, constructivism and instrumentalism all have their distinctive roles to play along the *rite of passage* to bring about their in-between identity. This subjective identification is experienced in,

expressed by, and enacted upon primordial ties, material rewards and a sense of belonging. They co-exist but also are in conflict (Jenkins 2008: 48; Esman 1994: 241; Jaffrelot 2005: 39-40). The infusion and tension caused by their co-existence and conflict brings about their in-between identity.

An in-between identity is the dynamic expression of dual identity. Primordialism, together with constructivism, explains how immigrant women develop their identification with the country of origin. Their primordial attachments derive from the socialisation of the social and cultural *whole* in which they are brought up (Grosby 1996: 51), and are symbolised by the birth given by their parents. As argued by Brubaker, immigrant women are the primordialists and treat their affiliation with their country of origin as ‘naturally given and immutable’ (Brubaker *et al* 2004: 49). For those who receive a certain level of compulsory education, the primordial attachments are channelled towards the nation-state by the constructivist scheme. The cases in point are the Chinese internalising the central-peripheral hierarchy, and the Indonesian Chinese attributing their hybrid identity to the national curriculum conducted in the Indonesian language. As a result, a national identity functions as a *coherent* worldview. Moreover, with the identity, they submit their political allegiance to the nation-state demarcated by the geographical border. Bounded by the worldview, they distinguish themselves from others who do not belong to their national community. They assign values to known and unknown cultural practices, and make their judgements the ultimate verdict for right and wrong. When they transgress the border of the state, they bring with them this national identity. Grosby rightly argues that a person never merely belongs to their immediate family but also to a larger collectivity including a nation (Grosby 1996: 51). However, as daughters, the national identity of immigrant women is mediated by their fulfilment

of their caring duties, as shown in their understanding of the renunciation of their original nationality.

Instrumentalism, together with primordialism, explains how they acquire the sense of inclusion and belonging to the adopted country. The instrumental strand of identification derives from the realisation of betterment. Instead of being purely economic or material interests as critiques on the instrumentalist approach argue (Hempel 2004: 256), betterment is measured against beyond material interests and evolving conceptions of self-interests which integrate those of their parents and children. The conceptions derive from not only macro-level satisfaction with higher living standards, civility, sound governance, access to rights and entitlements, but also micro-level self-achievement because of employment, community service and fulfilling motherhood duties as accomplishing a 'moral career'. The evolution of betterment, which takes place along the *rite of passage*, underlines the conditions under which identity and interests converge. The primordial attachments are generated by giving birth and the sense of fulfilling motherly duties. This gives them the sense of rootedness. Citizenship strings together the two threads of identification. It authorises unconditional rights to reside and work. It also renders a sense of inclusion and cultivates a sense of belonging. The former is critical to betterment and the latter is strengthened by motherhood.

The in-betweenness emerges from a dynamic incorporation as well as competition of the dual identity along their *rite of passage*. The identification with the country of origin is challenged *wholesale* by the strange social and cultural whole of the adopted country. This challenge takes place at visa application or entry clearance interviews before they physically cross the state border. On these occasions, their worthiness of being wives, mothers, and, potentially, citizens, is questioned. Afterwards, being

initially confined within the family domain, as wives and mothers, they are challenged by the worldview of their husbands and in-laws. With their social contacts expanding outside of the home, the cognitive challenge is encountered in everyday interactions with people of the private and public sectors. As they cross the gates to become citizens and, at the same time move along the *rite of passage* to become mothers, they develop identification with the adopted country. As wives, mothers and citizens, they encounter the infusion and tension of the dual identity. Home is where they straddle across the two identities. The renunciation of the original nationality is one of the occasions where they experience the in-betweenness as if being in a tug-of-war. They need to re-organise the conflicting worldviews and duties and reach a cognitive equilibrium. This *ongoing* re-organisation is how the in-between identity is brought into being. It creates a situation where they not only subjectively identify with both countries, but also are objectively pulled by both identities. It is a survival strategy with which to obtain and assert agency, stage resistance, and transform the empowerment to social and political participation.

Therefore, the in-between identity is a *holistic* characterisation of the incremental transition taking place in everyday life. Rather than imagining themselves as being connected with the *unknown* and faceless others (Anderson 2003: 6), this identity is a subjective willingness to affiliate them with specific people whose well-being they feel obliged to care for. This willingness is transnational as it spans across the state border. It is also territorial as it is attached to both countries where these people reside. In-betweenness gives national identity its contextual and situational underpinning. Primordialism, constructivism and instrumentalism in isolation cannot elucidate this transition.

Finally, in-betweenness is also reinforced by the contestation by the people of both countries. An in-between identity is often mistaken for being superficial, unauthentic, confusing, ambiguous, deceiving, and disloyal. Although postmodernist and constructivist critiques have elucidated the fluidity of identity to the extent that ‘fluidity’ has become a cliché (Brubaker 2000: 11), in everyday life in-betweenness is equated to a manipulative performing or condemned as being a form of ‘lying’. Emerging from the evolution of nation-state where individuals’ allegiance towards the collective is encircled by the jurisdictional border of the state, national identity is upheld as a singular, exclusive, possessive and unchanged loyalty. National identity has been theorised as being a primordial sentiment (Geertz 1963), a social construct (Anderson 2003), a civic sense of belonging (Rene 2004; Habermas 1992; Miller 2000: 25-40), a modernisation project (Gellner 1990), and a mobilisation for nation-building launched by political elites (Hobsbawm 1990), and a multi-dimensional conception that incorporates historic homeland, myths, mass culture, equal rights and common economy (Smith 1991: 14). However, these theorisations are mainly concerned about people who are confined behind a defined border. They do not shed much light on the consequences of willing migration and its subsequent situation where migrants find themselves being called upon by two nation-states for their primary allegiance. These conceptions on their own cannot envisage nor cope with the challenge as well as opportunity brought about by an in-between identity.

9.2 Different Paths to In-Betweenness

In spite of living under the same circumstances, the immigrant women do not experience the in-betweenness in the same way. Affected by the citizenship legislation, the facility of the Chinese language, and fulfilling motherhood duties, their diversified experiences pave different paths to in-betweenness.

Chinese Immigrants: Bridging Across and Sandwiched Between

For Chinese women, the citizenship legislation was the main source of exclusion. They felt they were given secondary treatment. The language hurdle was mostly experienced in the aspect of having varied non-local Mandarin accents. However, it also enabled some of them to claim a sub-identity as *Mainlanders* (*waishengren*). The motherhood duties were the dividing line separating older re-married women from younger mothers. Without acquiring the sense of rootedness generated from motherhood, the former identified less with Taiwan. In contrast, the latter made Taiwan as their home, similarly to immigrant mothers from Southeast Asia.

The perception of the Taiwan-China relationship was another aspect that distinguishes older women from younger women. For older women like Granny Yang, entirely engrossed in the central-peripheral hierarchy, their belief in Taiwan's subordination to China as a subordinate unit was unchanged. The indoctrination of the central-peripheral hierarchy, which had been internalised as their worldview, did not free them to conceive options other than Taiwan being ultimately *united by* the PRC. As citizens, they did not identify with the ROC on Taiwan. In contrast, Wong Hong and some of her peers revised their worldview. The hierarchy was still erected in their cognition, and like their older counterparts, it was evoked as a counter-strategy to fend off discrimination. Nevertheless, they modified it to various degrees with which to recognise the reality that Taiwan and China have been separated and ruled by disparate governments. As citizens and mothers, they could identify with how Taiwan defines itself now, whilst they remained ethnically Chinese. The war scenario dramatised the in-between dilemma into two opposite conceptions: either as a bridge across the Strait, or being sandwiched between and disowned by both states.

English-Speaking Filipino and Mandarin-Learning Vietnamese

For Filipino and Vietnamese women, the citizenship legislation was excluding and discriminatory. Nevertheless, being accepted as a citizen rendered a sense of equality and recognition. It is more evident amongst Filipino women that exercising voting rights generated a civic sense of belonging, which is also pronounced by fulfilling motherhood. The renunciation of their original nationality was an occasion where they were torn by the in-between identity. They were pulled by two primordial attachments and the conflicting daughterly and motherly duties. Filipino and Vietnamese women encountered a magnified language hurdle. Overcoming the linguistic challenge generated a sense of achievement for Vietnamese women and was conducive for identification and empowerment. In contrast, Filipino women opted for speaking English partly out of maintaining self-esteem. This reduced the incentives for adopting the Chinese language and reduced the potential for developing identification. Nonetheless, the mother-child intimacy of both groups was diminished because of the restriction on them of speaking their native languages. Unlike Chinese women finding an outlet for their in-between identity in the unsettling Taiwan-China relationship, the cross-strait issues were distant to Filipino and Vietnamese women. In their daily lives, they had no reason to doubt the sovereignty of Taiwan.

Jennifer, Hồ Minh Mai and Nguyễn Thị Minh Thu did not acquire citizenship. However, their determination of raising their children against all the odds was a major source of identification. For Phạm Thanh Van, her identification derived from fulfilling motherhood, having a high proficiency in Chinese, and achieving self-improvement in her career and social participation. For Ngô Xuân Phương, in addition to these, the democratic system was the most significant source generating her identification.

Indonesian Chinese: Returning To the Homeland and Making Taiwan Their Home

As *ethnic others* in Indonesia, Indonesian Chinese were already in an in-between situation before they left for Taiwan. The otherness was either transformed as a diasporic identity towards Taiwan, or was integral to their hybrid Indonesian-Chinese identity. Embracing a diasporic identity, Lee Fen Fen identified with Taiwan for being accepted as a returned national, and, on that status, achieved her migration goals. In contrast, Tan Mee Leh was frustrated for not receiving the same reciprocity. For those who held a hybrid identity, renouncing their Indonesian nationality was the moment when they experienced the in-betweenness generated from the infusion of wifely and motherly duties. The language hurdle was a barrier inasmuch as it was for Filipino and Vietnamese immigrants. They also encountered a diminished mother-child intimacy brought about by the pressure of speaking Mandarin. Some perceived acquiring the Chinese language as being reacquainted with, or authenticating their Chinese identity. As shown by the example of Susani Halim, it could also be a source of empowerment with which to participate in community service. Like their Filipino and Vietnamese counterparts, in the private family domain they were pulled by the caring duties for their parents and the demand of in-laws for their singular and exclusive loyalty.

