

Learning from the Ground Up
Global Perspectives on Social
Movements and Knowledge
Production

Edited by
Aziz Choudry and Dip Kapoor

palgrave
macmillan



LEARNING FROM THE GROUND UP
Copyright © Aziz Choudry and Dip Kapoor, 2010.

All rights reserved.

First published in 2010 by
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN®
in the United States—a division of St. Martin's Press LLC,
175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

Where this book is distributed in the UK, Europe and the rest of the world,
this is by Palgrave Macmillan, a division of Macmillan Publishers Limited,
registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills,
Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies
and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

Palgrave® and Macmillan® are registered trademarks in the United States,
the United Kingdom, Europe and other countries.

ISBN: 978-0-230-62103-9

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Learning from the ground up : global perspectives on social movements
and knowledge production / edited by Aziz Choudry and Dip Kapoor.

P. cm.

ISBN 978-0-230-62103-9 (alk. paper)

1. Social movements—Study and teaching. 2. Social action—Study
and teaching. 3. Action research. 4. Experimental learning. I. Choudry, A. A.
II. Kapoor, Dip.

HM881.L4Z7 2010

303.48/401—dc22

20100009106

A catalogue record of the book is available from the British Library.

Design by Newgen Imaging Systems (P) Ltd., Chennai, India.

First edition: September 2010

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in the United States of America.

*I dedicate this book to all who mobilize, organize, educate, and
agitate for self-determination, justice, and dignity, and I gratefully
acknowledge the Indigenous Peoples of Aotearoa and Turtle Island
for providing me with the spaces to think and write.*

—Aziz

*I dedicate this work to the Dalit victims of Kandhamal, and to
Dalit struggles for dignity, equality, and political-economic justice
in India.*

—Dip

CHAPTER 7

The Subjectivation of Marriage Migrants in Taiwan: The Insider's Perspectives

Hsiao-Chuan Hsia

The phenomenon of marriage migration in Taiwan began in the mid-1980s when it moved from the supposed periphery to the semi-periphery in the world system. Most marriage migrants decide to marry Taiwanese men because they hope to escape poverty and turbulence in their home countries, which are intensified by capitalist globalization. According to statistics released by Taiwan's Ministry of Interior, as of October 31, 2008, there were 411,315 foreign spouses (30.6 percent from Southeast Asia and 63.32 percent from mainland China) in the country. Ninety-two percent of these foreign spouses are women. Among the women from Southeast Asia, 64.1 percent are from Vietnam, 20.7 percent from Indonesia, 6.7 percent from Thailand, 5 percent from the Philippines, and 3.5 percent from Cambodia. Marriage migrants mainly marry farmers and working-class men (Hsia, 2004). Most arrive without knowing much Chinese or other languages commonly used in Taiwan, which leads to greater isolation. These women are constrained by stressed economic conditions, lack of social networks and support, and discriminatory practices in everyday lives, policies, and laws (Hsia, 2009).

To protect the rights and welfare of the immigrants and migrants, a group of organizations concerned about immigrants' issues established

the Alliance for Human Rights Legislation for Immigrants and Migrants (AHRLLIM) on December 12, 2003. AHRLLIM is Taiwan's first alliance campaigning specifically for immigrants' rights and welfare. Many NGOs handle welfare cases of marriage migrants but rarely stage contentious action against government policies and laws. AHRLLIM is currently the only alliance that aims at changing immigration policies and laws. After years of AHRLLIM's struggles, several significant changes have been achieved, including the November 2007 amendments of the Immigration Act and the Statute Governing the Relations between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland China Area on June 9, 2009, the two most crucial laws affecting marriage migrants in Taiwan.

In every AHRLLIM campaign, marriage migrants play significant roles. Their presence at various protest actions not only catches public attention but also establishes the legitimacy of the AHRLLIM-spearheaded immigrant movement. On September 9, 2007, hundreds of marriage migrants from Southeast Asia and mainland China joined hands in an AHRLLIM-organized protest rally in Taipei against the financial requirement for naturalization imposed by Taiwan's government. This rally assembled in front of the Executive Yuan (the executive body of the central government in Taiwan), marched to the Presidential Office Building, and ended with another picket in front of the National Immigration Agency. This protest action was historic because it was the first time that marriage migrants from all over Taiwan took to the streets to oppose policies violating their rights.

