

“**恭喜結婚啦!!**”  
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2016 TAIWAN FIELD TRIP  
2016 臺灣田野調查

# TAIWANESE WEDDINGS: TRADITION AND CHANGE

## 結婚啦 臺灣人的婚禮傳統與變遷

Every year, the Anthropology Department organizes a field trip to give majors a chance to observe and experience other cultures and to gain experience conducting fieldwork. In recent years, the Department has sought opportunities for students to actually conduct interviews and collect data.

This year, 7 students went to Pingdong in southern Taiwan. We lived in a village where Dr. Joseph Bosco first conducted his PhD dissertation fieldwork in 1984-86. We lived with families, and interviewed villagers and some outside experts, such as two matchmakers, a local historian, and at a shop that specializes in selling wedding ritual objects.

Our Taiwanese informants were extremely generous and willing to answer our questions. They themselves are interested in weddings.

Weddings have changed greatly over time. In the past, a groom delivered “engagement cakes” and “bride-price” in cash to the bride’s family. The wedding was held in front of the groom’s house, and one to three days later, the newlyweds returned to the bride’s natal home as guests for a feast known as guining.

Nowadays, the engagement party has merged with the guining and often takes place at a restaurant.

The wedding banquets used to be held in front of the home (a form called liushuixi), but many weddings now are held in restaurants in the city. Our trip did not overlap with any village weddings, but we had a banquet like the liushuixi on our last night in the village, when the Senior Citizens Society invited us to their annual banquet.

There are many rituals and customs associated with weddings. Taiwan is famous for the bridal photography that developed and is most elaborated there. Special stores sell ritual objects.

This exhibition intends to show how wedding rituals have changed over time, and also to illustrate how anthropologists can study a simple custom to learn more about a society and culture more broadly.

每一年，中大人類學系都會於暑期舉辦田野調查，提供學生觀察、體驗和參與不同文化的機會，並從中了解如何策畫人類學的田野工作。近年來，則更進一步調整，希望提供同學更多機會在田野工作去實際訪談和資料蒐集。

今年(2016年)，在Joseph Bosco教授帶領下，我們前往位於南台灣屏東縣的一個村莊進行田野調查。Bosco教授在1984到1986年間於這個村莊進行博士論文的田野工作，也因此，在他的協助下，我們借住在當地居民家中，並在村莊內進行訪談。此外，也經由居民介紹，訪談了兩位媒人、一位地方文史工作者，以及一位婚禮禮品店的專業服務人員，請他們以專家身份說明婚禮習俗和各項細節。

謝謝所有的受訪者，他們大方地接受訪談，不厭其煩地回答每個問題，並且熱情提供所有關於婚禮的資訊。

隨著社會變遷，結婚各項儀式有了許多調整，舉例來說，在過去，新郎需要支付喜餅和聘金給女方家長，而婚禮宴客則是在新郎家前方街道舉辦流水席，而在宴客後一至三天，新人男女雙方則需要回到女方娘家舉辦另一場宴客，稱之為「歸寧」。

今日，歸寧不再單獨舉辦，而是與訂婚儀式結合，由女方在餐廳舉辦宴客。

而過去在家門前舉辦「流水席」的結婚宴客方式，現在則多改由在都市裡的飯店或餐廳舉辦。我們這次田野實習並沒有參加到村裡的婚禮，不過最後一晚，適逢村里老人會在村廟前舉辦流水席，我們很榮幸地受邀享用。

還有其他很多關於臺灣結婚的儀式和習俗，比如近來蓬勃發展且廣為人知的婚紗照，以及特定販售婚禮用品的店舖。

這次展覽不僅展示了臺灣婚禮習俗歷時的變化，同時，也將呈現人類學家如何透過研究特定習俗，去理解更廣泛的社會文化。



# SEQUENCE OF WEDDING IN TAIWAN



# 臺灣婚禮

# 的 時序



## XIANGQIN

The practice of asking a matchmaker to find an appropriate bride for a son

男方的父母請媒人幫忙尋找匹配的對象。

## 1 壹 相親

## 2 貳 提親

新郎和新娘的父母見面提出婚事請求，當面商量聘金、喜餅的數量等婚禮的細節。

## TIQIN (WEDDING PROPOSAL)

The meeting between the two families to propose the marriage and to discuss details of the wedding including the amount of dowry and engagement cakes

## ENGAGEMENT

Engagement is the first ritual that formally unites the two families. At this ritual, the two families will exchange gifts to show mutual commitment and both sides introduce key family members through the ritual of offering tea.

## 3 參 訂婚

訂婚是正式結親的開始。儀式中雙方家庭交換信物，並藉由奉茶的儀式讓新人認識對方的家人。



## 4 肆 迎娶

新郎在結婚當天到女方家接新娘的儀式。過程中包括諸多細節，如：拜祖先，拜別女方父母，丟扇等。

## YINGQU

Yingqu refers to the ritual of the groom visiting the bride's family to pick up the bride and lead her home. The process includes many critical rituals such as praying to the ancestors, saying farewell to the bride's parents, dropping a fan from the wedding car window, etc.



## WEDDING BANQUET

The banquet on the wedding day is an important ritual. Relatives and friends of the groom's and the bride's will join the banquet to share the happiness and give the newlyweds their best wishes.

## 5 伍 婚宴

結婚當天的晚宴式婚禮過程中的重要場合。新人雙方的親戚和朋友多會出席，分享喜氣也給新人他們的祝福。



## 6 陸 歸寧

歸寧是由新娘娘家舉辦的宴席。儀式通常在婚宴的隔天或是三天後舉辦，剛結婚的新娘和新郎會以外人的身份返回娘家參加這場宴席。

## GUINING

Guining is a banquet held by the bride's family. It is usually held one to three days after the wedding banquet. The newlyweds return to the bride's natal family as guests (i.e., outsiders).



# 媒人

看提親習俗的變遷  
和自由戀愛

## 媒人婆的傳統角色與變遷

媒人婆於六十年代早期是一種在婚事安排中擔負多重角色的職業。她首先為青年男女牽引紅線，談成後再作提親的中間人。

**牽引紅線** 當時父母在兒子達到適婚年齡後，就會聘請媒人婆幫忙找家庭背景與八字相配的對象。

**提親** 一旦找到適合的對象，準新郎會連同家長和媒人婆到心儀對象的府上正式提親。提親時雙方家長會商議婚禮的細節、聘金和喜餅的數量。報導人林先生說當男方派媒人婆到女方家去徵求喜餅的數量和口味時，女方會根據家庭和社交圈子的人數計算出所需的斤兩。今日喜餅有多達六十多種的口味，包括紅豆、鳳梨等等。

台灣南部的居民以福建人為主，但也有不少客家人。客家人的傳統中，男方在提親會面後會留下紅包，以表誠意。如果女方答應這頭婚事就會收下紅包，反之女方會透過媒人婆將紅包歸還。雙方家庭同意婚事後，就會以新郎新娘的生辰八字來決定迎娶的吉日。