In line with the ethnocentric perspective, Indonesian Chinese saw people in Taiwan, China and around the world who are born to be Chinese as being ethnically Chinese. This conceptually precluded perceiving the people of Taiwan as being a separate *nation*. However, this did not prevent them from identifying with Taiwan as it is now: the ROC on Taiwan.

Identity and political participation

Exercising citizenship in the form of voting and political participation is enacting the civic sense of belonging. It is also a source of empowerment. The right to vote was utilised in the private family domain as well as exercised in the public realm. At home,

it became the ‘weapon of the weak’ (Scott 1985) with which to resist the suppression of the powerful male and female in-laws. In the public realm, it was used as the means to protect their rights. Relatively, Chinese women are more interest-driven. Filipino women show higher awareness of the operation of the democratic system. Some Vietnamese and Indonesian Chinese women are empowered by their language ability and translate it into civic participation.

The emphasis of immigrant women and political parties on human rights highlighted the significance of human rights in Taiwan’s nation-building project. It also depoliticised the participation of Chinese voters. Viewed in the light of empowerment, Phạm Thanh Van, Ngô Xuân Phuong and Susani Halim transformed their civic sense of belonging to political participation and community service. Their experiences as the interface between immigrants and political actors (political parties, factions, politicians, organisations) opens a new avenue for political mobilisation and election campaigns. It will call for new modes of representation for the immigrant constituency in electoral politics and integration of their interests into the nation-building project. How these are realised will in return affect their identity formation.

9.3 Consolidating the Nation through Disciplining the Immigrant Outsiders

My findings also demonstrate how immigrant women are actively appropriated into the nation-building project. Defying the overwhelming public discourse which treats marriage immigration as being a *social* issue, my exploration has shown that this immigration touches the heart of *identity* of the people of Taiwan. My analysis of the contents of textbooks, public discourse, and legislation shows that they strengthened the national narrative with which to construct a Taiwanese category. As the backbone of the nation-building project, the narrative depicted the Taiwan category as a democratic, prosperous and multicultural nation. The narrative upheld democracy, and particularly

human rights protection, as a moral mission. Accomplishing the mission was believed to reward Taiwan with the credentials of being internationally recognised as a civilised and advanced nation. The national narrative nurtured citizens to develop the *new Taiwanese consciousness*, which stressed the civic cohesion rendered by sharing a common interest and destiny, rather than ethnic ancestry. The ethnic ancestry was perceived as being the Chinese ancestry, the internal division within the Chinese ancestry (Hoklo, Hakka, and Mainlanders) and the Indigenous People's indigeneness. Prioritising civic cohesion over ethnic ancestry and cultivating the belief in multiculturalism was to overcome the internal division within the Taiwanese category and consolidate the *de facto* independence and sovereignty of the ROC on Taiwan.

Located in this national narrative, the citizenship legislation for Chinese, Southeast Asian and Overseas Chinese immigrants was differentiated to strengthen this democratic, prosperous, and multicultural self-identity. I have demonstrated that the official categorisation had significant consequences for the in-between identity of immigrant women. The citizenship legislation established Taiwan as being confined to the geographical area of ROC jurisdiction. It prized the territorial link (embedded within civic values) with Taiwan as the criterion for admitting new citizens to the national community and political polity. The national narrative, in tandem with the citizenship legislation, paved the way to the final congruence of the national and political units. Whilst the citizenship legislation strengthens the nation-building project, it also reinforces Taiwan's statehood because of the practical and tacit understanding of the foreign governments. This is inferred from the fact that without being concerned about their citizens becoming stateless, all of the governments of the Southeast Asian states, which do not recognise Taiwan as a state, permit their citizens to lose their original

nationality in order to acquire ROC nationality. Thus the citizenship legislation also contributes to Taiwan's state-building efforts.

To safeguard the *de facto* independence and sovereignty, Chinese immigrants were categorised as being unfit for democratic life. They were imagined as personifying a bellicose China which threatens to crush Taiwan's independence. It was feared that their political inclinations, deriving from their ethnocentric beliefs and conceptual hierarchy, would disturb the electoral equilibrium and compromise Taiwan's *de facto* independence. The 'undemocratic' categorisation failed to recognise that the political participation of Chinese immigrants was at least two-fold. In addition to being influenced by their worldview with regards to Taiwan-China relationship, they were also voters driven by preserving their self-interest. The latter opened the possibility of policy-issue oriented mobilisation, which was not necessarily along the lines of the unification versus independence divide. The *othering* built on the perception of the 'China Threat' discourse also failed to recognise the in-between identity of younger Chinese women. On the contrary, it contests their in-between identity and reinforced their confrontational central-peripheral hierarchy, which threatened the congruence of national and political units.

To assure the sustainability of prosperity, immigrant women were othered as an undesired dependent underclass. To save the damaged reputation of human rights protection, the legislation was liberalised more for the sake of the well-being of the family, but less for the benefit of the immigrants. The multiculturalism discourse was repudiated by the extant racial stratification in the discrimination against Southeast Asian languages, and the differentiation of Chinese and Southeast Asian immigrants. On the other hand, it was also used by immigrants to advocate for their equal status and right to speak their 'mother tongue' to their children.

The immigrants' in-betweenness mirrors the double face of the country that they adopt as their home. On the one hand, Taiwan was recognised as an independent state. Taiwan was praised for democracy mostly in the sense of serving the public with an efficient and transparent bureaucracy. Taiwan's prosperity was appreciated for providing opportunities for betterment because of the civility of the general public, the higher living standards and the meritocracy in the labour market. On the other hand, their subjective identification was not recognised by the *new Taiwanese consciousness*. Immigrant women could, and were willing to, cross the category boundary to self-identify as being Taiwanese. The civic sense of belonging emerging from motherhood, citizenship and political participation was a part of their in-between identity. Nevertheless, the New Taiwanese Consciousness, which stressed the civic sense of belonging, overlooked this willingness and agency. Being positioned in the racial hierarchy and biased by class, gender and ethnicity, they were excluded because of their perceived inferiority, amorality, abnormality, irrationality and materialism.

These examinations show a strong and clear message: marriage immigrant women are exploited to serve the interests of consolidating the Taiwanese category. It is executed through the implementation of the citizenship legislation and the public discourse of population 'quality'. It presents who Taiwanese people think they are by differentiating them from the outsiders. It is a case of 'banal nationalism' (Billig 2009: 6). What is surprising, perhaps, is that under this banal nationalism, immigrants do not become entirely uprooted or assimilated. They are in-between and permanently wander in the border lands.

The findings of the in-betweenness and its challenge to the nation-building have theoretical implications and empirical contributions as follows:

1. ***Gender and state.*** In addition to being utilised by the state as biological reproducers, cultural transmitters and boundary markers, women also actively engage with the state in three dimensions where the boundary between the public and private is blurred: a) their private marital and maternal intimacy is placed under the public gaze, and is intruded upon by the state in the name of the collective good; b) motherhood duties are infused with citizenship and women develop a motherhood-based identity and political participation; c) their ballot is not only the symbol of a public right, but also a token utilised in private family relationships.
2. ***Ethnicity and boundary.*** Ethnicity, blended with class and gender, is used to create a boundary for categories. However, the categorised defy the imposed categorisation and are able to seek accommodation in a sub-category or create their counter category.
3. ***Ethnocentrism and nation-state.*** Competing with a civic sense of belonging, ethnocentrism remains an influential concept with which to draw the boundary of the nation. It continues to challenge the nation-state of Taiwan.
4. ***Transnational ties versus the territorial borders.*** In-betweenness spans across the state border. However, the identification with each country is territorially bounded. The primordial ties are geographically attached to both countries, one of which is the home of parents, and the other the home of self and children.
5. ***Citizenship and national identity.*** Citizenship generates a sense of belonging. It emerges from motherhood and the sense of inclusion, equality, and sharing a common interest

6. **Methods of incorporation.** Multiculturalism needs to take into account the civic sense of belonging that emerges from motherhood. Considering the state's intervention and characterising immigrant women as 'Daughters-in-Law of Taiwan', the state is behaving like a combination of husband and mother-in-law monitoring their chastity and demanding their singular loyalty.
7. **Regional comparison.** Chinese women in Hong Kong face similar stigmatisation. Vietnamese women in South Korea face a similar stateless consequence. Filipino women in Japan face a similar runaway scenario. These empirical similarities require further investigation.

9.4 What's Next? : Suggestions for Future Research

Female marriage immigration is a human flow of far-reaching impact on the originating as well as receiving countries. Concentrating on the *rite of passage* and the transnational ties, my exploration has shown its impact on their self-identification. At its formative stage, several issues require further investigation in a comparative manner and from a temporal perspective to understand its enduring impact. Continuing from the issues examined in my thesis, I put forward the following suggestions to use marriage migration as a platform to further our understanding of the sense of national belonging.

Regarding the in-betweenness, it is necessary to examine immigrant women of different nationalities for the content and contestation of their in-between identity. My findings can be used as the foundation to develop a quantifiable survey for a larger sample. Included in this survey are not only women of the three categories, but also Caucasian, Japanese and Korean women, as they are generally regarded as middle-class immigrants. The findings will render indications of whether and how class and ethnicity criss-cross the formation of the in-betweenness, and how class and ethnicity affect the

way immigrant women negotiate the pressures of integration. These results will depict a Taiwan of multiple faces when viewed by their differing experiences and strategies. They will be critical to triangulate the content and contestation of the Taiwanese identity.