While it is crucial for marriage migrants to be active in the advancement of the immigrant movement, most have had no experience in political activism or even simple participation in civil society associations. Moreover, unlike in North America, Europe, and Australia, where immigrant networks are well established, marriage migrants in Taiwan, especially those from Southeast Asia, face severe isolation in a country where they do not even know the languages. Therefore, the issue of how these women can gradually transform themselves from being silenced in a strange and discriminatory host country to being vocal and active in the immigrant movement needs to be thoroughly examined. By examining my own long-term praxis, not only as an advocate, but also from directly participating in the empowerment of the marriage migrants and the making of an immigrant movement in Taiwan since 1995, this chapter illustrates the learning process of marriage migrants, which in itself contributes to the knowledge production regarding the issues of subjectivation (Touraine, 1988).

Subjectivation and Societal Movement

Unlike dominant U.S. social movement theories, such as political opportunity, mobilization structures, and framing processes, Touraine pays more attention to issues of "subjectivation." To be distinguished from the commonly used term of social movement, Touraine (1988) introduced the concept of "societal movement," where historicity and subject are two key components. For him, historicity means how society acts upon itself to remake social relations and cultural models by which we represent ourselves and act. Societal movements are not merely groups of actors with specific grievances within institutions, but are marked by the degree to which they act upon the prevailing cultural model. Touraine is concerned about the struggle of social actors (the subject) over historicity, that is, who controls the terms of the cultural model upon which action is based. Moreover, the development of a societal movement is a process of transforming the "personal subject" into a "historical subject," which makes their mark on history by remaking the social relations and the cultural model that determine our identity. This process of subjectivation is the social action that challenges the existing social orders (Beckford, 1998).

This chapter echoes Touraine's concerns with "subject" and "subjectivation." Due to their social, economic, and cultural disadvantage, marriage migrants, referred to as "foreign brides" in mainstream societies, are often seen as victims and their agency is neglected (Hsia, 2008b). Some feminists challenge the prevailing assumption that foreign brides are simply victims or trafficked women (Constable, 2003, 2005). The focus has shifted to the agency of women whose cross-border marriages are seen as escapes from political, economic, and cultural constraints and courageous attempts to achieve a better future. However, we cannot ignore the structural limitations to individuals' resistance and should not narrowly perceive agency as merely individual escape from structural constraints. More important, these individuals may go further to form a "collective agency" that will transform these constraints. By doing so, they become "historical subjects." The individual escape may be seen as the expression of "personal subject," which by itself cannot transform historicity, that is, short of transforming into "historical subjects." This transformation will not occur automatically. Indeed, marriage migrants with multiple disadvantages in Taiwan often suppress their anger and resentment against unfair treatment or adopt the tactic of "exceptionalization" (Hsia, 2004); that is, to consider themselves as the exception from other "foreign brides" to resolve the inner conflicts created by the discrimination they face. This general status of "foreign brides" is what Marx (1978) called the class-in-self rather than class-for-itself.

The question of how the class-in-itself can be transformed into the class-for-itself has been much discussed and debated. Freire (1970) argues that through liberatory education, the oppressed are empowered to develop a critical consciousness of the world of oppression and commit to its transformation. Some critiques argue that Freire's theory is too linear and neglects the impacts of the unavoidable power relations between "teachers" and "students," and the dynamics among students of different social positioning (Ellsworth, 1989). Schapiro (1995) highlights the difficulty that practitioners of liberatory education face in overcoming entrenched power relationships especially when their students maintain an apparent passivity and look to them for leadership and guidance. The power relationships become more problematic when the teachers are from outside and have more privileges.

Moreover, several social movement theorists contend that the key to resolving differences among organizations with different social backgrounds is to clearly define "cause ownership" and the groups most directly affected, usually the underprivileged, should be acknowledged as having primacy and thus should take the lead in campaigns (Beamish & Luebbers, 2008; Stephen, 2008). Stephen (2008) specifically addresses the issues of collaboration between immigrant and nonimmigrant organizations in an alliance for immigrant rights; the ability of the nonimmigrant organization to follow the immigrant organization's lead is the key to develop trust necessary for successful alliance building.

In the United States and Western Europe, where immigration has a very long history and im/migrants have already developed solid networks and organizations, many im/migrant organizations have all the capacities to lead campaigns for their rights. However, Taiwan has a relatively short history of immigration. While im/migrant networks and political organizations are still very limited, the issues and difficulties facing im/migrants are very urgent under intensifying capitalist globalization. Therefore, Taiwan's movement organizations cannot simply ignore the conditions where immigrants' and migrants' human rights are egregiously violated and wait for them to build their own networks and political forces. However, issues of subjectivity for im/migrants are still crucial for creating a solid movement. Therefore, the challenge for organizations to build im/migrant movements is to simultaneously balance the need to tackle urgent issues and to empower im/migrants (Hsia, 2008a). Lacking strong social networks, and facility in the local languages, not to mention knowing how to access critical information such as laws and policies regulating their rights and welfare, there is a strong tendency for migrants and immigrants in Taiwan to look to the more privileged local people for leadership and guidance, and this dynamic needs to be addressed in the process of empowerment. In the following section, I

will analyze my experience in the development of an immigrant movement in Taiwan to show how the marriage migrants are empowered and how the delicate issues of power relations between privileged local organizers and underprivileged marriage migrants are dealt with.