## 由相親到提親

八十年代社會逐漸開放，女性開始進入職場工作。林先生提到當時工廠成為年輕人結識異性的場所，自由戀愛也變得越來越尋常。媒人婆原本牽引紅線的功能因而日漸式微。然而媒人婆在正式提親時依然不可或缺。

儘管自由戀愛越來越普遍，然而與婚禮相關的決定和細節依舊由家中長輩在提親時互相討論，並透過媒人婆居中協調。至此，媒人婆雖然名義上依然叫「媒人」，但她們的工作本質已變成輔助婚事的協調者。

## 現今的求婚、提親習俗

時至今日，提親已不再是雙方家庭的首次會面，聘金的數目也不再透過提親當面商討。在交往期間，不但情侶都已經和對方家人相互認識，而且雙方的長輩往往在提親前也已見過面。雖然年輕一代可能會受西式的作法影響，安排一個浪漫的場合，拿出花和戒指求婚；但這類的求婚始終是取代不了上府提親。如報導人陳先生所解釋，透過提親正式的徵求家長的允許和祝福，仍然是婚事上不可省略的程序。提親被視為是雙方家庭正式向親戚和友人宣布喜訊，而媒人婆的參與在這個過程中依然必不可少。

## 自由戀愛和新式婚姻介紹

自由戀愛讓人聯想婚姻媒介的行業應該會息微，但我們的調查卻發現自由戀愛的風潮其實為婚姻介紹一行創造了新的榮景。現有的職業媒人透過商業化的一對一約會或集體相親活動安排，為單身男女製造機會。他們多半不會擔任提親中的媒人婆角色。根據我們的報導人也是職業媒人郭女士的經驗，客戶的年齡由二十至四十多歲不等，一般都是無法順利找到伴侶的人。職業媒人會為客人篩選喜好，如是否吸煙、年齡及家庭背景等。雖然不像傳統媒人般在提親中擔任要角，職業媒人可說是在客戶的同意下，在婚姻大事中扮演了決定性的角色。



## MATCHMAKING: THE ORIGINAL DUTY OF MATCHMAKERS

In the early 1960s, the matchmaker was an occupation with multiple functions, including matchmaking and coordinating official wedding proposals.

### Original duties of matchmaking

Parents would consult a matchmaker when their son reached a suitable age for marriage, and the matchmaker selected potential brides-to-be from her database based on similar family backgrounds and bazi astrological compatibility.

#### Matchmaking superstitions

- Age difference between the bride and groom must not be 3, 6 or 9 years. Nowadays, this is considered superstitious and adapted when convenient.
- Number of people must be an even number when the groom goes to officially propose, since an even number symbolizes pairing. Most likely the groom would bring along his parents and the matchmaker.

### Official Proposal to the bride's family

The main purpose of the brief meeting is to discuss expectations, dowry and engagement cakes. One informant, Mr Lin, said they send the matchmaker to ask the bride's family the amount and flavours of engagement cakes wanted. The bride's family would calculate the amount according to the size of their family and social circle. Engagement cakes are measured by the kilo, and nowadays there are over 60 flavours of wedding cakes including red bean, pineapple etc.

The majority of Southern Taiwan inhabitants are Hokkienese, but there are also a number of Hakkas. In the Hakka tradition, if the groom's family was interested, they would leave a red envelope with the bride's family as a subtle symbol. In response, the bride's family agrees to the wedding by accepting the red envelope. Returning the red envelope through the matchmaker implies rejection of the proposal. After both families agree to the marriage, they will take the groom and bride's bazi compatibility to calculate a wedding date that is most compatible with the couple and that brings the most luck.

## FROM MATCHMAKERS TO GO-BETWEENS

In the 1980s, society began to accept both men and women in the workforce. According to one informant, Mr. Lin, the factories became a common area for couples to meet and free dating became more common. Hence, the matchmakers' function of matchmaking decreased but they still played an essential part in the official proposal between families.

Despite gaining independence in choice of partners, wedding decisions were solely made by the parents of both sides through discussion during the proposal, and the matchmaker must be there at all times to coordinate the negotiation. While the title is still matchmaker, their duty was primarily as a go-between.





THE CHANGES IN ENGAGEMENT

## MATCHMAKERS NOWADAYS

Nowadays, wedding proposals are no longer the first time for families to meet, nor is it for dowry negotiation. Young couples will meet the family on a more casual basis while still dating, and it is likely the parents of both sides have met beforehand. In addition, although the younger generation has more exposure to western rituals such as surprise proposals with rings and flowers, this is a practice that exists outside of traditional wedding procedures, and does not replace the traditional wedding proposal. Formally seeking the family's permission continues to be seen as "an inevitable item on the wedding agenda", as stated by Mr. Chen. Wedding proposals are seen as the official announcement to family and friends of the union of two people, and the deed must be performed with the matchmaker.

### Rituals and Regulations loosen up

- Compatibility with wedding dates is no longer as strict. Quoting one of our informants, Mr. Cai, "convenience is everything for wedding dates."
- Requirement for a go-between has become more lenient. A female relative who possesses the qualities of a "blessed person" may be invited to fill in the role of go-between instead of hiring a professional. "Blessed" means she must be well-off and have a happy family completed with a son and daughter.

## FREEDOM OF LOVE & MODERN MATCHMAKING INDUSTRY

Contrary to popular belief, the freedom of love has actually brought an increase in dating and matchmaking industry. Our informant, Ms. Guo, is a professional matchmaker who does not interfere as a go-between in wedding proposals, but specializes in 1-on-1 dates arrangements and group dating events for women and men who have trouble finding their other half, and the age of clients ranges from the 20s to late 40s. The professional matchmaker filters the likes and dislikes, such as smoking habits, family and age backgrounds. Although the duties differ from the original importance of a go-between, the professional matchmaker can be seen as a vital decision maker under the consent of the clients.



從1960年代至今，訂婚的形式雖然大致不變，但仍然有不少細微的變化。以下的段落將會闡述訂婚環節於不同時期的轉變。第一個時期為1950年代至1970年代；第二個時期為1980年代至1990年代；第三個時期則是21世紀以降。

## 喜餅

訂婚當天，喜餅是不可或缺的一樣物品。女方會藉由發送喜餅予親朋好友來宣佈婚訊。當然，女方並不會收下所有的喜餅，而會將一部分的喜餅回贈男方，好讓男方能將喜餅供奉給祖先以上告婚訊。

### 種類

60年代至90年代的喜餅並沒有顯著的差異，皆是些中式餅。喜餅的餡料、大小則取決於男方家的喜好。21世紀的喜餅與之前的則有明顯的區別。有些受訪者表示其訂婚時用的喜餅乃是西式餅乾或西式糕點。他們解釋現在很多人不喜歡吃中式餅，送出去的喜餅放至過期也沒人吃，反而西式餅乾及糕點較受現代人的歡迎。其次包裝精美的西式喜餅也給人更高雅、大氣的形象。儘管如此，中式喜餅並沒有漸漸淡出21世紀的訂婚環節中，反而是以添加了各種新元素的方式存在。比如說，除卻芝麻、花生等傳統餡料，還添加了紅豆、麻糬等食材，令中式喜餅層次分明、口感豐富，受到不少人喜愛。