An aspect of the contestation of national identity I explored in my fieldwork is about expressing identification at sports events (Maguire and Tuck 1998: 106; Holihan 1997). I asked which team interviewees would support in the following scenarios: a) when 'Team Taiwan' competes with a foreign team; b) when the team of their originating country competes with a foreign team; and c) when 'Team Taiwan' competes with the team of their originating country. It is interesting to note that using Japan as the imagined foreign team evoked a stronger response, as some interviewees commented 'They invaded us during the war'. Interviewees' responses had a gender twist. After replying to the first two scenarios without pauses, most of them excused themselves for skipping the last scenario because 'women are not interested in sports'. Nevertheless, a Chinese woman depicted it as a mother watching her two sons fighting and thus unable to have joy in either's victory. The responses I received suggested that sports events were occasions where one might experience the tension of an in-between identity (Smith and Porter 2004: 2). However, due to the limitation of space, I did not discuss these findings in this thesis. I shall revisit these results and explore, with an emphasis on gender, whether and how the in-betweenness is enacted or avoided.

It has been recognised that Overseas Chinese women are under-studied within the field of Overseas Chinese studies (Newsletter of Southeast Asian Studies 1997: 68). It is more so for those who became marriage immigrant women. As mentioned in Chapter 3 and Chapter 7, little is known about the facilitation and life experiences of earlier Overseas Chinese women who migrated to Taiwan for marriage. It is also unknown

why the presence of Vietnamese Chinese women is considerably smaller than that of the Indonesian Chinese. During my fieldwork I also interviewed Overseas Chinese women from Malaysia and Myanmar, whose reasons for moving to Taiwan varied, from seeking education, using a tourist visa for employment, and for marriage. Archival and legal studies will help to trace how their entry is granted by the evolving legislation, which is the embodiment of Taiwan's self-identity as the surrogate China and how this self-identity changes in the wake of democratisation. Ethnographic studies of their experiences will clarify how the transnational links between Taiwan and the Overseas Chinese communities have survived the severing of diplomatic relations between Taiwan and their originating countries. These findings will problematise the male-imagined Overseas Chinese communities. They will also draw a picture of how the Taiwan-China relationship has changed in the eyes of the Overseas Chinese and how this is affected by China's rise as a major power.

Husbands of transnational couples are also critically absent from the research into marriage migration. Limited information is found in Hsia's exploration of their motivation for seeking transnational marriage (Hsia 1997), Chang's research of husbands who ran the online campaign sites for cross-strait couples (Chang 2004), Chao's ethnography of husbands who established organisations to improve their Chinese wives' rights and entitlements (Chao 2006), Fan's observations of those who accompanied their wives to the gynaecology department at hospital (Fan 2006), and Wang and Tian's study of the role that masculinity plays in the formation of transnational marriage (Wang and Tian 2006). Given the stereotype that husbands are the dominant party in transnational marriages, the paucity of information no doubt impairs our understanding of marriage immigration. My research has shown that husbands are excluded from the Taiwanese category because of their perceived

abnormality and inferiority. I have also shown that some husbands developed counter-strategies with which to negotiate such exclusion. One highlighted Taiwan's inability to be a *normal* state in spite of its economic prowess; two criticised the racial hierarchy Taiwan constructs for its middle position between Caucasians and Southeast Asians. One stressed the development prospects of Vietnam and saw in Vietnam their opportunity for making a better living; another saw Indonesia as a safe haven in the case of war erupting between Taiwan and China. One stressed to his Vietnamese wife that Taiwan is an independent state; another reminded his Chinese wife not to cultivate their son into a young 'communist'. These counter-strategies need to be teased out so as to deepen our understanding of the role husbands play in the formation of their wives' in-between identity and the impact on their own identity.

The interaction between transnational couples gives rise to another crucial issue: immigrant-turned citizen's political participation. I have contextualised how citizenship in the form of voting rights and civic participation is exercised in the private family domain and in the public sphere. However, I did not fully explore its implications for electoral politics in terms of party preference. It is foreseeable that *communities of transnational families* will be established along nationality lines with the gradual growth of their population, the maturation of the ethnic economy, the expansion of Southeast Asian-language media (for example, Chang 2008), and the development of autonomous organisations. The existence of such communities will not only challenge the multicultural policy, but will also render themselves as constituencies of clearly defined interests at local and national levels. At its developing stage, it is necessary to identify the conditions for such developments and its potential modes of alliance with any given political parties. Combining studies of political participation of the transnational couples will enrich our understanding of women's political socialisation

and the role politics plays in the husband-wife intimacy. It will also lay the foundations for future studies of the ethnic and national identity debate in Taiwan.

It is essential to dig deep into the immigration legislation to find out how it is utilised for the task of nation-building. My research has shown that the package of immigration laws is a lens with which to look into the development of a national community. A key finding of my research of the legislative change is the role that household registration plays in distinguishing nationality from citizenship. However, due to the lack of archival information, I have not been able to fully investigate the *governmentality* of household registration and its emergence as a solution to migration control, particularly with regards to admitting PRC citizens and Overseas Chinese. Deeper research of this issue is critically required. Archival research is also needed to trace how the current legislation governing foreigners, Overseas Chinese, PRC citizens and ROC citizens inherits previous administrative rules and regulations. This kind of research should be sensitive to how categories of migrants (economic vs. investment immigrant, non-economic vs. dependent immigrant, skilled vs. unskilled labour, marriage immigrant) develop along with the making of immigration legislation. These studies will demonstrate how gender, class and ethnicity have undercut the imagination of the national community in the globalisation era.

A major contribution of my research is comparing immigrant women of different national origins. However, comparisons across state borders are also critically needed. Research on household registration and the impact of renouncing a previous nationality will benefit from comparing similar legislation in Japan and South Korea. The experience of receiving marriage immigration of PRC citizens and Overseas Chinese should be compared with those of Hong Kong and South Korea, given that they also accommodate marriage immigration of Chinese women and Overseas Korean women.

This kind of studies will reveal how people who are born and bred in different political systems are differentiated and how returned nationals are appropriated into the imagination of the national community. The jigsaw puzzle will not be completed if legislation of the destination countries is not included. To fully grasp the impact of marriage immigration on the national community, it is also necessary to include the legislation of the originating states. The amendments to the nationality laws in Indonesia (Winarnita 2008) and Vietnam (McKinsy 2009) are cases in point. The former now permits Indonesian women who marry foreign nationals to pass Indonesian nationality to their children and the latter accepts dual nationality of Vietnamese women who marry foreign nationals. A comparison of the legislation of the originating and destination countries will generate a regional picture for this unique mode of migration.

Becoming in-between is a life-long process fighting against discrimination and winning back self-esteem. The making of immigration legislation, social categorisation and familial intimacy all have their roles to play in this ongoing *rite of passage*. It requires additional dedicated research to uncover the tension, fusion and ambiguity of this duty-based and motherhood-oriented identity. It also requires more studies to look into its origin, evolution, strength, variation and the impact on individuals and the two countries they are entitled to call home.

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_____, 2008c. *The Draft Bill of the Amendment of Article 17(1) of the Act Governing the Relations between People of the Taiwan Area and People of the Mainland Area*. Legislative Yuan General No. 1554, Initiative of Legislators No. 8130 (立法院議案關係文書, 院總第一五五四號, 委員提案第八一三〇號, 中華民國九十七年五月廿一日印發, 案由: 本院委員張顯耀、盧秀燕、黃志雄、陳福海、楊瓊瓔等卅二人, 鑒於現行「台灣地區與大陸地區人民關係條例第十七條」, 針對大陸配偶來台依親居留、長期居留、定居之年限限制, 較諸外國配偶歸化我國國籍之居留、定居等規定, 實有外籍配偶待遇優於大陸配偶之不公平情形, 爰提出「台灣地區與大陸地區人民關係條例第十七條」修正草案, 是否有當? 敬請公決) (in Chinese), 21st May.

_____, 2008d. *The Draft Bill of the Amendment of Article 17 of the Statute Governing the Relations between People of the Taiwan Area and People of the Mainland Area*. Legislative Yuan General No. 1554, Initiative of Legislators No. 8321 (立法院議案關係文書，院總第一五五四號，委員提案第八三二一號，中華民國九十七年七月十六日印發，案由：本院委員吳清池、潘維剛、黃志雄、江玲君、蔡錦隆、陳福海、江義雄等廿四人，建請修正現行「台灣地區與大陸地區人民關係條例」第十七條條文，是否有當？敬請公決) (in Chinese), 16th July.

_____, 2008e. *The Draft Bill of the Amendment of Article 17(1) of the Statute Governing the Relations between People of the Taiwan Area and People of the Mainland Area*. Legislative Yuan General No. 1554, Initiative of Legislators No. 8375 (立法院議案關係文書，院總第一五五四號，委員提案第八一五七號，中華民國九十七年十月一日印發，案由：本院委員張顯耀、費鴻泰、陳福海、洪秀柱、盧秀燕等廿六人，鑒於大陸配偶來台依親居留，其受雇於台灣地區工作之各種限制，較諸外籍配偶獲准居留者，不需申請許可即享有工作權利，實有不公。基於人道關懷、人權考量，爰提出「台灣地區與大陸地區人民關係條例第十七條之一」條文修正草案，以彰顯基本人權。是否有當？敬請公決) (in Chinese), 1st October.

_____, 2008f. *The Draft Bill of the Amendment of Article 17 of the Statute Governing the Relations between People of the Taiwan Area and People of the Mainland Area*. Legislative Yuan General No. 1554, Initiative of Legislators No. 8485 (立法院議案關係文書，院總第一五五四號，委員提案第八四八五號，中華民國九十七年十一月五日印發，案由：本院委員孫大千、孔文吉、呂學樟等廿三人，鑑於現行「台灣地區與大陸地區人民關係條例」第十七條，針對大陸配偶來台居留及定居有類別、數額及年限等限制規定，此較諸外國配偶歸化我國國籍後定居之規定，實有外國配偶待遇尚優於大陸配偶之不平等情形，特提出本修正案。是否有當？敬請公決) (in Chinese), 5th November.