Demonstrating Marriage Migrants' Subjectivity in Immigrant Movement

The immigrant movement's legitimacy hinges on active participation of immigrants themselves. Many activists impose themselves as spokespersons on behalf of the marginalized, neglecting the subjectivity of the grassroots. Frequently it seems that those participating in a protest action are "mobilized" without fully knowing the issues at stake. It is therefore not surprising that Ms. Chen, a college-educated Vietnamese marriage migrant, wrote angrily to a newspaper questioning the legitimacy of AHRILM's protest action against an anti-immigrant policy in July 2005, where marriage migrants from Kaohsiung (in southern Taiwan) joined marriage migrants from Taipei in a rally (Chen, 2005):

We [marriage migrants] simply hope for good health, happiness, and being ourselves quietly. Especially for those foreign spouses whose lives are mostly confined to the boundary given by the husband's families, this is really the only simple and practical wish for them... But the newspapers reported that a group of so-called foreign brides took to the streets to protest against the Ministry of Education. These simple and innocent sisters probably could not have even entered the Ministry of Education in their home countries, and could not have even gone outside the front doors of the husband's family; how could they possibly travel from Kaohsiung to protest the Ministry of Education in Taipei?... I experienced the worst pain and sorrow since I moved to Taiwan, not only because of the feeling of humiliation by the fact that foreign spouses are manipulated, but also because of my witnessing of the craziness of the Taiwanese... We foreign spouses are humans and we are not as despicable as to be treated as pigs, dogs or cows.

Being critical of such common practices of "speaking on behalf" of the mass in many social movements, AHRILM has been conscious about the issues of subjectivity from the start. For eight years before AHRILM was established, a grassroots organization, TransAsia Sisters Association, Taiwan (TASAT) had been empowering and organizing marriage migrant women. Consequently the subjectivity of marriage migrants had been gradually

developed in the process, upon which the "legitimacy" of this immigrant movement is based. At AHRLIM's first protest, marriage migrants organized by TASAT were on the frontline. These women became significantly more active afterward, often participating in AHRLIM activities, speaking at protests or press conferences, and sharing their experiences and opinions. TASAT's chairperson, Yadrung Chiu (2005), originally from Thailand, wrote a response to Ms. Chen, entitled "The Southeast Asian Sisters Already Rise Up":

I used to have the same wish as Ms. Chen: simply hope for good health, happiness and being ourselves quietly. But now my thoughts are quite different. Aside from having good health, happiness and being myself quietly, I also want the rights I deserve.... One thing needs to be clarified to all is that we are not the "dogs, pigs or cows being manipulated by the Taiwanese" as Ms. Chen described in her article. We knew the issues very well before we went to the protest.... Our brains are clear.... And we did not just learn about it one or two days before the protest. In the past few years, we have been discussing various situations in our lives and our rights and welfares... and... how we can make the governments aware of our difficulties and our demands. We are willing to do things to demand for our own rights.... The sisters could stand up because we have the TransAsia Sisters Association in Taiwan.... By working together with Taiwanese sisters and Southeast Asian sisters, we hope to help more Southeast Asian sisters to stand up!

To demonstrate the subjectivity of marriage migrant women takes a long process of empowerment. While TASAT was formally established in December 2003, it originates from the Foreign Brides' Chinese Literacy Program, which I initiated at Meinung, Kaohsiung, in 1995. By providing a venue to learn Chinese collectively, this program helps women break their isolation and gradually build their subjectivities and collectivity. The program is not intended simply to assimilate immigrant women into mainstream Taiwanese society. It refuses to employ literacy as a tool to transmit an "ideology of accommodation" and reinforce a "culture of silence" (Freire, 1985). After much trial and error, the literacy programs gradually developed curricula that combined the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1970) and the *Theater of the Oppressed* (Boal, 1979). Every class has a theme related to participants' needs (from bargaining in the markets to their welfare and rights), and includes icebreakers, discussions of issues, and learning keywords. In addition to improved Chinese abilities and self-confidence, the marriage migrants' networks, and those with other community organizations grew

significantly (Hsia, 2006a). In 2002, in collaboration with volunteers, I formed another community base in Taipei. After eight years of grassroots-based empowerment of the marriage migrants and the local volunteers, we collectively established a national organization called TASAT.