### 購買方式

從60年代至90年代，喜餅皆是由男方決定數量及購買，然後再於訂婚當天送至女方家。至近年來，有些男方會先與女方商量喜餅的數量，有些則會把購買喜餅的權利交予女方，讓女方自己選擇喜歡的喜餅及數量。或者訂購之後由男方買單，或者一開始男方就先將買喜餅所需的金額以紅包的方式交給女方。

### 贈送方式

從1960至1990年代，喜餅皆是由男方訂購之後，在訂婚當天送至女方家。而在21世紀，雖說很多情況下喜餅由女方購買，不過這些喜餅會先送至男方家，再由男方於訂婚當天帶到女方家。近年來，為了方便，有些新人會簡化儀式把訂婚宴及結婚宴合在一起，於同一天請客。受訪者表示，在這種情況下，他們會把喜餅直接送到宴客的地點，直接在婚宴時贈送給女方的親朋好友。

### 存在形式

相比以前喜餅皆以實物的方式購買和運送，21世紀結婚的一些受訪者打破傳統，以餅卡取代實物，讓親戚自己去餅店領取喜餅。這樣既省了運送喜餅的麻煩，亦保證了喜餅的新鮮度。

## 儀式

### 1 拜祖先

訂婚當天，新郎攜帶六禮或十二禮至新娘家，女方家把這些物品供奉在神明、祖先面前，然後兩位新人上前持香拜拜，敬告婚訊。當新人將香插入香爐時，必須一插到底，切忌失敗再插，因為這意味著新人將會再婚。拜祖先這個儀式從六十年代以來沒有什麼明顯的變化。溪埔村的村民都篤信神明且在家中供奉著祖先的牌位。他們因而很重視向祖先及神明告知其子女的婚事。

### 2 戴戒指

戴戒指。這個儀式指的是在訂婚時新郎為新娘戴上戒指，把其套牢、訂下終生的意思。但是這個儀式在21世紀之前似乎有所不同。在六十年代結婚的受訪者表示，那些首飾是由媒人在訂婚當日送來，之後再由新娘在結婚當日自行戴上。不過在1980年代之後結婚的報導者則說，有些新郎於訂婚那天親自到新娘家下聘時，便已有執行戴戒指這個儀式。到了21世紀之後，新郎於訂婚那天到場是必須的，而戴戒指亦成了訂婚當天最重要的儀式之一。有受訪者表示新娘在新郎為其戴戒指時，手指必須彎曲，令戒指難以戴到底。寓意新娘沒有那麼容易被新郎套牢、沒那麼容易讓新郎娶到手。在這一天，新娘被視為是最尊貴的人。因此戴戒指時她坐在一張高椅上並腳踏矮凳，其他親屬則全是站著的。而腳踏矮凳這個儀式亦是隨著戴戒指這個儀式的普遍性才流行起來。寓意新娘嫁到新郎家後能「腳翹翹」（形容翹著腿不用做辛苦事的樣子），過上好日子。



## ENGAGEMENT CAKES

Engagement cakes are fundamental in Engagement. The bride's side can inform their friends and relatives about the bride's coming marriage through sending them the cakes. The bride's side will return some cakes to the groom side, allowing the groom to offer it to his ancestors and to inform them of the impending marriage.

### The types of engagement cakes

The cakes in the 1960s to the 1990s were Chinese traditional cakes without many changes. The size and fillings of the cakes were determined by the groom's side as they are the one buying the cakes. The cakes in the 2000s have changed significantly as some of the informants replaced the Chinese cakes with western biscuits and cakes to be their engagement cakes. They explained that people nowadays do not eat Chinese cakes and instead prefer to have western cakes. Some of them even expressed that the fancy packing of western cakes present an elegant image, which is what they wish to show. The Chinese traditional engagement cake, however, did not disappear; instead it exists in a new way by adding some new elements. For example, apart from those commonly used fillings (sesame, peanuts), new fillings like red bean and mochi (sticky rice cake) are added into the cakes, making the engagement cake more tasty and trendy.

### The approach of buying the engagement cake

From the 1960s to the 1990s, it was the groom's side that determined the type and quality of the engagement cake, bought the cakes, and sent them to the bride's home during engagement ritual. In the 2000s, though, the groom's side would discuss with the bride's side before buying the engagement cakes. Some even "handover" the power of decision-making to the bride's side, allowing them to choose what they want while the groom's side still remains responsible for paying the bills. Some would give a red envelop of money to the bride in advance to let her buy the cakes she desires.

### The method of sending the engagement cakes

The groom's side purchased and sent the cakes to the bride's home as part of the engagement ritual from the 1960s to the 1990s. Since 2000, though the engagement cakes are bought by the bride's side, the cakes are sent to the groom's home first and the groom will bring the cakes with him to the bride's home for the engagement ritual. When the bride's family holds an engagement banquet, they are just given out at the banquet. And since some people nowadays out of convenience combine the engagement banquet and wedding banquet, an informant mentioned that they sent the cakes to the banquet hall directly and gave them to bride's friends and relatives who came to join their wedding.

### The format of the engagement cake

In contrast to the practice before 2000 where actual cakes were delivered, the cakes nowadays, in some cases, are virtual cakes, where the bride's side sends cake coupons to their friends and relatives instead of sending the "real" cakes. Informants claimed that it reduces the time and cost in transporting the cakes. People can go and take the cake anytime they want to and thus they can have fresh cakes.

## RITUAL

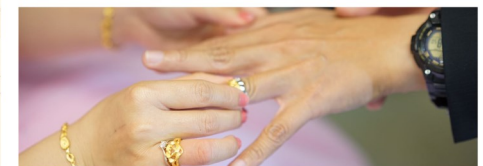
There are several rituals the bride and groom have to follow during engagement day.

### Worshipping the ancestors

The groom brings with him the Liuli (6 ritual gifts) or Shierli (12 ritual gifts) to the bride's home. The bride's family places all these items on the table in front of their ancestors' tablets. The bride and groom then offer incense and pray to her ancestors, telling them that they will be married. One thing they should pay attention to is they have to insert the incense into the censer successfully at the first attempt since the second try symbolizes remarriage. This ritual has not changed much since the 1960s as people in Ke Po still believe in life-after-death and pay great attention to inform their ancestors about the important changes in their life stage.