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APPENDIX A – Who Are They? Interviewees’ Personal Profiles

I. Older Chinese Retirees Coming for Their Second Marriage

Originating hometown

There were 13 older women in my research who came to Taiwan for their second marriage. Four of them came from Fujian, three from Hubei, two from Guangxi, and there is one each from Guangdong, Jiangxi and Sichuan. It is estimated that 60 percent of Chinese marriage immigrant women in Taiwan are from North Fujian (Chao 2007: 134) and reportedly there is a thriving market in Yongle for organising bogus marriage to Taiwan (Chao 2007: 134). Three of the four Fujianese have daughters working in the UK. This testifies to the global routes of Fujianese migration¹¹².

Domicile

All of the interviewees reside in metropolitan Taipei, and all but Auntie Shi live in private housing. That means that there is no tangible boundary between their home and the surrounding neighbourhood. Auntie Shi and her Mainlander husband live in a dormitory provided for discharged servicemen who remained single at advanced age (not a nursing home)¹¹³. Being a gated and walled military compound by nature, it is

¹¹² Fujian is an ancestral home for Chinese sojourners overseas for centuries and also one of the historical origins of Han Chinese in Taiwan. The Fujianese migration tradition was rekindled after the economic reforms and nowadays it is known for sending migrants throughout the world, as captured by this doggerel ‘*Taiwan fears Pingtan, America fears Tingjian, Japan fears Fuqing, Britain fears Changle, and the whole world fears Fujian*’ (Liu-Farrer 2010).

¹¹³ Living in a state-owned property, their utility bills are paid by the Ministry of National Defence and a small clinic is staffed by the military medical unit for the residents’ needs. Its decades-old panel-block military layout and the communal setting are such that residents are allocated in single bedrooms (the only personal space) and share the common rooms, shower rooms and toilets. Some set up a small cooking facility on the narrow corridor and share meals with neighbours in the nearby rooms. In spite of the fact that it deprives residents of the domestic comfort of a conventional private house, it is envied by some for the minimal living costs.

also a closed social system where its Mainlander residents and their Chinese wives are largely insulated from its surrounding neighbourhood.

Age

Except two that were unknown, the mean age of the 11 interviewees was 56.2 years (between 43 and 71) and their mean marriage age was 47 (between 33 and 56).

Education

Except for one unknown, there is Zhong Meiling who claimed herself to be illiterate, while Wu Lili and Qian Aini have had a primary education. Wu Lili dropped out of primary school after it was closed down during the Cultural Revolution. The educational attainment of the other nine interviewees is evenly distributed – three at the junior high school level, three at senior high school level, and three at university level.

Occupation

Except for one unknown, prior to migration, the majority of the interviewees (8, or 66 percent) were state employees and five of them had retired before coming to Taiwan. They are Granny Yang working at a research institution as a senior engineer, Auntie Shi and Zhang Jinhua as primary school teachers, and five working at state-owned enterprises. The other four – the Fujianese - were either unemployed housewives or engaged in farming.

After migrating to Taiwan, the interviewees beyond the age of 60 do not intend to work and live on their husband's pension. The only exception is Auntie Liu who does cleaning for a cram school. Interviewees below the age of 60 are still actively looking for employment, including the Fujianese whom I met at a placement agency and in their workplace. Their employment is mostly to be found in the caregiving industry, while part-time work is found for nannying and cleaning.

Channels of introduction to their husband

Except for two unknowns, eight of the interviewees were introduced to their husbands by acquaintances in China or Taiwan. They were introduced by relatives, friends, neighbours, or returned Chinese immigrant women. Three of them were introduced by professional brokers. Seven of the total 13 interviewees married elderly Mainlanders but not all of their husbands are military pensioners.

Length of residency in Taiwan and motherhood

The interviewees arrived in Taiwan between 1994 and 2005. Seven of them (54 percent) have lived in Taiwan for more than 10 years, ranging from 10 to 15 years. All of them except Zhang Jinhua left their teenaged or adult children in China. Long Yongru is responsible for the living cost of her teenage sons in China. Hu Hailang and Wu Lili's daughters also marry Taiwanese men, while Zuo Zirong was looking for suitable candidates for her daughter.

Acquisition of citizenship

Eight of them (62 percent) have acquired citizenship. Three of them were on a Long-Term Residency Permit while the other two were on a Dependent Residency Permit.

Religion

Except for Granny Yang, Zhang Jinhua and Zhong Meiling who are Christian, none of the other 10 interviewees identified their religious belief. Granny Yang was introduced to a Presbyterian church in her neighbourhood by a neighbour. She described the neighbour as a 'second-generation Mainlander' who took pity on her after her husband had passed away. She claimed her church supports Taiwan independence and that members of the congregation preferred to speak Taiwanese dialect in spite of her lack of

comprehension. Zhang Jinhua claimed she believes in Jesus but she also frequents Buddhism temples. She noted that the wide-spread superstition to be found in Taiwan was an eye-opening experience for Mainland Chinese who are moulded to be atheists by the CCP regime from an early age.

II. Younger Women Coming To Taiwan for Their First Marriage

There are 24 younger women in my research who came to Taiwan for their first marriage.

Originating hometown

Anhui, Sichuan, Guangdong and Guangxi are the top four origins of the interviewees. There are respectively six, four, three and three interviewees from these four provinces. (The over-representation of Anhui is an unintentional coincidence.) The other origins are Shanghai, Shandong, and Hubei (two from each of these places). Each of the last four interviewees came from Fujian, Shaanxi, Henan and Hainan.

Six interviewees experienced labour migration inside China before arriving in Taiwan. They left home in Anhui, Sichuan, and Guangxi to work in Hangzhou, Dongguan, Shenzhen and Shanghai. Jiang Derong intermittently worked in Taiwan illegally for five years¹¹⁴. Long Yun left Shanghai and acquired a PhD in biology in a foreign country. The higher geographical mobility of the younger interviewees is not seen amongst the older interviewees. This gives the former labour migrants a broader perspective with which to compare their migration experiences and the different urban

¹¹⁴ Jiang Derong's illegal employment in Taiwan is a case study of family chain migration. Her grandfather sponsored her father to be relocated to Taiwan, and her father sponsored her visitations, which were valid for six months each year. She shuttled between Taiwan and Hubei for five years and every year she worked in Taiwan on her visitation permit.

landscape in their hometown, the cities they were working in, and the residing places in Taiwan.

Domicile

Eighteen interviewees (69 percent) reside in metropolitan Taipei, including Keelung. The other eight reside in Taoyuan, Pingtung, Kaohsiung and Taichung. Residing in Taipei enables them to attend activities organised by the non-profit organisation CARES (Chinese Association for Relief and Ensuing Services), where they can acquire initial contacts with fellow immigrants.

The fast urbanisation in China means that the urban landscape of mega-cities like Shanghai, as well as second-tier cities like Hangzhou, have undergone a facelift and re-engineering. The appearance of glass-covered skyscrapers, wide and straight boulevards, and the growing motor vehicle ownership is taken to visualise *modernity* in its material sense. A similar development is sweeping through smaller provincial cities. In this light, Taipei does not particularly live up to the expectation of a ‘better’ life.

Age

The mean age of the interviewees was 34.2 years (between 24 and 46) and their mean marriage age was 26.1 (between 18 and 43).

Education

Long Yun is the only one acquiring a doctoral degree out of the 98 interviewees. Three interviewees have a university degree and half of the interviewees received senior high school education. Seven (27 percent) have junior high school-level education, including drop-out Ming Xianglan because her school was closed down during the Cultural Revolution. Two received primary education, including Zhu Yongli, but she dropped out in the second year. Thus she regarded herself as illiterate and did not have access to

education until she moved to Taiwan and attended private tuition for her children given by a Christian neighbour.

Occupation

The occupational background of younger Chinese interviewees is a witness to China's economic reforms. There are only five younger interviewees (22 percent) employed by the government at a factory, primary school and in governmental agencies. Except for three unknowns, 14 of them (61 percent) worked in the private sector, including helping out with the family-run business and being self-employed, and half of these privately employed women left home for jobs in the coastal cities (see above).

After migrating to Taiwan, nine of them (35 percent) are unemployed, mostly because of childrearing and housekeeping responsibilities. For the other 16 interviewees, most of them found jobs as shop assistants. Compared to their older counterparts who are less mobile socially and geographically, the younger interviewees' employment gives them wider exposure to random members of the general public.

Channels of introduction to their husband

A major difference between the older and younger Chinese interviewees is how they meet their husband. This sketches out the changing face of cross-strait marriage. Ten out of 26 younger interviewees (38 percent) knew their husband while the latter was in China for work or business. Eight of them (31 percent) met initially through social matchmakers and their introducers were returned immigrant women, relatives in China or Taiwan or Mainlander returnees. Three of them met their husband while visiting Taiwan. Long Yun got married with her husband while studying abroad, while An Qilang and Ma Xinting met their husbands through online social networking sites. Ming Xianglan's late husband was a native Taiwanese. During World War II he was an

interpreter for the Japanese military on Hainan Island but failed to return to Taiwan after the war with his Japanese girlfriend who was a nurse. Xianglan and her husband returned to Taiwan in 1994 with their three children. Mi Yuping is the only one who got married via a brokerage (her elder sister-in-law is also Chinese).

Length of residency in Taiwan and motherhood

The interviewees arrived in Taiwan between 1994 and 2008. Nine of them (35 percent) have lived in Taiwan for more than ten years, ranging from 10 to 15 years. Apart from two unknowns and two having no children, 20 of them gave birth in the first two years after moving to Taiwan. Twelve of them (60 percent) have one child and the other eight interviewees have two children.

Acquisition of citizenship

Eleven interviewees (42 percent) have acquired citizenship. Another 10 interviewees (38 percent) were residing on the status of the Dependent Residency Permit. The other five are on Long-Term Residency Permits and Visitation for Family Reunion status.

Religion

Six of the interviewees are Christian. Shi Yiping in Pingtung and Zhu Yongli in Taipei were converted after their Christian neighbours helped them to overcome a difficult marriage and a strained relationship with their in-laws. The others do not practice any religion.