In addition to empowering marriage migrants and Taiwanese volunteers, TASAT has tried to change public perceptions of immigrant women, through seminars, writings, paintings, theater, and documentary films. The women's voices can often help subvert the public image of them as submissive, problematic, and incompetent. In September 2005, the first collection of writings, paintings, and pictures of marriage migrant women, *Don't Call Me Foreign Bride* was published and attracted public attention. As editor, I noticed that a common response from readers was an appreciation of marriage migrant women's talents, and consequently their appreciation of multiculturalism and awareness of their own prejudices.

Subjectivation of Marriage Migrant Women

As much social movement studies scholarship suggests, potential for various collective activisms can be transformed into social movements only through efforts of formal or informal organizational networking (McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996; Tarrow, 1998). However, the isolation faced by marriage migrant women makes it very difficult to form informal social networks, much less formal organizations.

I now turn to analyze the principles and methods in the subjectivation process of marriage migrants employed by TASAT. I argue that in addition to Touraine's "personal subject" and "historical subject," a "communal subject" must be created in the subjectivation process.

Fulfilling Practical Needs to Initiate the Empowerment of Marriage Migrants

As Moser (1989) argues, the goal of gender-sensitive projects should be to address "strategic gender needs," which involve transforming oppressive structures, such as patriarchy. However, women in disadvantaged situations are often preoccupied by practical gender needs, such as childcare and making ends meet. To address only practical needs, however, is to reinforce oppressive structures (by perpetuating the ideology of "women's domain"). Moser maintains that effective projects must meet both practical and strategic gender needs.

By addressing marriage migrant women's practical need to learn Chinese, the literacy programs aim to create an opportunity for group dialogue by

encouraging them to share their experiences, and gradually form their organization to speak up for their rights (Hsia, 2006a).

Learning language can fulfill practical needs while incorporating strategic needs. Freire (1970) argues that the first step of raising critical awareness (conscientization) is to break through the "culture of silence." For marriage migrants from Southeast Asia, knowing the local language is the precondition for breaking silence, and consequently forms the foundation of building an immigrant movement.

However, learning language does not automatically lead to fulfilling the strategic gender needs—to realize the roots of oppression. Many government and some NGO-run language programs aim merely to assimilate and domesticate migrant women. By emphasizing how to become a "good housewife" and "good mother," they neglect immigrant women's agency and the values of their cultures. As Freire (1985) observes, traditional literacy education only transmits an ideology of accommodation, reinforces the "culture of silence" that dominates most people, and thus can never be an instrument for transforming the real world. TASA's view of literacy emphasizes the development of the learners' consciousness of their rights, along with an analysis of their position in the real world. We eventually developed a module to encourage women to share and reflect on their experiences, and to discuss issues and solutions by creative methods, such as sculpture and forum theater, to transform them from "Spectators" to "Spect-Actors" (Boal, 1992).

From "Personal Subject" to "Communal Subject"

With the help of our Chinese programs, marriage migrant women are no longer too shy to speak up and share in classes. However, despite common issues, they did not automatically develop a sense of "community" due to the barriers of differences in personalities, countries of origins, class, ethnicity, and educational levels, which often result in tension and conflicts. For instance, when women in our Taipei program were invited to contribute a presentation at one event, tensions and divisions developed in the process of preparation. Some complained to the local volunteers who served as "teachers," and threatened to leave the program if certain women continued to participate in the classes. The volunteers were very worried, and after discussion, we decided to bring the issue back for the immigrant women to face collectively. Using forum theater, a scenario regarding the obstacles facing the literacy program was played out. As problems arose, the play was stopped by the "joker" (which I played), who asked the audience to discuss how they would solve the problem and then implemented their plan of action.

To avoid the issue being "too close to discuss," the scenario played out was the potential division among the volunteers. After enthusiastic discussions, the immigrant women reaffirmed the group's importance, vowing to work collectively.

Our programs emphasize dialogue and encourage immigrant women to express their subjectivity. When encountering conflicts among individuals with different backgrounds, we still uphold this principle and facilitate a process whereby immigrant women can reflect on themselves, collectively come up with resolutions, and move further from personal to communal subjectivity. Without a sense of community, they cannot work collectively toward advancing their welfare and rights. Therefore, the "communal subject" needs to be added in the process of transformation from "personal subject" to "historical subject" in Touraine's theory of subjectivation.