### Wearing jewelry

The groom helps the bride to wear the ring at engagement, symbolizing the groom has betrothed the bride. However, this was not a ritual before the 2000s. Informants who got married in the 1960s mentioned that the jewelry was brought by the matchmaker, together with other gifts, at the engagement ceremony, and the bride later wore the jewelry by herself on wedding day. Some informants who got married in the 1980s and 1990s, however, reported that when the groom visited the bride at engagement, they had carried out the ritual of wearing jewelry together. In the 2000s, the groom must go to the bride's home for the engagement, and wearing the jewelry becomes one of the most important rituals that day. Female informants claimed that they were told to bend their finger when their fiancé is trying to put the ring on their ring finger, symbolizing that they are not that easy to be caught by their husband. On engagement day, the bride is regarded as the most important person so she is the only one sitting on a high chair and resting her feet on a low stool. The rest of the family members and relatives participated all stand around her during the jewelry-wearing ritual. Resting her feet on a stool is a ritual symbolizing that the bride can enjoy a relaxed and happy life after marrying her husband.





## 奉茶：孝順與輩分

奉茶是中式婚禮中一個重要的儀式。在台灣，奉茶時娘家和夫家的長輩都會坐在椅上，等待新娘為他們送上一杯茶。在奉茶期間，媒人婆會根據輩分向新娘逐一介紹家中長輩。這次序必定以男性和輩分較高者為先，體現中國父權和長幼有序的思想。輩分在家庭倫理關係上十分重要，每個人要都嚴格遵守。奉茶的重要性在於令新娘了解家中的關係，使日後在侍奉時懂得長幼次序。另外，奉茶時新娘需要站著，長輩坐下，亦是顯示了長輩與新娘之間的地位差距。在古時，只有地位較高的人能坐著並接受別人的侍奉。因此奉茶這行為替換了新娘對長輩的孝敬和尊重。

這個儀式由古至今仍然留傳，可見孝順、尊敬長輩這些觀念在台灣社會保持著重要地位。即使是現今社會，很少新人會對儀式內容作出修改。比較有趣的是我們其中一位受訪者，在婚禮中要求新郎亦要進行奉茶儀式，以表示對女方家長的孝敬。雖然形式有所改變，令男女雙方更平等，但儀式的最重要核心——孝和輩分，仍維持不變。

## 潑水：“嫁出去的女兒是潑出去的水”

潑水是很能體現傳統家庭關係的婚禮習俗之一。當新娘準備離開娘家的時候，新娘的母親會把一盤水潑到地下。這代表著以往人們認為當女兒結婚便不再屬於娘家，像潑出去的水一樣不能收回來了。在傳統社會，婚姻往往是根據“父母之命，媒妁之言”，而離婚回到娘家是不被認可的行為，被視為是不孝和有損家聲的事。因此潑水這一習俗，可視為新娘以及她父母對接受這親事的決心，絕不希望離婚，同時亦是新娘對尊重和孝順父母決定的表現。

從上，我們可以了解到傳統女性在家庭和社會的地位。老一輩的人往往都不太希望生女兒，原因是由於女兒是無法傳宗接代，是外嫁的，像潑出去的水一樣沒法收回。但是，對於年輕一輩，他們則持不同的家庭觀念，並改變潑水這一婚禮習俗的內容。為了避免女兒不再回來這一想法，很多人都會取消潑水或是以其他方式取代習俗，例如用茶壺倒水畫圓圈以表示對女兒的祝福。

## 米篩與黑傘：對性的規範

當新娘離開了娘家，媒人婆會根據新娘是否懷孕來決定當新娘在戶外時（亦即從娘家出門到上車和從下車到進夫家門兩段路）需用米篩或是黑傘擋在新娘頭上。當新娘沒有懷孕，媒人婆就會用米篩；相反如果懷孕，則會用黑傘。必須要有一樣東西遮在頭上，主要作用是為了防止當日附於新娘身上的新娘神過於強大，以至到與天爭大。對於米篩和黑傘的源由，我們無法從受訪者身上得知。只知道米篩上的八卦會影響胎兒，因此不能用在孕婦身上。另外，黑傘很有可能是近年才有的習俗。一位80多歲的婦人指出，古時她所見的婚禮並沒有撐黑傘的習俗。相信這與古時社會對性的規範有一定的關係：黑傘代表著婚前性行為，在傳統社會被視為嚴重的罪行，不但有損家庭威望，男女雙方更會被浸豬籠，因此不會有黑傘的出現。儘管婚前性行為被視為是一大禁忌，稱黑傘並不是為了要羞辱他，而是為了保護嬰兒。

在現今這個年輕人不想生育的時代，人們漸漸不覺得婚前性行為是一件羞愧的事。相反的，對於希望早點抱孫子的長輩而言，更是十分受歡迎。我們其中一位受訪者就曾說到很多人都希望能用黑傘。而不管婚前性行為能被接受與否，米篩和黑傘都是對新娘貞操以及生孕的一種規範，以外壓力來管制未婚女性以及維護家庭名聲。



## TEA SERVING: FILIAL PIETY AND FAMILY HIERARCHY

Tea serving is an important ritual for Chinese weddings. In Taiwan, the elders of the two families will sit on chairs and wait for the bride to serve them tea. The matchmaker (or later the “blessed female elder”) will introduce the family members one by one according to their age and gender. The strict order reflects the importance of patriarchy and filial piety in Chinese society. According to one of our informants, serving tea is a process designed for the bride to meet and learn how to address the elders and to learn her position in the family. With the knowledge, the bride can in the future treat the family elders well and show appropriate respect to them. In addition, the bride needs to stand when she is serving the tea, while the older people are sitting on chairs, which shows the hierarchy between the bride and the other family members. In the past, only people with higher position can sit and enjoy service from people with lower position.

The ritual passed from generation to generation, until now. The ideas of filial piety and respecting hierarchy are still rooted in Taiwanese society. Therefore, people seldom modify the content of this wedding tradition. Interestingly, one of our informants has required the groom to serve tea to the bride’s parents, so as to show his respect for his in-laws and to make the ritual more equal. Although there are some changes which assert gender equality, the core value of these rituals -- filial piety and family hierarchy -- still remain the same.



## POURING WATER: THE DAUGHTER WHO WILL NEVER COME BACK

The traditional family and kinship system remains striking in the ritual of pouring water. The mother of the bride will pour a bucket of water on the floor when her daughter gets in her wedding car and is ready to leave. Many informants say the meaning of this ritual is that as spilled water cannot be put back in the bucket, so too daughters once married cannot come back home. Traditionally, marriage was arranged by the parents. Divorce and returning to a woman’s natal family is not encouraged and would bring bad reputation to her family. Pouring the water, therefore, can be interpreted as a ritual reflecting the determination and confirmation of getting married for the bride and her family. It also reflects the bride’s filial piety, that she should “obey her parents’ command and the matchmaker’s advice” (“父母之命，媒妁之言”) and be a good wife in her husband’s family.

The above statement allows us to see the position of women in the traditional family and society. The older generation prefers sons over daughters because a daughter was not a carrier of the family lineage and would marry out from her natal family, like water which has been spilled. However, nowadays, parents and the bride begin to see things differently and therefore alter the meaning of pouring water. Some of them may cancel this ritual, others may change the ritual into using a tea pot to pour a circle around the bride and her wedding car to symbolize the family’s good wishes to her.