III. English-Speaking Filipinas from Big Towns in the Philippines to Quiet Villages in Taiwan

The Philippines is currently a major emigration country in Asia. The estimated stock of overseas Filipinos around the world as of December of 2008 amounts to 8,187,710, including permanent, temporary and irregular migrants. That means nearly one tenth of

the nation's population resides outside of the country. Filipino spouses of foreign nationals are part of the permanent migrants. Between 1989 and 2008, they totalled 352,108, and 90.3 percent of them are female (CFO 2010).

Analysing the statistics released by the Philippine government, Ogena *et al.* (Ogena *et al.* 2007) present a comparison of the socio-economic indicators of Filipino marriage immigrant women to Taiwan, South Korea and Japan. The time span of the data collected by the authors is between 1989 and 2006, which coincides with the time of arrival of the 13 Filipino interviewees who participated in my research (between 1991 and 2006). Hence their study is a useful reference point with which to position the 13 interviewees in the general context.

Ogena *et al.* divide the data into two periods: 1995-1999 and 2000-2004. The number departing for Taiwan peaked in 1997, but then declined afterwards. On the other hand, the number marrying Korean husbands has been increasing in spite of some fluctuations in the observed periods (*ibid*: 5).

In terms of age, in the two periods, the majority of Filipino immigrants to Taiwan were in the age range of 25 to 29 years. The mean age of the first period was 25.25 years and rose to 27.60 years in the second period; the ratio of women younger than 25 years decreased significantly (*ibid*: 7). In a 10-year period, Filipino women who migrated to Taiwan moved from the being youngest to the oldest, compared with their counterparts to South Korea and Japan (*ibid*: 8). Although the ages of immigrants to the three destinations vary, they are above the age of 25 years, comparable with the national trend which showed that the 25-29 years of age cohort was the biggest group of Filipino spouses of foreign nationals. If the observed period is expanded to cover 1989 and

2008, this age cohort occupies 31.47 percent of all Filipino spouses¹¹⁵ (www.cfo.gov.ph).

In terms of education, the majority of Filipino women who migrated to Taiwan in the first period were high school or vocational school graduates. They were exceeded by women with college or higher education in the second period. That is, more than 50 percent of Filipino women who came to Taiwan between 1995 and 1999 had a high school diploma, whereas more than 60 percent of Filipino wives between 2000 and 2004 had a college or higher degree. A reverse trend was observed amongst those who migrated to South Korea. Those who migrated to Japan remain to be dominated by high school graduates in the two periods (*ibid*: 9).

In terms of work status, in the two observed periods, around 80 percent of Filipino women were not working before they migrated to Taiwan. The proportion of women of the same status to Japan reduced from 90 percent to 89 percent, whereas their counterparts going to South Korea rose from 68 percent to 78 percent (*ibid*: 10). This finding is different from the statistical profile of Filipino spouses presented by the Commission of Filipino Overseas (CFO). The latter shows that 59 percent of Filipino spouses were employed and amongst those unemployed spouses, 14 percent of them were housewives¹¹⁶. It requires more analysis to determine whether there is a significant variation amongst streams of spouses to different countries, that is, whether those who migrate to the US differ significantly from those who depart for Japan, Taiwan and South Korea.

¹¹⁵ Given that 90.3 percent of Filipino spouses marrying foreign nationals are female, the aggregated data can represent the characteristics of female population.

¹¹⁶ Employment is mainly found as 'service workers' (15 percent) and 'professional, technical and related workers' (14 percent) (http://www.cfo.gov.ph/pdf/statistics/FS%20BY_OCCU.pdf).

There were in total 13 Filipino immigrants participating in my research. Although Lu and Yang asserted that domestic ‘maids’ seldom return to Taiwan as wives (Lu and Yang 2009: 16), in my research there were cases of former migrant workers from the Philippines (and Vietnam, Indonesia) who found their marital partners while working in Taiwan and returned.

Originating hometown

Except for three unknowns, six interviewees are from Manila, and the other four are from Cebu, Bataan, Iloilo, and Mindanao. Three of the latter later migrated to Manila for employment.

Domicile

Eleven interviewees (85 percent) live in three townships in Pingtung. The other two, Cindy and Virginia, live in Taichung and Taipei. Comparing where they resided in the Philippines and Taiwan, all but two experienced urban-to-rural movement after migration. The two exceptions are a case of urban to urban movement and a case of rural to rural movement.

Age

Except for one unknown, the mean age was 43.83 and the mean marriage age was 30.66. If excluding Ellie and Virginia who were in the second marriage, the mean marriage age was 28.7. Viewed by the Philippine social custom, they had passed the conventional marriage age of 25 years (del Rosario 2005: 257).

Education

All of the 13 interviewees completed high school or higher education. Three of them are university graduates. Six (46 percent) have a vocational college diploma. Four completed senior high school.

Occupation

Except for one unknown and one helping her sister with housework, the other 11 interviewees had worked before they came to Taiwan. This is not in line with the findings of Ogena *et al.* that 80 percent of Filipino immigrants to Taiwan were not working prior to migration¹¹⁷ (Ogena *et al.* 2007). Most interviewees had done more than one job, such as primary school teacher, laboratory technician, hotel staff, bank clerk, secretary, accountant, and shop assistant.

International labour migration – realised and unrealised – is an eye-catching feature of their employment. Working abroad as a contract labourer is described by some as an ‘ambition’. Virginia was a teacher for 20 years but came to Taiwan in 1990 for care-giving work before foreign labour was formally legalised in 1992. Marian was working at an electronics factory in Taiwan. Peony was an accountant in Manila and later a caregiver in Taiwan. Andrea received a job offer as a dancer in Japan but the offer was withdrawn so she stayed in the same recruitment agency for office work. Peggy worked at a factory but planned to work in Taiwan.

After migration, they actively sought employment except for full-time mother Daisy. Virginia did cleaning in Taipei. Marian continued to work at an electronics factory in Taichung. Interviewees in Pingtung were caregivers, dish-washers, cleaners, shop assistants, shop owners and one worked at a piggery. Shops selling Filipino foods and offering remittance and postal service are the meeting places for their fellow

¹¹⁷ This significant difference may be due to the way the question is phrased. In the study of Ogena *et al.*, the question was whether immigrants were employed before departure. In my interview, my question was ‘What did you do for a living before you moved to Taiwan’. Hence, respondents in the research of Ogena *et al.* might not be working at the moment when they applied for required documentation for migration. Therefore, a large scale survey may be needed to gain a better understanding of their occupational background.

immigrants. Jennifer in Pingtung briefly gave English classes to her husband's colleagues but afterwards she worked as a shop assistant and did part-time cleaning for the church.

Channel of introduction to husband

Virginia, Peony and Marian met their husbands while working in Taiwan. Jennifer and Ellie met their husbands who were then working in Manila. Daisy was introduced by a neighbour who had married a Taiwanese man. The other seven interviewees were approached by brokers. At the time of interview, Peggy's husband had passed away. Ellie and her son moved out after her husband's affair was over. Jo suffered domestic violence but decided to stay in the marriage and applied for citizenship. All the others remained in the marriage.

Length of residency and motherhood

The interviewees arrived in Taiwan between 1991 and 2006. Nine interviewees (69 percent) have lived in Taiwan for more than 10 years, ranging from 11 to 19. Except for Virginia whose adult children live in the Philippines and the US, all of the other 12 interviewees have children in Taiwan and the majority of them have two children.

Acquisition of citizenship

Nine interviewees (69 percent) have acquired ROC citizenship. The other four were on Residency Permits.

Religion

Peony and Virginia are Catholic. The others, except for Marian's unknown religion, are Protestant. Christian belief is important not only in terms of *faith* but also for extending social contacts outside of home with Taiwanese or fellow immigrants. Church clergy allied with social workers offer help in finding employment, claiming benefits, and

communicating on behalf of immigrants with school teachers. Interviewees' reluctance to perform ancestor worship is a perennial tension with mothers-in-law.

IV. Young Vietnamese Wives from Villages in Vietnam to Villages in Taiwan

Vietnam is a country experiencing streams of outward-migration over the past few decades. Political refugees after the reunification in 1975 were accommodated in North America, Western Europe and Australia. During the 1980s, some took advantage of the state-launched temporary labour migration programmes and stayed in the USSR and the Eastern European socialist states¹¹⁸. There were a total of 26 immigrants from Vietnam participating in my research. Six of them are of Chinese ancestry.

Originating hometown

Hugo and Nguyen find that Vietnamese marriage immigrant women to Taiwan are mainly from the Mekong Delta region, one of the poorest regions in Vietnam (Hugo and Nguyen 2007: 369-370). This is reflected in my research: 16 interviewees (62 percent) are from the Mekong Delta region. Only two were from the North (Hanoi and Bac Ninh Province) and one from Huế. Seven interviewees are from Ho Chi Minh City. The North-South regional variation is blended with the urban-rural divide. It is believed that most Vietnamese workers are from the north, whereas Vietnamese wives come from rural villages in the south where modern utilities are lacking. Their hometown is likened by their Taiwanese husbands to 'the rural villages of Taiwan *thirty years ago*' (Fung and Liang 2008: 64) and thatched-roof houses are stressed as the visual presentation of Vietnam's under-development, or 'backwardness'.

¹¹⁸ These various forms of migration were taken by family members of some interviewees. For Vietnamese immigrants in Canada, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland see Woon 1986, Drbohlav and Džúrová, 2007; Baláz and Williams 2007; Grzymala-Kazłowska 2002.

Domicile

Eight interviewees reside in metropolitan Taipei and four reside in Yunlin, Tainan and Kaohsiung. Fourteen interviewees (54 percent) reside in rural areas, including seaside villages in Chinshan, Yilan, and Penghu, and agricultural villages in Taichung, Nantou and Pingtung. If viewing their migration across the state border as a movement along the urban-rural spectrum, only three from the Mekong Delta region migrated to urban areas (Taipei, Keelung and Kaohsiung), while the majority remained in rural areas after marriage. Those who were from urban areas in Vietnam, remained in urban Taiwan except for one residing in a seaside village in Chinshan.