From "Communal Subject" to "Historical Subject"

After several years of empowerment, the marriage migrant women from Meinung were no longer silent. They were willing to share their opinions in class. A sense of community, or transnational sisterhood among the immigrant women was gradually formed. However, the original goal of establishing a grassroots organization was still far from realization. Proposals of organizing collective action for their rights and welfare failed, because members were only interested in social activities, like outings or cooking. Some women lost their motivation to attend classes when they could speak fluently. The Meinung volunteers realized that the Chinese program itself was not enough for immigrant women to cultivate their collective strength because they still had to face daily problems at home after heated class discussions. The volunteers decided to organize a Hope Workshop in 2001, aiming at uniting the immigrant women through intensive discussions over two weekends.

The first half of the first weekend's workshop went very well. With dynamic methods, common problems were collectively summarized. However, when we requested that the women further discuss how to solve these problems, a strong sense of fatalism arose, with women saying, "It's all fate. We can't do anything about it!"

The volunteers were greatly frustrated and worried, knowing that the immigrant women could not rely on them forever and would have to face many difficulties by themselves. Finally, we decided to change the original plan for the next workshop and bring back the obstacles the Chinese program faced to the immigrant women, rather than relying solely on the volunteers for solutions.

We started the second workshop with a forum theater (see below for more on this technique), using the following scenario. Some volunteers enthusiastically phoned the immigrant women to remind them of the coming Chinese class, but everyone had reasons for absence and the volunteers were very frustrated. I served as the “joker” and asked every volunteer to express her feelings and worries. I then addressed the immigrant women saying, “It seems that all of the volunteers are very frustrated and tired, while the sisters (immigrant women) are no longer interested in participating in the programs. So it seems better to end the programs, so all will be happy.” The immigrant women immediately objected. In response to questions posed by the joker, the marriage migrants collectively outlined the problems and discussed solutions. Eventually, a resolution emerged: Everyone decided to donate NT\$300 (New Taiwan Dollars) to a fund and to find a meeting place where everyone could get together and organize activities. Because of this collective action, the immigrant women in Meinung found their own meeting space for the very first time. Their energy and strength could be combined and together they built a “new home,” where they felt a sense of belonging.

After this, the Meinung women actively started many training programs, which inspired them to be independent and eager to help other underprivileged women. Organizers of the Chinese programs initiated a multilingual hotline for marriage migrants with the Ministry of the Interior’s Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Committee. After over three years’ discussion and negotiation, however, the committee transferred the project to a foundation, arguing that the organizers and immigrant women in Meinung were not professional social workers and may not understand procedures for handling hotlines. The volunteers were terribly sad, and after seeing the women’s disappointment upon telling them the frustrating news, began sobbing and crying. At that moment, the immigrant women comforted the volunteers, and their strength helped calm the volunteers. Collectively, they all discussed and analyzed why they lost this project. Eventually, they realized that without a formal organization, it would be difficult to speak out collectively and make their demands heard by the government.

Through careful reflection and discussion, the frustration and anger over the hotline project became the turning point that helped the women understand the necessity of establishing a formal organization. They soon became actively involved in preparing TAsAT’s founding assembly, participating in every detail, from the mission statement to membership fees. Volunteers helped them draft TAsAT’s constitution, because the marriage migrants were still not familiar with the legal process of registering the organization at the Ministry of Interior. Later, they divided tasks into working groups.

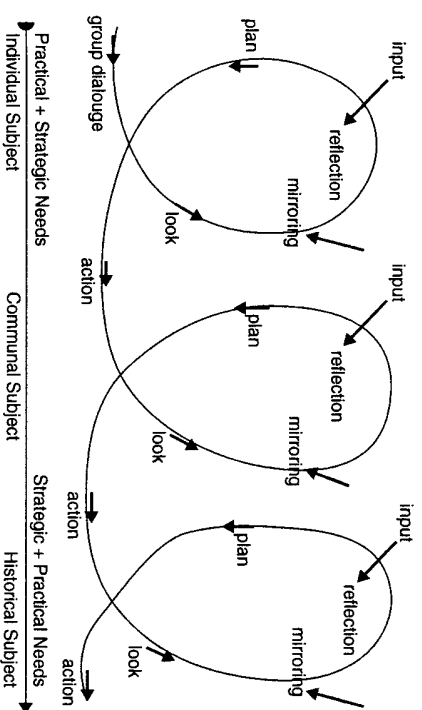


Figure 7.1 Subjectivation Process of Immigrant Women

TAsAT is actively involved in AHRIM to demand basic rights and push for changes in policies and public perceptions of marriage migrants. TAsAT has also created a venue for marriage migrant women to join forces with other disadvantaged groups, such as migrant workers. By sharing its experiences, TAsAT has broadened perspectives and expanded international networking. Through increasing networking with organizations from their home countries, marriage migrant women of TAsAT have begun to understand capitalist globalization as a root cause of their escape from their home countries and to see the importance of transnational collaboration (Hsia, 2009).