看婚禮的平息爭議  
與追尋和諧

## MI-TAI (米篩) AND BLACK UMBRELLA: RESTRICTION ON SEXUALITY

When the bride leaves her home, the matchmaker will hold either a mitai (rice sieve) or a black umbrella over the head of the bride while she is outside, that is, from the time she leaves her house and enters the wedding car, and then, at the groom's house, from the time she exits the car and enters his house. If the bride is pregnant, instead of using a mitai, the matchmaker will use a black umbrella. Both of them are used to prevent the powerful bride from offending the gods in the sky. Most informants could not explain why the black umbrella is used. Some said the "eight trigrams" (八卦) on the mitai will badly influence the baby. Therefore, mitai cannot be used for the pregnant bride. On the other hand, according to an informant who is over 80 years old, the black umbrella seems to be a recent ritual and cannot be seen in the past weddings. The black umbrella tells about pre-marital sex. Since sex was strictly forbidden in traditional society, it is understandable that no such rituals were performed in the past. But while there was a taboo against premarital sexual behavior, the umbrella is not meant to humiliate the bride. It is to protect the infant.

So nowadays when people are unwilling to have children, premarital sex is less forbidden. The older people are even happy to see black umbrella in a wedding as this says that they will soon meet their grandchildren. Regardless of the acceptability of sexual behavior before marriage in general, the rituals of the mitai and black umbrella are still a restriction on females regarding their sexual behavior and virginity as this is a public evaluation related to family reputation. It is a duty for female to maintain her virginity before marriage so as to be a proper wife in traditional society.



## 為什麼要探討“爭執”？

- 1 探討爭執就是在挖掘哪些細節對於新婚夫婦和雙方家庭是最重要並有必要達成共識的。雖然爭執的過程、爭執的重點每個家庭都不同，但是把不同的敘述疊加起來，就能發現其中有一些話題的出現的頻率較高。從這些話題中，就可以推論出婚禮中的重點。
- 2 「爭執與協調」這個主題吸引我的原因還來自於一位新嫁娘的話：「我的婚禮不是為我準備的，而是為我的客人和家人準備的。我只是我婚禮中最重要的一位客人而已。」當我們研究婚禮的時候，時常把焦點放在婚禮的習俗、進程與儀式上。真正在婚事中最重要新郎和新娘往往反而被忽視了。當我們把目光轉向「爭執與協調」時，我們看到的不僅僅是習俗和儀式，而是能帶出婚禮的後台、進一步思考「婚禮」對於當事人的意義何在。
- 3 爭執也能提供一個探討“習俗”的新角度。在婚禮上，人們都希望能儘量避免爭執與歧異。習俗和慣例的存在往往能幫助當事者避免爭執的發生。

## 表達“和睦”意願的典型例子

### • 說吉祥話

婚禮上的來賓見到新人和他們的家人時，都會主動說些吉祥話。除此之外，在台灣南部的婚禮中，還有一位專職說吉祥話的「好命婆」。「好命婆」常常是新娘父母的好朋友：她的婚姻幸福、家庭和睦，並育有至少一兒一女。在訂婚和迎娶時，隨著儀式進行到不同階段，她會用閩南語跟新娘說些押韻的吉祥話。新娘的父母希望藉此祝福自己的女兒婚後也能像好命婆的婚姻一樣順利。

### • 丟扇子

迎娶中，當新娘坐上禮車去新郎家時，在車開動之前，新娘要從車窗丟出一把綢扇。新娘的兄弟或是親近的男性親戚會揀起這把扇子，然後放在她的被子下。這意喻著新娘會就此丟掉大小姐脾氣，到夫家做一位賢妻良母。

### • 撒緣粉

新娘到達夫家後，在她進門之前，媒婆就要在她身邊撒「緣粉」，邊撒邊說「人未到，緣就到」。緣粉是一種粉色的石灰粉，由新娘的母親準備。希望新娘到夫家之後也能和大家和睦相處，受到歡迎和喜愛。

### • 吃湯圓

當新娘到達新娘房後，新郎會餵新娘吃甜甜湯圓。寓意婚姻的甜蜜圓滿。

## 關鍵問題

意見的不同往往出現在那些方面？ 錢，有爭議的習俗，主動權

是什麼引起這些不同的？ 性別，種族背景（客家人和閩南人），年代不同，親家關係

怎麼解決這些問題？ 協調者（媒婆），適當的沈默，改變解釋的方法，保持彈性





## WHY FOCUS ON CONFLICTS?

- 1 Conflicts show what is important for the newly married couples and their families. They show the aspects that the participants pay significant attention to. Although disagreements or quarrels have their backgrounds which vary from household to household, by accumulating different stories, the important values in weddings in general can be highlighted.
- 2 The second reason I found the focus on “conflicts and negotiations” productive came from a witty comment of a recently married girl. She said, “My wedding was about everybody else but me. I was only the most important guest of my own wedding.” The attention towards weddings tends to be drawn upon the ceremonies. The couple who are getting married, worried and occupied with preparation, are somehow alienated from the very wedding that is supposed to be designed for them. The wedding finally becomes a theatrical production to entertain the guests. Hereby looking at negotiating and comprising, the significance of the “back-stage” is brought up. And what happens behind the scene is just as important as what is shown to the audience on the big day.
- 3 Conflicts offer a new perspective for rethinking the concept of custom. At weddings, people have a tendency to avoid conflicts and disagreement. Customs or conventions, whether they are all practiced or not, play a major role to minimize the possibility of disagreements.



## BASIC QUESTIONS

*What are the kernels of the disagreements?*

Money, ambiguous customs and initiative

*What triggers these disagreements?*

Gender, ethnicity (eg. Hakka vs. Hoklo), generation, the relationship between in-laws

*How these problems were solved?*

Mediator, sensitive silence, rhetoric efforts, and being flexible

## THE TYPICAL STEPS TO PRESENT THE IDEA OF HARMONY

### Auspicious Words

Guests are expected to voluntarily give auspicious greetings to the couple and the family. In the weddings of Southern Taiwan, there will be a lady called “the blessed lady” (好命婆). She is usually a close friend or relative of the bride's family. Her family is well off and she has a harmonious marriage and at least one son and one daughter. Through the ceremonies of engagement and the wedding day, she utters auspicious sayings as the bride goes through the wedding rituals. The bride's parents wish that, by doing so, the bride will be as lucky and happy as the lady after the wedding.

### Throwing the silk fan

When the bride is leaving her home for the groom's, before the car drives away, she needs to throw a silk fan out of the car window. Her brother or a close male relative of hers will pick up the fan. He then needs to put it under his bedding. It means that the bride will throw away her bad temper as a beloved and spoiled daughter but enter a new household as a tender and obedient wife.



### Spreading the pink powder

After the bride arrives at her husband's home, before she passes the entrance, the matchmaker will sprinkle some lime powder colored in pink upon the bride and say “Your popularity arrives before you”. It means that the bride is loved and welcome even before her arrival. The colored lime powder is prepared by the bride's mother. This step implies that the girl will blend in her husband's family smoothly.