Stressing that most of her fellow immigrants and their parents knew nearly nothing about Taiwan, Hoàng Minh Suong in Chinshan said that the second biggest city Kaohsiung was mistaken by Vietnamese parents for being in the ‘countryside’. When asked whether her fellow immigrants in her village felt disappointed by its distance and isolation from Taipei, she replied: ‘A lot of Vietnamese live in the outskirts of Taipei. When their parents asked where they lived, they wouldn’t say [they lived in the countryside]. They all said they lived in Taipei. To the ears of parents, ‘*Taipei*’ spells the magic. [*But*] *Taipei is a big town. Which corner of Taipei do you live in?*’ (02/06/09, Chinshan)

Age

The mean marriage age was 22.2 and the mean age was 30.6. Eight interviewees were married at ages between 17 and 19. Twelve of them got married in the age range of 20 to 24. They were married considerably younger than the Filipino interviewees.

Education

Compared to Filipino interviewees, the educational attainment of Vietnamese interviewees was lower. Four interviewees reached university level but only two of them completed their education. Seven interviewees received senior high school-level education and an equal number of interviewees received junior high school-level education. There is one drop-out in each group. Eight interviewees (33 percent) received primary school-level education, including three drop-outs. In total, there are seven interviewees (27 percent) whose education was disrupted. This is higher than Chinese and Filipino interviewees. (Despite the high drop-out rate, there were two full-time mothers undertaking postgraduate studies in Taiwan. This is not seen in Chinese, Filipino and Indonesian Chinese interviewees.) Family poverty and fathers' failing business were unanimously given as the reasons for disruption.

Occupation

The younger marriage age of Vietnamese interviewees means that they mostly participated in the family livelihood and undertook multiple odd jobs during their adolescent years. In addition to two interviewees having no work experience, 10 interviewees helped out with family farming and a self-owned shop or factory. Their participation in the family livelihood underlines the significance of the household as an economic unit and for the indispensability of their labour. The pattern that women work at home and also do farming reflects the conventional gendered division of labour in Vietnam (Teerawichitchainan *et al.* 2010). Their waged labour contributed to family economy (usually controlled by father), funded the family business or enabled their male siblings' education. Daughters' contribution to family economy is also seen in agricultural households in Taiwan in the 1960s-70s (Farris 2004: 347).

Seven interviewees found jobs at factories and two were employed by trading companies. These businesses were Vietnamese-owned and invested in from Taiwan, Japan and Hong Kong. Their employment is a manifestation of the globalisation of Vietnamese economy through the regional integration. Four Vietnamese Chinese were employed by at Taiwan-related businesses in Vietnam and Taiwan. This demonstrates the strength of the transnational economic link. Vietnam is a sending country of contract workers to Taiwan. Thus, three interviewees, including one Vietnamese Chinese, were working at Taiwan's textile and electronics factories. Ngô Xuan Phuong is Vietnamese Chinese and was working for a marriage broker (her aunt) as an interpreter.

The pattern of home-based livelihood and gendered division of labour continues after migration. Eight interviewees ran their own shops or helped out businesses owned by their husband or in-laws. This underscores the value of their labour for the family economy. It may also create a family feud when the appropriation of wage and profit is disputed particularly because of remittances. Some opened their own shops¹¹⁹. Unlike the two Filipino shops aiming to serve Filipino customers, these shops are for general customers. Two Taipei-based interviewees worked at a travel agency and a placement agency because of their Chinese fluency. Six interviewees worked at a factory and shops, including university-level Ngô Hoàng Linh working as a butcher.

Channel of introduction to their husband

All of the 26 interviewees came to Taiwan for their first marriage. Except divorcee Pham Thanh Van and widow Trinh Phuong Thuy, the other 24 remained married at the time of interview.

¹¹⁹ They are shops for clothing alterations, beauty salons, snacks, books, and groceries. One runs her own restaurant.

Matchmaking was the major channel of meeting their husbands. Eleven interviewees (42 percent) were introduced by brokers and eight were initiated by social matchmaking of acquaintances. Social matchmaking (introduction arranged by an acquaintance) is prevalent in Vietnam due to the sex ratio imbalance caused by the Independence War of the 1950s, the Vietnam War in the 1960-70s and large-scale male emigration after 1975 (Goodkind 1997: 114). The growth of transnational marriage is visualised by the improved living standards effectively and promotes matchmaking as an accepted channel of introduction.

Four interviewees met their husbands while the latter was visiting or working in Vietnam. Reportedly, a ‘husband holidaying in Vietnam’ is a cover for professional brokering (Fung and Liang 2008: 63-64). Three interviewees met their husbands while working in Taiwan.

Length of residency and motherhood

Interviewees arrived in Taiwan between 1993 and 2008. Ten interviewees (38 percent) have resided in Taiwan for more than 10 years, ranging from 10 to 16 years. Fourteen interviewees (54 percent) have resided in Taiwan between 6 and 9 years.

All of them have children in Taiwan. More than half of them became mothers within or after the first year of their residency in Taiwan. In spite of the stigmatised *fertile* image, 12 of them have only one child, while another 11 have two children. Only two of them have three children.

Acquisition of citizenship

The length of residency is well reflected by their high percentage of naturalisation. Sixteen interviewees (62 percent) have acquired citizenship. Pham Thanh Van is the

only Permanent Resident out of all 98 interviewees, whereas the others were on Residency Permits.

Religion

Amongst 26 interviewees, only two were Christian and one was frequently visited by a pastor. Whether daughters-in-law are able to *independently* conduct ancestor worship rituals is interpreted by mothers-in-law as the indication of her willingness of adaptation. Compared to their Filipino counterparts, Vietnamese interviewees seemed more able to satisfy this expectation. Vietnamese women's high adaptation to local religious rituals is often attributed to their similar cultural heritage including Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism.

V. Overseas Chinese from Indonesia

Originating hometown and dialects

Nine interviewees were from Jakarta and saw themselves as urbanites. Another nine interviewees were from Pontianak and Singkawang, West Kalimantan. Le Fen Fen and Sim Se Ham were from Medan. Jakarta is cosmopolitan, whereas west Kalimantan is provincial and less developed. West Kalimantan is historically known for the habitation of Hakka Chinese (Heidhues 2003). Choi Kim Chai stated that in Pontianak, Hakka men and women leave home for overseas employment in Malaysia, Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan (05/06/09, Penghu).

In addition to Indonesian language (*Bahasa Indonesian*), Hokkien is the *lingua franca* for Indonesian Chinese, but Hakka is the dominant speech in Kalimantan. Six interviewees from Kalimantan are Hakka speakers and the other three were brought up by Hakka and Teochew (Chaozhou) parents. Interviewees from Jakarta and Medan speak Hakka, Cantonese, Teochew and Foochow (Fuzhou). Multilingualism – speaking

Indonesian as well as one or more Chinese dialects - is common amongst Indonesian Chinese. However, it is not common to speak Mandarin (see below in the section on education background).

Domicile

There is a clear urban-rural divide in interviewees' residing places in Taiwan. Half of the interviewees reside (or work) in urban areas including metropolitan Taipei, Keelung and Kaohsiung. The other half resides in rural areas including Yilan, Pingtung and Penghu. Thus their migration across the state border also means a movement along the development spectrum. If Kalimantan is regarded as a relatively rural area, then six interviewees move to rural and three move to urban areas in Taiwan. From urban Jakarta and Medan, four interviewees move to rural and seven move to urban areas in Taiwan.

Adaptation is harder for those who experience downwardly urban to rural migration. This is particularly so for Lai Siu Moi in Yilan and Ang Lip Fong in Pingtung, who were brought up in a well-to-do family and had a career in Jakarta. It is also a challenge for Chew Siu Wai in Pingtung because her tailoring job in Jakarta at a garment factory brought her an independent income. For those who moved from rural Kalimantan to Penghu (an off-shore island) and Pingtung (an agricultural county), the rural environment does not live up to the expectation of modernity and prosperity.

Age

The mean age was 37.05 and the mean marriage age was 25.5. If excluding Choi Sook Yin and Ng Siew Day who came to Taiwan for their second marriage, the mean marriage age was 22.8. Four interviewees from Kalimantan got married at the age between 17 and 19.

Education

Four interviewees are university graduates, including Le Fen Fen studying in Taiwan and Ang Lip Fong, Susani Halim, and Yenny Wong studying in Jakarta. Lai Siu Moi studied in Sydney, Australia, at a college for catering and home economics. Seven interviewees (35 percent) received senior high school-level education. Five interviewees received a junior high school-level education, including Ng Siew Day, Chew Siu Wai and Liew Siew Lian dropping out in the second year. Three interviewees finished at primary school level. Unable to attend any school, Choi Sook Yin was illiterate in Chinese and Indonesian languages.

Occupation

The types of interviewees' employment prior to migration are clearly defined by the urban-rural divide. For those who resided in Jakarta, there was employment generated by the investment of multinational companies. Others made their living by opening shops or maintaining family-owned shops, a major livelihood of Indonesian Chinese. For those whose hometown was in Kalimantan, they did not find employment in factories but shops, or helped out with their family's farming and ran trading between Jakarta and Pontianak at personal level. In addition, there were those marrying off to Taiwan at a young age without employment experiences. After Taiwan opened its domestic labour market for foreign labourers, three worked in Taiwan's factories.

After migration, nine interviewees, regardless of whether in rural or urban areas, were unemployed housewives mostly because of responsibilities for childrearing, housekeeping and caring for elderly parents-in-law. Lacking the prospect of a career outside of the home partly contributes to the perception of downward social mobility, and this is particularly so for Lai Siu Moi, Chew Siu Wai and Yenny Wong. Others found employment in shops, restaurants and hotels, or helping out with a family-owned

businesses. Le Fen Fen became an IT professional after graduating from university in central Taiwan. Susani Halim is a contracted interpreter and director of a community service centre

Channels of introduction to their husband

There are four major ways of being introduced to their potential husbands. Nine interviewees were introduced by professional brokers. The broker in Penghu extended his service by charging fees for citizenship application paperwork (Wu 2005: 3). Three knew their husbands while studying or working in Taiwan, and another three knew their husbands while the latter were working in Jakarta. Five interviewees were introduced by social matchmaking via families, relatives or friends who have a transnational link between Taiwan and Indonesia. The link is part of the earlier *return migration* of Indonesian Chinese to Taiwan. Because of the transnational links amongst Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Indonesia, a woman may be introduced to these various places for marriage (or employment).