Despite harsh structural constraints, the marriage migrants organized by TAsAT have been greatly empowered and have significantly increased their participation in public issues and international networking. This process of subjectivation is summarized in Figure 7.1.

Keys to Transformation: Opportune “Mirrors”

The process of subjectivation is not linear and smooth. When encountering obstacles in actual praxis, methods to facilitate “breakthrough” and leap to a higher level of understanding and praxis are necessary. In *On Practice*, Mao (1937) articulated the dialectical relation between knowledge and practice. In the process of practice, at first a person sees only the phenomenal side, the separate aspects, the external relations of things, which is the “perceptual stage of cognition” (Mao, 1937, p. 262). As social practice continues, things

that give rise to sensory perceptions and impressions are repeated many times; then a sudden change (leap) takes place in the brain in the process of cognition, and concepts are formed; they grasp the essence, the totality, and the internal relations of things, which is the stage of rational knowledge. Certain catalysts are needed for this leap to occur. Based on the experiences of empowering marriage migrants, I find that to help the women temporarily distance themselves and observe their experiences and practices more objectively is an important mechanism to propel transformation. Moreover, it is not to "teach" immigrant women how to understand things, but rather, to develop a "mirroring" effect by which they can see themselves, identify the problems, and find the solutions. The following are some important methods to create such "mirroring" effects.

Forum Theater

The techniques of the theater of the oppressed (Boal, 1979) are very effective in creating "mirrors," among which the forum theater is considered the most effective. Rather than providing an ending, the forum theater poses questions for the audience to discuss how to solve the problems.

Actual Practices

As Luria (1976) points out, experiences in collective action form the socio-historical shaping of mental activity that significantly impact people's understanding of the world. Moreover, Foley (1999) argues that learning in social action is significant and empowering, largely informal, and often incidental.

For example, Peihsiang used to be one of the youngest, shyest, and most dependent members of TAsAT. Through various trainings, she became more confident in sharing her own experiences in public forums. However, her perception remained relatively narrow and self-interested—she seldom took initiative, and mostly followed others. Peihsiang was tasked to speak at a forum about TAsAT's history, principles, and methods of empowerment, because more experienced TAsAT members were not available. Although she accepted the task, she was very anxious and relied solely on materials provided by TAsAT staff. In helping her prepare, I briefed her about the audience and listened to her rehearse the presentation. Peihsiang said that she did not feel comfortable and confident because she did not personally participate in some parts of TAsAT's history included in this presentation, and requested that I tell her what to do. Instead of telling her what to say in the presentation, I reminded her, "As the officer of TAsAT, we need

to learn broader perspectives, linking our own experiences to the mission of TAsAT and the general immigrant movement. In the forum, you will represent TAsAT, not just yourself, and the audience will learn and evaluate TAsAT's work based on your presentation." Interestingly, Peihsiang suddenly appeared calm, and her presentation went very well and impressed the audience. Afterward, she told me that she was eager to know more about TAsAT's history and all aspects of the im/migrant movement.

This vignette illustrates that we constantly encounter situations where the immigrant women look to us for answers. Instead of "teaching" them what to do, we strive to help them to situate themselves where they can link their personal lives to broader structural and historical contexts. From this realization, they can find ways to move forward.

Responsibility and Emotion: "Volleyball"

Practices in Organizing

Previously, local volunteers accompanied marriage migrants in most situations so that they felt more secure in facing the general public. To overcome dependency on the volunteers, TAsAT gradually gives responsibilities to marriage migrants. However, these responsibilities often lead to emotional reactions.

For instance, in preparing for TAsAT's founding assembly, we divided the tasks for working groups, each with a migrant woman coordinator. Two weeks before the assembly, we met to discuss the list of recommended names for the coming election of officers. Instead of discussing who would be appropriate, the women complained how tired and useless they all felt. The volunteers, including myself, tried our best to energize and encourage them in the midst of depression and frustration. A voice of reflection suddenly came into my mind, "Why do I always have to shoulder the emotions of the marriage migrants? If I sincerely perceive them as my equals, why can't I share my emotions? If I continue to simply take on their emotions, would this stop them from growing? Is this a really equal partnership?"

These self-critical thoughts made me decide to break the usual pattern. I said, "All of us are tired. I think I am no less tired than any of you here. If we feel that it's not worth it to form the organization and all we get is tiredness, we can decide now to call off everything." Instead of suppressing my own emotions and feelings as I had usually done, I decided to reveal myself by walking out of the meeting after my comments. After I left, the marriage migrants were at first shocked because they had never seen me like that, and later started to share their bad feelings developed in the process of preparation, eventually deciding that it was crucial to form the organization, and made a list of recommended officers.