### Eating sweet tangyuan (sticky rice dumplings)

After the bride is sent to the bridal room, her husband will feed her tangyuan (sticky rice dumplings) in sweet soup. The round shape symbolizes harmony and the sweetness symbolizes happiness of the marriage.

# 聘金

## 從金錢看婚禮的轉變

在傳統中式婚禮中，最重要的一環莫過於錢。任何一項花費都需要雙方家庭的同意。如同我們訪問的一位媒人所言：錢永遠是最容易出現爭議的事情。從前媒人的職責是介紹陌生的男女相識。現在在台灣人們一般會找「便媒人」（而非職業媒人）作為「中間人」為兩家商討婚事的各種細節，特別是與錢有關的事宜。有些受訪者表示他們會找親戚中的女性長輩作為便媒人。

## 由聘金到奶母錢：嫁女概念的轉變

台灣人現在一般都不會收取聘金，而改為收取「奶母錢」。對受訪者而言，聘金和奶母錢是完全不同的概念。很多受訪者都說，如果是收聘金，就不只是這個數目。每當他們解釋奶母錢的時候，他們都會說這是「尿布錢」。意指這錢是為了報答新娘的父母把新娘養大所花的費用。因為奶母錢本身是對女方父母花費的一種回報，女方不需要因為收了奶母錢而為新娘準備嫁妝。相對而言，聘金是一種補償，是為了補償女方失去了一個女兒。

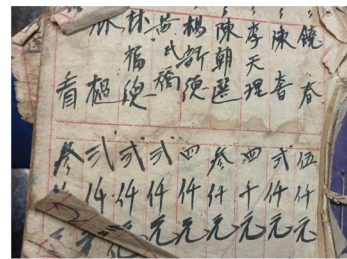
在「迎娶」當中提出台灣人現在在女兒嫁出門時或者不再潑水，或者認為潑水代表一種祝福而不是用來表達「嫁出去的女兒就是潑出去的水」（意喻不再是同一家人也不該隨意返家）。由此可見，在現代台灣，出嫁的女兒不像從前一樣不再屬於原生家庭，而是繼續跟原生家庭保持很緊密的關係。這和從聘金到奶母錢的轉變所反映的意義轉變相當一致。

## 由物質到金錢：婚禮的現代化

在訂婚和結婚的儀式中，「禮」是不可或缺的要素。男女雙方父母會分別替新娘及新郎準備「頭尾禮」，包括衣服、鞋子和金飾等。根據以前的習俗，雙方父母需要在訂婚當天把頭尾禮和金飾贈於新人。現在父母一般都不再買頭尾禮，而是把相應的金錢包在紅包中給新人，讓他們依照自己的喜好去買。雖然大部份的人仍然會準備金飾，但也有一位受訪者表示在小女兒訂婚時沒有幫她打金飾。這是因為當時的金價太高，所以他們決定以紅包代替。在現代的婚禮當中，越來越常見以紅包代替以往會準備的各種禮品。

現在，像頭尾禮、「六禮」或是「十二禮」（後兩者為男方為新娘所準備如糖霜、冬瓜等能帶來好兆頭的禮品）等，基本上都是以紅包代替。以紅包代替物品，讓新人按照自己的需求再去買，這種以實用性為主的做法很能體現現代化婚禮的考量。

以前的喜餅是由男方準備，然後在訂婚時帶過去女方家。現在則是由男方與女方商討需要買多少喜餅，然後付給女方所需的金額。喜餅的錢會在訂婚時包在一個紅包裡交付女方，然後女方會負責訂購及分送喜餅。除了喜餅以外，在訂婚儀式中所用到的錢，都是以紅包的形式轉交。但有一位受訪者的例子，卻展現出現代婚禮儀式更進一步的簡化。這位先生同意婚禮可以一切從簡，並把很多婚事的細節都交給兒子和媳婦決定。最後他並沒有把喜餅的錢包在紅包裡，而是透過銀行把錢直接匯進女方的帳戶。



*In a traditional Chinese wedding, the most important aspect is money. Every single expense requires the consensus between the two families. A matchmaker said that the money aspect is always the biggest subject of debate. In the past, a matchmaker introduced unmarried men and women to each other; today, matchmakers are usually invited as a "middle person" (hence the Chinese name bianmeiren, i.e., "expedient meiren") for discussing the details of marriage, mainly about the issues dealing with money. Some of the informants said that they invited a female senior relative as the bianmeiren.*

## FROM BRIDE PRICE TO NAIMUQIAN: THE CHANGE IN IDEA OF GETTING MARRIED

People in southern Taiwan do not accept the bride price anymore and instead take naimuqian (can be understood as nursing fee). According to our informants, bride price and naimuqian are different concepts. Many of them said that if they are taking bride price, they would have taken much more money. When asked to explain the idea of naimuqian, the informants only replied that it is the money for paying baby's diapers. They used the term to explain the idea of naimuqian as a return for the bride's parents bringing her up. Since naimuqian itself is a return for the bride's parents' care for the daughter, the bride's family does not need to prepare dowry for receiving naimuqian. On the other hand, bride price is a kind of compensation since the bride's family is losing a daughter.

As mentioned in "Ritual Performance in Wedding Day", when brides leave their parents' houses on the wedding day, their parents either no longer pour water, or they pour water to express good wishes rather than that "a daughter is like spilled water who never come back after getting married". We can then conclude that there is a change in the idea of daughter getting married such that the married daughters are able and expected to keep contact and connection with the original family. This is consistent with the change from bride price to naimuqian.



## FROM MATERIALS TO MONEY: THE MODERNIZATION OF WEDDING

At the engagement/wedding ceremony, li (gift) is necessary in every part. In the engagement ceremony, the groom's and bride's parents prepare touweili (dressing up gift) including commodities like clothes and shoes, gold jewelry for the bride and the groom. According to the custom, parents give the touweili and golden jewelry to the couple on the day of engagement. Nowadays, their parents usually do not buy touweili; instead, they put the money for touweili in a red envelope allowing the couple to buy what they need. Although most people still prepare gold jewelry, one of our informants told us that she did not buy gold jewelry for her younger daughter but prepared a red envelope because gold was too expensive at the moment. In a modern wedding, there is a growing trend of preparing red envelopes, substituting the actual gift items that they need to prepare.

Nowadays, other li, for example, the liuli (six gifts) or the shierli (twelve gifts), which are the gifts prepared by the groom's side for the bride (including things that symbolize good fortune like sugar) are usually replaced by red envelopes. The couple therefore can later choose what they need or what they would like to buy with the red envelopes. The choice of offering red envelopes illustrate the pragmatic characteristic of modern wedding.