Length of residency in Taiwan and motherhood

Interviewees migrated to Taiwan between 1983 and 2007. Twelve interviewees (60 percent) arrived in Taiwan before 2000 and have lived in Taiwan for more than 10 years, ranging from 10 to 26 years. The other eight came after 2000. As *the Nationality Act* was amended in 1999 and *the Immigration Act* was promulgated in 2000, the year of arrival determined which legal procedure interviewees followed to apply for citizenship. Fifteen interviewees became mothers in Taiwan, while three were childless at the time of interview. Ng Siew Day and Choi Sook Yin have their adult children living in Indonesia.

Acquisition of citizenship

Fifteen interviewees (75 percent) have acquired citizenship and the other five were on Residency Permits. At the time of interview, Yenny Wong stated that she preferred to apply for a Permanent Residency Permit rather than citizenship, due to the concern of losing her Indonesian nationality.

Religion

Six of the interviewees in Keelung and Pingtung are Christian. The Christian beliefs created frictions in Susani Halim's interaction with her in-laws, because she declined to practice ancestor worship and tomb sweeping. Ng Siew Day is a Buddhist and being able to read Buddhism texts in Chinese. This overcame the fear she encountered as a caregiver in the intensive care unit where there is a thin line between life and death. Tan Mee Leh often visited an Earth Deity temple but felt deserted by the deity because of her hard life. Other interviewees did not have specific religious beliefs but observe a religious calendar defined by folk beliefs and conduct ceremonial practices as most Taiwanese families do.

Table 1 Interviewees' Personal Background: By Category

Chinese	Older (13)	Younger (26)
Hometown		
Majority	Fujian (31%)	Anhui (23%)
Experiences of labour migration (in China, Taiwan)	0	6 (23%)
Domicile		
Metro Taipei	13	18 (69%)
Taoyuang, Taichung Kaohsiung, Pingtung	0	8
Age (yrs)		
Current	56.2	34.2
Marriage	47	26.1
Education		

PhD	0	1
University	3	3
Senior HS	3	13 (50%)
Junior HS	3	7
Primary	2	2
Illiterate	1	(1) ^a
Occupation: before migration		
Studying overseas	0	1
State employees	8 (62%)	4
Housekeeping/farming	4	4
In the private sector	0	14 (54%)
Unknown	1	3
Occupation: after migration		
Unemployed (on husband's pension)	4	0
Unemployed (housekeeping, caring for family)	0	9
Laborious (car-giving, cleaning, dish-washing)	8 (62%)	4
Shop assistants, self-employed	0	11 (42%)
Other ^b	0	2
Unknown	1	0
Channel of meeting husband		
Social matchmaking	8 (62%)	8
Brokering	3	1
Husband working in China	0	10 (38%)
Knowing husband when visiting Taiwan	0	3
Online social networking sites	0	2
Other ^c	0	2
Unknown	1	0
Length of residency (yrs)		
10-15	7 (54%)	9 (35%)
4-9	6	9
1-3	0	8
Motherhood		
Children in China	11	2
Children in Taiwan	1	20 (77%)
Childless	1	2
Unknown	0	2

Acquisition of citizenship			
Citizenship	8 (61%)	11 (42%)	
Long-Term Residency	3	10	
Dependent Residency	2	3	
Family Reunion	0	2	
Religion			
Christian (Protestant)	2	6	
Not-specified	11 (85%)	20 (78%)	
Southeast Asian	Filipino (13)	Viet. (26)	
Hometown			
Majority	Manila (45%)	Mekong Delta (62%)	
Experiences of labour migration (in Taiwan)	3	3	
Unknown	3	0	
Domicile			
Metro Taipei (incl. Keelung)	1	8	
Rural ^d	11 (85%)	14	
Urban area ^e	1	4	
Age (yrs)			
Current	43.83	30.6	
Marriage (excl. second-marriage interviewees)	30.66 (28.7)	22.2	
Education			
University	3	4	
Vocational college	6 (46%)	0	
Senior HS	4	7	
Junior HS	0	7	
Primary	0	8	
Illiterate	0	(1) ^f	
Occupation: before migration			
Farming/helping family/unemployed	1	12	
Teacher	1	1	
Factory workers (incl. in Taiwan)	3	10	
Office clerks, shop assistant, lab technician	3	2	
Domestic work/care-giving	4	0	
Working for marriage broker	0	1	

Unknown	1	0
Occupation: after migration		
Unemployed (housekeeping, caring for family)	2	8 (31%)
Laborious (car-giving, cleaning, dish-washing)	7 (54%)	0
Shop owners	2	8
Factory worker	1	3
Office clerk (travel agency, placement agency)	0	2
Shop assistants	0	3
Agriculture	1	2
Channel of meeting husband		
Social matchmaking	1	8
Brokering	7 (52%)	11 (42%)
Husband working in Manila/Vietnam	2	4
Knowing husband when working Taiwan	3	3
Length of residency (yrs)		
16-19	3	1
10-15	6 (46%)	9
4-9	4	14 (54%)
1-3	0	3
Motherhood		
Children in Taiwan	12	26
Children in the Philippines/Vietnam	1	0
Acquisition of citizenship		
Citizenship	9 (69%)	16 (62%)
Permanent Residency	0	1
Residency	4	8
Religion		
Christian (Catholic/Protestant)	12	2
Not-specified	0	24
Unknown	1	0
Indonesian Chinese	20	
Hometown		
Jakarta	9 (45%)	
Kalimantan	9 (45%)	
Medan	2	

Experiences of labour migration ^g	2
Domicile	
Metro Taipei (incl. Keelung)	9
Rural (Yilan, Pingtung, Penghu)	10 (50%)
Urban area (Kaohsiung)	1
Age (yrs)	
Current	37.5
Marriage (excl. second-marriage interviewees)	25.5 (22.8)
Education	
University	3
Overseas college	1
Senior HS	7 (35%)
Junior HS	5
Primary	3
Illiterate	1 ^h
Occupation: before migration	
Farming, helping family	2
Factory worker, artisan	3
Office clerk, shop owner or assistant	10 (50 %)
None	3
Unknown	2
Occupation: after migration	
Professional	1
Unemployed (housekeeping, caring for family)	9
Laborious (car-giving, construction)	2
Shop owners	5
Factory worker	1
Channel of meeting husband	
Social matchmaking	5
Brokering	9 (45%)
Husband working in Jakarta	3
Knowing husband when working Taiwan	3
Length of residency (yrs)	
16-19	3
10-15	9 (45%)
4-9	4

1-3	4
Motherhood	
Children in Taiwan	15
Children in Indonesia	2
Childless	3
Acquisition of citizenship	
Citizenship	15 (75%)
Residency	5
Religion	
Christian	6
Buddhism	1
Not-specified	13

Source: author.

Notes:

- a. Refers to Zhu Yongli who regarded herself as illiterate.
- b. Refers to Long Yun working at a research institute and Chen Qing working at an electronics factory.
- c. Refers to Min Xianglan whose late husband was a Taiwanese in Hainan and Long Yun who knew her husband in a foreign country because of overseas study.
- d. Refers to Pingtung for Filipino interviewees, and Taichung, Nantuo, Yilan, Pingtung, and Penghu for Vietnamese interviewees.
- e. Refers to Taichung City for the Filipino interviewees, and Kaohsiung, Tuoliu and Tainan and for Vietnamese interviewees.
- f. It refers to Tran Thi Loan who regarded herself as illiterate.
- g. As the two were trader and office clerk before working in Taiwan, in the occupation slot they are respectively counted under 'farming, helping family' and 'office clerk, shop owner or assistants'.
- h. Ng Siew Day dropped out from primary school and regarded herself illiterate both in Chinese and Indonesian.

APPENDIX B: Summary of the Results of 2003 Census and 2008 Survey Conducted by the Ministry of the Interior

In 2003, the Ministry of the Interior conducted an island-wide census of foreign and Chinese spouses (MoI 2004a). This was followed by a survey in 2008 (MoI 2009a)¹²⁰. The reporting of the 2003 census was in line with the prevailing stigmatisation and saw marriage immigrant women as the cause of social problems. In contrast, the reporting of the 2008 survey recognised that the stigmatisation was actually contributing to their disadvantaged living. Both results, summarised in this Appendix, provide a general picture of the personal background of the foreign and Chinese spouses. Table 2 shows the geographical distribution of foreign and Chinese spouse in Taiwan.

The 2003 census found that the mean age of Taiwanese partners whose spouses were Chinese was 45-years-old and it was 39-years-old for those whose spouses were foreigners. The age gap of Taiwanese-Chinese and Taiwanese-foreign couples was 12 years. There are 35.9 percent of Taiwanese spouses receiving junior high school education and a similar ratio (34.6 percent) of senior high school graduates. In the 2008 survey the ratio of senior high school graduates rose to 40.1 percent. In the 2003 census the rate of socio-economically disadvantaged Taiwanese partners is 19.7 percent, including Mainlander veterans, mentally and/or physically disabled persons,

¹²⁰ The size of the census population was 240,837 persons, excluding those who were dead, divorced and did not reside in Taiwan. The respective numbers of Chinese and foreign spouses who were interviewed by government agents were 139,222 and 101,615, including 4.4 and 5.2 percent of Chinese and Southeast Asian husbands. Most of the cited results do not distinguish between women and men. However, as the percentages of Chinese and foreign (including Southeast Asian) husbands are very low (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2 in Chapter 3), the statistics of Chinese and Southeast Asian spouses can be taken for representing Chinese and Southeast Asian wives. Likewise, most of the cited results do not distinguish between Southeast Asian wives and wives of other nationalities. However, as the percentage of the latter groups is very low, the statistics for foreign immigrant women can be taken for representing Southeast Asian wives. The 2008 survey interviewed 13,345 foreign and Mainland spouses, who were selected through systematic sampling. Most results do not distinguish between foreign and Mainland spouses.

low-income persons and Indigenous persons. Amongst disadvantaged Taiwanese partners, 43 percent were Mainlander veterans and 41 percent were disabled persons. In the 2008 survey the ratio of 'healthy' Taiwanese partners was 92 percent, and 80 percent of Taiwanese partners were employed, mainly in the manufacturing industry. In terms of the health of the children, defying the stigmatisation that immigrant women's children are prone to be troubled by learning difficulties, the percentage of children who had an underlined health issue or learning difficulties was a minute of 0.4 percent in the 2003 census and 0.8 percent in the 2008 survey, so represented a minute percentage.