This experience helped me realize that although we had seen the importance for the marriage migrants to take up tasks and responsibilities, we failed to see that it is equally important for them to share emotions, especially frustration, that arise from taking responsibilities. As Foley (1999) suggests, learning in social action can transform power relations, but can also be contradictory and constraining. In the past, local volunteers took on responsibilities, while the marriage migrants perceived themselves as only "helping" the volunteers. Since the volunteers and organizers were conscious of their relative privilege, we unconsciously felt obligated to shoulder all the migrant women's emotions. However, this emotional dependence of the marriage migrants reflects a kind of "patronizing" relation, where they are protected by the local volunteers or organizers, just as children are protected by adults. This patronizing relation hinders the marriage migrants from transforming themselves into historical subjects, and reflects certain notions of heroism that we unconsciously hold. To ensure a truly equal partnership in TASAT, local volunteers and organizers need to learn how to share responsibilities and emotions with marriage migrants. This painstaking process involves the kind of interaction I call the "volleyball" practices in organizing: When marriage migrants toss up a ball of emotion to the organizers, we need to toss it back to them so that they have the opportunity to learn how to undertake responsibilities, and gradually become real team mates who can equally and collectively share responsibilities and tasks. Moreover, the local volunteer/activists need to learn that they also benefit from the advancement of the immigrant movement, because it develops a more open, multicultural, just, and democratic society for all. This realization helps break the mentality that the locals (us) are "helping" the im/migrants (them), and consequently develop a more genuine sense of comradeship between local volunteers/activists and im/migrants.³

Moving Toward the "Other"

Mainstream social movement theories argue that for the sake of effective mobilization, the framing process needs to distinguish "us" from "them"—that is, the boundary between "ally" and "enemy" (Tarrow, 1998). However, this is the politics of identity that Touraine (1988) criticizes for not being able to transform historicity.

As TASAT becomes more established, marriage migrants have developed a stronger identity with the organization. However, some members (locals and marriage migrants) fell into the trap of identity politics. For instance, some felt that other migrant workers should be blamed for the social stigma

against marriage migrants because the former misbehave and come to Taiwan only to make money.

To transcend identity politics, TASAT has tried to help marriage migrants see the link between themselves and the so-called other through creating an environment where marriage migrants develop empathy for and build alliances with other disadvantaged groups. So, when interpreters are needed to help with migrant workers' cases, TASAT organizes marriage migrants to provide translation. TASAT organizers help explain the conditions of other migrant workers and the marriage migrants can develop empathy with them. Subsequently, TASAT members joined several rallies for migrant workers' issues. Moreover, TASAT joined the International Migrants Alliance (IMA), a global alliance of grassroots migrant organizations founded in 2008. By participating in IMA's activities, the marriage migrants expressed their appreciation of learning from and working in solidarity with grassroots migrant organizations in different countries, began to see themselves and TASAT as part of the broader global movement of im/migrants, and realized the importance of linking to the social movements in the home countries of im/migrants.

Conclusion

Employing Touraine's concept of "societal movement," and through a critical analysis of my direct involvement in the empowerment of marriage migrants, this chapter has particularly focused on "subjectivation" issues. Several lessons can be highlighted. First, subjectivation is a long and dialectic process, involving delicate interaction between emotion and reason, and sometimes even experiences retrogression. When encountering crises, through dialogue and reflection the subjects are gradually transformed to the next level. As Schapiro (1995) contends, some liberatory education theories assume what form of social action and participation is desirable, which gives the educators the ultimate ownership of truth and knowledge. Instead of assuming a predetermined path of development, TASAT perceives every bottleneck and crisis as great opportunities to collectively reflect and decide the next step. These bottlenecks and crises are crucial in the subjectivation process where the marriage migrants transform themselves to the next level of subjectivity.

Second, a mixture of disruptive and constructive tactics is needed to develop a mass movement whose primary movers are the disadvantaged mass. Some studies argue that "disruptive tactics" are necessary for social movement organizations. Gamson (1990) maintains that social movement organizations adopting "force and violence" are more successful than others.

Due to lack of resources, social movement organizations need certain disruptive tactics to attract public attention and push the state and society for changes. However, "constructive tactics" are also necessary to empower disadvantaged groups. Economically and socially marginalized, the disadvantaged mass can hardly afford frequent protest action. Therefore, the process of subjectivation needs to attend to their practical needs. Social movement organizations have the potential to fight the disadvantaged if they always take up radical action, which will alienate themselves from the mass and weaken the movements. On the other hand, the historical subjectivity of the mass needs to be developed by certain forms of confrontations pushing for structural changes.

