



**Panel's title :** *Asia-Europe intimate links: family migration, binational couples and mixed-parentage children*

**Coordinators (Affiliation, University...):**  
 Asuncion Fresnoza-Flot (CMR/ISL, Radboud University)  
 Simeng Wang (CNRS-CERMES3)

**Language :** English

**Topics :** (Migration, couple, family, children, intimate links, Asia, Europe)

**Panel presentation :**

Family migration, that is, human spatial mobility for the purpose of family formation or family reunion, is increasing steadily in the Asia-Europe migration corridor. This phenomenon concerns 'mixed' couples whose members have different nationalities and ethnicities, 'non-mixed' ones, and parent-child dyads. In these cases, the usual focus of scientific attention is the immigration experiences of the one who moved in Europe (the Asian adult migrants), whereas the viewpoints of their family members such as their spouse and children remain largely understudied. To fill this gap, this panel present findings from recently conducted empirical researches in the field of anthropology, psychology and sociology. Its objectives are threefold: first, to compare the family migration involving Asian migrants in different European countries using an interdisciplinary perspective; second, to identify intersecting factors shaping the family dynamics and experiences of these migrants and their family members, especially through an intergenerational approach; and third, to pinpoint the manifold stakes of migration, of binational intimate relationship, of raising children in migration context, and of growing up in an ethnically diverse society.

**Key words :** Migration, couple, family, children, intimate links, Asia, Europe

**Participants :**

- 1) Yali Chen (University of Geneva)

**Communication's title :** Dependency, independency and interdependency: post-global marriage life strategies of Chinese migrant women in Switzerland

**Language :** English

**Presentation :**

By analyzing the reasons why Chinese women marry European men in Switzerland and the dependency, independency and interdependency that characterize their social and private lives. International migration studies often emphasize the hypergamy of Asian women marrying Western men to improve their living conditions and obtain a more favorable position. However, we observe in our study a different situation that may even be considered as hypogamy as their settlement in Switzerland with a Western husband destabilize their economic condition. Via a literature review in the theme of "global marriage" and interviews conducted with Chinese migrant women in Switzerland, this research aims to understand whether they develop "strategies" of negotiation with their husband and the society of settlement, and how they maintain their network and their role both in their society of settlement and in their host country.



2) Asuncion Fresnoza-Flot (Radboud University)

**Communication's title** : European men with Filipino spouses, Filipino men with European wives: masculinities and gender dynamics in 'mixed' couples in the men's eyes

**Language** : English

**Presentation** :

Studies on 'mixed' couples involving Filipinos are largely focused on the perspectives of Filipino women, whereas the viewpoints of their foreign partners are practically absent from the literature. Addressing this empirical gap, this presentation draws from interviews and informal conversations with two groups of men: Belgians and Dutch in (present or former) relationship with Filipino women, and Filipinos (currently or previously) married to Belgian or Dutch women. Through these men's eyes, this presentation investigates their sense of masculinity and its influence on the gender dynamics in their couple. Data analysis highlights the importance of the traditional gender division of household chores (wherein women fulfil caregiving obligations at home and men do the productive role) to Belgian and Dutch men. Some of them appear satisfied with the division of labour in their couple, whereas others remark that their Filipino wives' behaviour departs from their expectations, prompting them to negotiate. Filipino men also wish to follow the traditional division of labour in their home but find it difficult to reach this goal since Belgian/Dutch spouses pursue gender equality. The resulting frustration pushes Filipino men to adopt various strategies to cope with their situation. These men's experiences indicate that class, age and national belonging are intersecting factors that shape their interactions and relationships with their spouses, who in many cases defy the social stereotypes about them.

3) Jean-Baptiste Pettiers (University of Cologne)

**Communication's title** : From Europe and Asia, with love - an inter-continental conversation on romanticism, modernity and the perpetuation of clichés

**Language** : English :

**Presentation** :

As anyone circulating between Europe and East-Asia will know, tenacious clichés pervade the relationship between the two continents, and by extension, the intimate relationships between their respective inhabitants. The association of Europe with the ideal of romanticism and Asia with the one of familism, as well as racial stereotypes associating Asians with femininity and Europeans with masculinity, pervade the Euro-Asian relationship with sentimental and sexual metaphors constantly repeating themselves and difficult to resist. The question of mate choice and the importance given to love are also a constant source of questionings and misunderstandings. By examining the process of modernisation wherein they take their source and by examining some of their present day prolongations, this presentation sheds light on these clichés and the challenge they pose to the relationship between Asia and Europe as well as in the intimate relationships between their inhabitants.



4) Simeng Wang (CNRS-CERMES3)

**Communication's title** : Transformation of family and matrimonial norms among Chinese women and men spouses of French citizens: an approach in terms of intersectionality

**Language** : English :

**Presentation** :

Based on a qualitative survey carried out among Chinese women and men spouses of French citizens, their family members and in-laws, and prefectural administrative officers, this communication aims to analyze the transformation of family and matrimonial norms in an international migration context, through an approach in terms of intersectionality. In this study, all Chinese migrants were qualified – in China, in France, or in both countries – and already in regular situation (hence they were not getting married for the purpose of regularization). By focusing on three social scenes where they were faced with different familial systems and matrimonial norms during their migration to France (firstly their departure from their family of origin in China, secondly their administrative encounters with the French administration and with the agency in charge of immigration and integration (OFII), and finally their installation in France), the communication shows that the administrative category “Spouse of French”, far from homogeneous, comprises a diversity of social trajectories. Gender relations, social classes, generation effects and ethnic relations operate in an intersectional way as producers of family and marriage norms in the context of international migrations, and participate in the socialization process of those international migrants.

5) Yanfei Wu (Catholic University of Louvain)

**Communication's title** : From physical migration of the family to cultural migration within the family: Chinese emigrant families in Belgium

**Language** : English :

**Presentation** :

The so-called ‘acculturation gap’ is probably the most studied cause of conflicts in immigrant families in the past decades. However, this construct inherently assumes that children are more acculturated to the receiving country than their immigrant parents. Our data in Chinese immigrant families in Belgium challenge this assumption: although some of the migrants’ children we interviewed identified themselves as “completely Belgian having nothing to do with China”, some others did feel “being Chinese” even stronger than their parents. We also found that this divergence in self-identity exerts also an impact on parent-child coactions and relationship, particularly in moments of conflicts. This study uses interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to dive into the texture of Chinese adolescents’ accounts in Belgium.



6) Fong-Ming Yang (Soochow University, Taiwan)

**Communication's title** : Love and commitment: an approach to well-being among the French-Taiwanese homosexual couples

**Language** : English :

**Presentation** :

This paper aims to examine a less-studied issue regarding Euro-Asian couples: how homosexuality get transformed or adjusted in migratory situation, particularly in relationship involving French citizens. Since the establishment of the Civil Union Law (Pacte civil de Solidarité) in the end of 1990s, the friendly attitude of the French society has attracted foreigners' interests. Homosexuals from other countries immigrate to France to experience a couple life that is not recognized in their country. Some among them choose French as their partners. Using my long-term fieldwork research with French-Taiwanese gay and lesbian couples in Lyon and Paris, I want to take into account the notion of well-being in social sciences when asking the questions: do they enjoy their homosexual relationship in France? How do they to maintain their intercultural intimacy?