On the Chinese side, the census found that the mean age of Chinese spouses was 33-years-old. More than half of them (55.5 percent) belonged to the age group of 25 to 34-years-old and the next biggest age group was 35 to 44-years-old (20.6 percent). The majority of them (40.9 percent) received a junior high school education and 27.7 percent of them are senior high school graduates. Being introduced by relatives and friends was the major channel of meeting their husbands (60.8 percent), but there were 9.6 percent introduced by fee-charging marriage brokers. A significant number of them (28.3 percent) got to know their Taiwanese partners on their own, without social matchmaking or professional brokering. There were 18.9 percent of Chinese women marrying for the second time. Half of the Chinese women became mothers in Taiwan and 47.8 percent of them gave birth to 1 to 2 children. The great majority of Chinese immigrant women were unemployed (73.3 percent) and 84.7 percent relied on 'personal or husband's employment or business' as the major source of the family income, with 9.5 percent of them relying on their husbands' pension (mainly veterans' wives). The census found 75.3 percent of them relied on their husbands as the source of personal expenses. There were 29 percent marrying disadvantaged Taiwanese partners; amongst these, 54 percent married Mainlander veterans and 30 percent married disabled persons.

A very limited number (9.7 percent) of Chinese immigrant women attended publicly funded training courses, including Chinese language, life orientation, employment training, supplementary school and caregiving training.

The census found that the mean age of foreign immigrant women was 27-years-old. The great majority of Southeast Asian spouses belonged to the age group of 15 to 24-years-old (46.5 percent) and 25 to 34-years-old (41.5 percent). The majority of Southeast Asian spouses (35.5 percent) received a junior high school education, with a nearly equal number (33 percent) being senior high school graduates. Being introduced by relatives and friends was the major channel for foreign immigrant women to meet their husbands (48 percent), with 37.8 percent introduced by fee-charging marriage brokers. There is a very low percentage (2.4 percent) of foreign immigrant women marrying for the second time. The great majority of foreign immigrant women (70.8 percent) became mothers in Taiwan and 66.2 percent of them gave birth to 1 to 2 children. The majority of foreign immigrant women (66.6 percent) were unemployed and 95.7 percent relied on 'personal or husband's employment or business' as the major source of family income, with 4.1 percent relying on the income of co-habiting family members. 73.6 percent of them relied on their Taiwanese husbands as the source of their personal expenses. There were 13 percent marrying disadvantaged Taiwanese partners; amongst these, 68 percent married disabled persons, and 16 percent married Mainlander veterans. There were 19.1 percent of foreign immigrant women attending publicly funded training courses.

The results of the census allow us to descriptively compare Chinese and foreign spouses (see Table 2). In terms of age, Chinese spouses were on average older than their foreign counterparts by six years. In terms of Taiwanese partners, the rate of Chinese spouses marrying disadvantaged partners was twice as high with a concentration on

marriage with Mainlander veterans. (This is partly reflected by the rate of those who relied on their husband's pension as the main family income.) In the case of foreign spouses, a higher rate appeared in marriage with disabled partners. In terms of education, Chinese spouses on the whole attain a higher level of education. In terms of the channels of meeting potential husbands, Chinese spouses commanded more autonomy, which testifies to the intensified contact between Taiwan and China. In contrast, a higher rate of foreign spouses were approached by marriage brokers and the actual rate may be even higher as 'introduced by relatives and friends' is known for a semantic substitute for brokering arrangements.

A significant difference between the two is that the number of re-married Chinese women is six times higher. In terms of giving birth, there are less Chinese women bearing children, arguably because the percentage of re-marriage is higher amongst Chinese women. Foreign spouses who had a higher rate of co-residing with parents-in-law (more than 50 percent) were more likely to give birth (Chen Yu-hua 2006: 16). In terms of personal finance, both Chinese and foreign spouses were dependent on their Taiwanese partners for family income and personal expenses. Although both were largely unemployed, the labour participation of foreign spouses was slightly higher than that of their Chinese counterparts because Chinese immigrants were under conditions of more restrictive regulations (see Chapter 4 for details). Although the contribution of other sources to the family income was marginal, Chinese spouses relied more on their Taiwanese partners' pension, whereas foreign spouses relied more on co-residing family members. By law, military pensioners' spouses are entitled to half of the pension after their partners' death. Thus, Chinese women who marry military pensioners and who have acquired citizenship will be entitled to half of the pension after their Taiwanese partners pass away. This provides ammunition for

those who argue that receiving marriage immigration bears an extra burden on the public finances. For foreign spouses who are more likely to be co-residing with their parents-in-law, sharing the family finances exacerbates financial dependence and insecurity. It is a particularly thorny issue when remittances are involved. In terms of attending training courses, both Chinese and Southeast Asian spouses had low participation, but the latter's enrolment was nearly five times higher.

Table 2 Comparing Chinese and Foreign (including Southeast Asian) spouses: 2003 census (unit: %)

	Chinese	Foreign	Southeast Asian
Taiwanese spouses:			
-Average age (yr)	45	39	
-Education: JHS, SHS	35.9, 34.6		
-Disadvantaged	29	13	
Mean age (yr)	33	27	
Age group:			
-15-24-year-old			46.5
-25-34-year-old	55		41.5
-35-44-year-old	20.6		
Education:			
-primary school	18.5		33.1
-Junior high school (JHS)	40.9		35.5
-Senior high school (SHS)	27.7		21.3
Channel of knowing husband:			

-Social matchmaking	60.8	48	
-Professional brokering	9.6	37.8	
-Neither of the above	28.3	13.7	
Second marriage	18.9	2.4	
Giving birth	50	70.8	
Number of children (1-2 persons)	47.8	66.2	
Personal finance:			
-unemployed	73.3	66.6	
-husband's income/business as the main source of family income	84.7	95.7	
-others (pension/family members)	9.5	4.1	
-husband as the source of personal expense	75.3	73.6	
Attending training courses	4.8	19.1	

Source: MoI 2004a.

As the immigration legislation has been significantly reformed since 2003 (see Chapter 4 for details), the above results need to be updated by the findings of the 2008 survey. The survey finds a general decline of marriages that were introduced by brokers. The major channels of meeting husbands were through the introduction of relatives and friends (52.8 percent) and meeting their husbands without professional brokering or social matchmaking (33.8 percent). After the immigrants' right to work was liberalised, the rate of unemployment fell, and a total of 56 percent were allowed to work. It resulted in 55.96 percent being in employment, the majority of which was in the manufacturing, catering, wholesale and retail industries (69.7 percent). For those who

did not work, the major obstacle was homemaking and housekeeping (96.9 percent). The lack of the ID Card was the major reason for an employer's rejection. In terms of sources of personal expenses, the ratio of reliance on Taiwanese partners fell to 66.4 percent. The percentage of using personal income for personal expenses rose to 27.4 percent. After the facility of Chinese language was made a prerequisite for naturalisation, the ratio of those who were enrolled at language training and orientation courses increased to 27.7 percent.

Table 3 Domicile of Foreign and Chinese Spouses: 1987-2010 (unit: person)

			Foreign		Chinese	
	Total	%	Number	%	Number	%
	(a)	b+c/a	(b)	b/a	(c)	c/a
Area	432,171	100	146,979	34	285,158	66
New Taipei Cty	80,340	18.58	24,607	31	55,702	69
Taipei Cty	44,725	10.35	10,836	24	33,865	76
Taichung Cty	44,872	10.38	14,385	32	30,455	68
Tainan Cty	27,887	6.45	9,414	34	18,439	66
Kaohsiung Cty	47,654	11.02	14,957	31	32,666	69
Yilan Cy	6,974	1.61	2,856	41	4,077	59
Taoyuan Cy	46,648	10.79	17,114	37	29,497	63
Hsinchu Cy	10,892	2.52	5,337	49	5,506	51
Miaoli Cy	11,739	2.72	4,870	42	6,827	58
Changhua Cy	18,912	4.38	8,988	48	9,876	52
Nantou Cy	9,190	2.13	4,330	47	4,813	53

Yunlin Cy	13,681	3.16	6,301	46	7,334	54
Chiayi Cy	11,517	2.67	5,006	44	6,467	56
Pingtung Cy	17,121	3.96	7,399	43	9,679	57
Taitung Cy	3,730	0.86	1,390	38	2,302	62
Hualian Cy	7,519	1.73	1,842	25	5,652	75
Penghu Cy	1,721	0.39	912	55	754	45
Keelung Cty	8,828	2.04	2,270	26	6,532	74
Hsinchu Cty	7,209	1.67	2,572	36	4,601	74
Chiayi Cty	4,115	0.95	1,270	31	2,814	69
Kinmen Cy	1,967	0.46	289	15	1,663	85
Lianchiang Cy	514	0.12	34	7	473	93
Unknown	5,164	1.19	0	0	5,164	100

Source: NIA 2011a, MoI 2011a¹²¹.

Notes:

1. Numbers include men and women.
2. 'Cty' stands for County.
3. 'Cy' stands for City.

¹²¹ Data available at Ministry of the Interior website <http://sowf.moi.gov.tw/stat/gender/ps05-13-99.xls>.