In the past, the groom's family was expected to bring engagement cakes to the bride's home on the day of engagement. Nowadays, the groom's family asks how many cakes the bride's family hopes to have and gives them money for the cakes. They would put the money inside a red envelope and bring it to the bride's home on the day of engagement. The bride's side would buy the cakes and deliver the cakes by themselves. In most cases, the money used in rituals is put inside a red envelope. However, we heard one exceptional case that further simplified modern wedding rituals. In this particular case, the parents agreed to the proposal of a simpler wedding and leave the wedding arrangement to the groom and the bride. The informant did not even offer the money for wedding cakes in a red envelope but sent the money to the bride's side via bank transfer.



## POWERFUL YET VULNERABLE

*"We cherish the females!"*

- Hakka man in his early 90s

The female gender is always a two-edged sword; on one end, females are protected and cherished, and, at the same time, because they are protected, they are thought to need help and not seen as independent females. This theme is present in the statements people make, as they tell of how they cherish females, implying an incapacity of females to act alone.

The bride is powerful on her wedding day: she sits while her elders stand, and other elders of unlucky zodiac signs have to hide themselves from her when she enters the room. However, she is to be protected by the mitai (rice sieve) and the black umbrella: the mitai protects the female from the sky (天), just as the black umbrella protects the child in her womb. As one elderly male Hakka informant told us, the bride is to walk first as she goes up the stairs, so that if she falls, the male can protect her; and she walks after the man when she goes down the stairs, in case she falls. In another symbolic practice, Wearing Gold Ornaments, at the engagement, the bride places her feet on a low stool while she sits as the elders stand, to imply that the bride will not suffer in her groom's house since she will be able to sit around and relax. Yet again, this is to say the bride/woman is under the protection of the family instead of being seen as an independent character.

## MALE'S PROMINENT ROLE IN MARRIAGE AND THE PREFERENCE FOR SONS

*Informant: "If anyone tells you they don't want a son, they are lying."*

*Interviewer: "Would you mind if you didn't have a son?"*

*Informant: "Oh no, of course not."*

*Interviewer: "Are you lying then?"*

- A conversation with a female informant in her late 60s

Even though many of the informants had rejected the notion of valuing males over females, there is nevertheless an implied male superiority over females. The male is still seen as the one who is to initiate marriage as a female university student informant shared with us, and many of the practices in the marriage custom still reflect a general preference for sons over daughters. In addition, the fengcha ceremony in which the bride offers tea to the elders of the groom's side since she is marrying into their family, is also an indication of this gender inequality as there is the expectation that the new bride is to serve the groom's family and show respect to them.

# 女性 看婚禮的性別議題

## 受珍視的弱者 「我們疼惜女人的！」 --九十多歲的客家老先生

女性的性別好似是雙刃劍。一方面而言，女性是受到呵護和珍視的；但另一方面而言，因為女性總是受到保護，他們很容易被認為是脆弱的、不能獨立的。許多我的受訪者都說“我是疼惜女人的！”這句宣言似乎同時也暗示了對女性獨立自主能力的懷疑。

在婚禮當天，新娘的地位是最高的，其地位甚至高於家庭中的長輩。比如說，她會坐在凳子上，而家中的長輩會站在她的身邊。當新娘進入屋中，和她生肖相衝突的年長的親友不可以與她面對面。但同時，她需要有米篩和黑傘保護。為的是不被“天公”看到。我的受訪者中一位客家爺爺說，新娘要先走上樓梯，因為怕她摔倒，這樣走在她後面的男性可以保護她。新娘走下樓梯時，男人就要走在她前面，也是為了保護她。另外一個例子是，新娘在訂婚戴金飾時只有她坐在一個椅子上並把腳擺在一個圓凳子上（這意味著新娘嫁給新郎，進入他們的家庭不會受苦），其他的人包括長輩都站著。如此種種，都可以看出新娘（女性）是被看作一個需要被保護的對象，而不是一個獨立的個體。

## 男性在婚姻中的優越地位和「生兒子」的殷盼

報導人：「要是有人跟你說他們不想要兒子，他們就是在說謊。」

訪談人：「如果你沒有兒子，你會介意嗎？」

報導人：「不會啦。」

訪談人：「那你在撒謊嗎？」 --與六十多歲的女性報導人的對話

雖然許多受訪者都說現在已經不再重男輕女，但是在他們有關結婚的口述中還是可以感受到男生優越的地位。在結婚的決定中，男性會被看作是掌握主動權的一方（一位我們訪問的女大學生就說希望男性先提出求婚）；很多的婚俗也都暗示了希望新娘會生兒子而不是女兒。此外，在奉茶的儀式裡，只有新娘需要奉茶給男方的長輩，而新郎則不需要同時為女方的家人奉茶。因為新娘被認為是「嫁入」男方家，將需要服侍和尊敬這些長輩。這些細節都說明了兩性的不平等。

很多婚禮的習俗都在強調女性「傳宗接代」的功能，而不是把她當作一個完整的個人。例如，使用米篩和黑傘取決於新娘是否懷孕；使用黑傘的目的更是為了保護肚子裡的孩子而不是新娘。又如，在迎娶的前一天，新郎的家人也會請一個屬龍的男孩子在新床上滾一圈，因為很多人都說這樣新人將可生一個兒子。此外，「生兒子」的願望還表現在許多細節中：如老奶奶會告訴新娘希望可以抱孫，或是在新人進門時塞給他們一對紅蛋。

## 女性的主導權與性別角色的轉變

儘管如此，在與婚禮有關的習俗中，女性並不是完全被動的。有一位女性的受訪者就跟我們說，有幾個做法是可以讓新郎在婚後對妻子言聽計從的，像是：新娘把她自己的婚鞋放在屋內衣櫃的高處或是新娘踩過新郎的拖鞋。在我們的訪談對象中，有一個新娘曾要求新郎也要給她的長輩奉茶，以表示男女是平等的。此外，現在女兒出嫁時潑水的作法也有了新的意義，已經不再用以表達「嫁出去的女兒潑出去的水」這樣的想法。因為女兒是外人這個想法的淡出，歸寧宴的舉辦也少了很多。又如，年輕一代喜歡在迎娶時捉弄新郎，要求新郎要「闖關」才可以娶到新娘。由此可見，新娘在婚禮的過程中得到了更多的主導權。在訪談的過程中，很多女性受訪者都會提到「獨立的女性」這個概念。顯然，性別的定位是在慢慢的改變中。



## CHANGES IN WEDDING RITUALS STEM FROM THE FAILURE IN PASSING ON THE MEANINGS

Do people have to tell others that they are getting married? The question can indeed be broken down into several more questions. First, what are the symbolic meanings behind wedding announcement? How different would that be in the eyes of the older and younger generations? Second, why do some of the younger generations resist wedding announcement? The fieldwork conducted in May has inspired me to think that the ritual had been passed down with their meanings lost.

The differences between the two generations lie on the emphasis of individuality. To the older generations, being able to expand their family is an announcable honor. To the younger generations, it is completely unnecessary to spread the news to people because it signifies only a change of relationship status to them. LinXinYing is one of my informants, and she has expressed to her parents her unwillingness to host a wedding banquet and rituals. Both Lxy and her fiancé think it is the best for them, and according to Lxy, quite a lot of her friends of similar age prefer her way too.

## WORSHIPPING GODS BEFORE GETTING MARRIED

According to tradition, the groom has to worship TianGong and DiGong right before the wedding night. It is common for this ritual to be eliminated in recent years because fewer people recognize the importance of doing so.

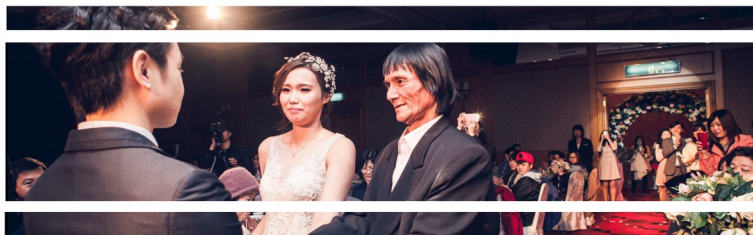
People used to practice arranged marriage, which means there is limited time shared between the bride-to-be and the husband's family. As harmony is very important in Chinese culture, relationships are a great contributing factor to whether the family would stay harmonious. The older generations seek help from God and pray for good relationships between the married couple, and more importantly between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

Yet, as recent generations seldom get married based on arranged marriage, it allows the younger people to have sufficient time to understand their another half before marrying. According to my younger informants, they think it is a pointless ritual: they are not aware of the meaning of the ritual. It seems inevitable that the ritual is abandoned.





The female is often depicted as a reproductive machine rather than an individual being in marriage customs. For example, the mitai and black umbrella both symbolize whether or not the female has a child in the uterus; the black umbrella meaning to protect the child in the uterus rather than the mother herself. A lot of the marriage customs is about having a son. For instance, on the day before the wedding, the family will invite a boy with a dragon zodiac sign to roll on the bed in the wedding room, as many say this will give them a son. There are also other subtle ways, like the grandma telling the bride that she hopes to have a grandson, or when at the groom's home, the newly-wed couple is given two red eggs to mean the wish for sons.



## WOMEN'S AGENCY AND THE CHANGING GENDER ROLES

It is, however, significant that in many of the aspects of marriage, the woman is not passive and has agency. As a female informant told us, there are a few practices that the bride does to ensure that her husband listens to her, for instance, putting her shoe on top of the dresser, above everyone else's, or stepping on her husband's shoes. A bride had asked her husband to serve tea to her elders on her side to reduce the gender inequality. The female leaving home and the poshui practice (spilling water) are changing as people are assigning new definitions to the practice, where it is no longer about getting rid of the female from the home. The decline of guining is also symbolic of the declining emphasis put on the female being an outsider to her natal family. There is a game that the groom must play before he gets the bride, where the female is valued more than before. The idea of the independent female too, is illustrated in many of the conversations. Gender continues to be reshaped.



## 儀式意義的失傳與儀式的改變

結婚到底有沒有「昭告天下」的必要呢？我們可以試著從兩個方面來回答這個問題。首先，到底把「好消息」告訴親朋好友的意義在哪裡？對不同代的人而言，這份意義是否相同？其次，為什麼有些年輕人反對廣發喜訊？不把喜訊告知他人，對老一輩和對年輕人來說又有何差別。五月份的田野考察結果，讓我得出一個結論：儀式之所以改變是因為儀式的象徵意義並沒有被傳承下去。

對於老一輩來說，後人為家庭帶來喜事是家族的榮耀，因此把好消息分享給身邊的人就是喜上加喜。對年輕人來說，婚姻只是兩個人之間的事，只是代表互相身分的改變，所以沒有宣揚喜訊的必要。Lxy是我其中一位訪談的對象。她和她的未婚夫一致認為不需要擺喜酒，並正在向他們的父母極力爭取免卻所有儀式。根據Lxy的說法，她很多年齡相仿的朋友也都有這樣的想法。

## 結婚前夜的「拜拜」

根據傳統，新郎需要在結婚前一天晚上到廟宇裡拜天公及地公。這個儀式於近年經常被省略，因為新一代的人都不明白箇中的意義。

從前的人結婚時難以自行挑選對象，所謂的「盲婚啞嫁」。因此以前新郎和夫家在婚禮前根本沒有和新娘相處的時間。和諧的關係在中國文化中向來崇高的價值。而家庭能否和睦又是由一家人彼此的關係來決定。也難怪長輩會想透過拜拜的儀式，祈求神明保佑夫妻與婆媳間的關係平順和諧。

相反的，現在的年輕人多半自行挑選終生的伴侶，結婚前已有足夠的時間互相了解對方。根據我較為年輕的訪談對象所言，拜拜只是「迷信」，他們無法感受到這麼做的必要性。失去意義的儀式自然難以躲過被摒棄的命運。

## 結婚歸寧一次辦

「訂婚要請客，結婚又要請客，這樣很無聊呀！浪費時間與金錢，當然要把它們放在一天，無聊一天還不夠嗎？」

- 節錄自一位年輕女性

根據台灣傳統，歸寧與結婚必須分開辦兩次喜宴。結婚的喜宴名義上需由新郎請客，隔天新娘需要歸寧，就是在女家再辦一次喜宴。年紀較大的一輩相信這樣令婚禮更加正式和得體。

年輕一輩卻希望減少婚禮的開銷與所需的時間，所以通常把兩次喜宴合起來辦理。

老一輩都認為為家庭開枝散葉是非常重要的事，因此把結婚視為一大榮耀。分開的兩次喜宴邀請的對象不同，以讓更多人分享家庭的喜事。

現在的年輕人較少保留這種看法。他們大多以事業為重，對家庭的義務看得較輕。其中一位剛剛結婚兩個月的訪談對象解釋：其實現在越來越少人會舉行多次喜宴招待客人。因為辦喜宴的費用實在太昂貴，而且台灣的公司大多只給員工一星期的婚假。



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## COMBINING ENGAGEMENT BANQUET AND WEDDING BANQUET

*"You have to hold a banquet for the engagement and again for the wedding; this is very boring, a waste of time and money. Of course you want to hold them together on one day; is one day of boredom not enough?"*

- A quote from a young female informant

In Taiwanese tradition, there used to be two banquets: the wedding banquet hosted by the groom's family, and another called GuiNing. According to the older generations, this makes the wedding more formal and official, hence they think it is important to follow traditions.

The younger generations think it is a waste of time and money to host separate banquets; hence they combine two banquets into one.

People used to consider it their main duty to expand their family and getting married is therefore considered a big honour to the family. They would host separate banquets with different guests, in order to share their happiness with other people.

The younger people now have different priorities and the major one is usually careers. According to one of my informants who has just gotten married two months ago, it is actually less and less common for people to host banquets in the traditional way because it is costly and there is only a week of wedding holiday in policies of Taiwan companies.

Regarding the practicality of the separate banquets, it is indeed understandable that people would combine everything into one.