Third, scholar-activists like myself need to constantly reflect on our positions in social movements and transcend the tendency of reinforcing existing power relations. Touraine (1981) calls for the sociological intervention where sociologists should consider themselves as historical actors and representatives of real or potential actors greater than themselves, but at the same time should not be identified with the actors. For Touraine, maintaining distance helps delineate the social movement from the struggle and hence also to designate the social and cultural stakes of the conflict. However, this kind of distance may not be attainable in the social context where the gap between the haves and have-nots is severe, and consequently the intellectuals' access to critical information and their abilities of abstraction are needed to support the movements with more holistic and historical analyses. At the same time, we have to face the reality that intellectuals can be more easily co-opted by the status quo and may not have much at stake if they withdraw from the movements. Given these considerations, elsewhere (Hsia, 2006b) I argue that the intellectual should see him/herself as a "conscious wolf man," rather than a movement leader. The conscious wolf man is aware of his capacity to cause harm; therefore, before the full moon, he tries every means to avoid causing fatal damage. He constantly reminds people around that he might betray them and helps them learn all of his expertise and skills so that the people can carry on with their struggles after he eventually betrays. This metaphor of conscious wolf man illustrates that the role of intellectuals in the movement is not to lead, but to constantly empower more people to build their analytical capacities, avoiding the possibilities of inflicting a vital wound on the movement upon their future betrayal.

Notes

1. Marriage migrants were required to submit proof of financial security under strict guidelines, including a bank statement or official receipts for income tax

wherein the amount should be at least equal to 24 times that of the minimum wage. Many marriage migrants cannot apply for citizenship because of this.

2. "Foreign bride" is common parlance in Taiwan and reflects the discrimination against third-world women. Quotation marks are used to remind readers of the ideology behind the term.
3. The local volunteer/activists experience a similar learning and subjectivation process to the marriage migrants, which is beyond the scope of this chapter.

References

- Beamish, T. & Luebbers, A. J. (2008). "Peace and justice: Learning from an alliance to stop a hot lab 'LULU' in Boston's South End." Paper presented at Annual Meeting of American Sociological Association, Boston, MA, July 31.
- Beckford, J. A. (1998). Re-enchantment and democratization: The recent writings of Alain Touraine. *European Journal of Social Theory* 1(2), 194-203.
- Boal, A. (1979). *The theatre of the oppressed* [Trans. Adrian Jackson]. London: Pluto Press.
- _____. (1992). *Games for actors and non-actors*. [Trans. Adrian Jackson]. London and New York: Routledge.
- Chen, H. F. (July 19, 2005). The arrogance behind the project of Taiwanese children by Mekong River. *Apple Daily* (Taipei). Public Forum page (in Chinese).
- Chiu, Y. (August 1, 2005). Southeast Asian sisters already rise up. *Apple Daily* (Taipei). Public Forum page (in Chinese).
- Constable, N. (2003). *Romance on a global stage: Pen pals, Virtual ethnography, and "mail order" marriages*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- _____. (ed.). (2005). *Cross-border marriages: Gender and mobility in transnational Asia*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Ellsworth, E. (1989). Why Doesn't This Feel Empowering? Working Through The Repressive Myths of Critical Pedagogy. *Harvard Education Review* 59 (3), 297-324.
- Foley, G. (1999). *Learning in social action: A contribution to understanding informal education*. London and New York: Zed Books.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- _____. (1985). *The politics of education: Culture, power and liberation*. [Trans. Donald Macedo]. Granby, MA: Bergin and Garvey.
- Gamson, W. A. (1990). *Strategy of social protest*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Hsia, H. C. (2004). Internationalization of capital and the trade in Asian women: The case of "foreign brides" in Taiwan. In *Women and globalization*, ed. D. Aguilar & A. Lacanana, pp. 181-229. Amherst, NY: Humanity Press.
- _____. (2006a). Empowering "foreign brides" and community through praxis-oriented research. *Societies Without Borders* 1, 89-108.
- _____. (2006b). The making of immigrants movement: Politics of differences, subjectivation and societal movement [in Chinese]. *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies* 61(1), 1-71.

- Hsia, H. C. (2008a). The development of immigrant movement in Taiwan: The case of alliance of human rights legislation for immigrants and migrants. *Development and Society* 37(2), 187-217.
- _____. (2008b). Beyond victimization: The empowerment of "foreign brides" in resisting capitalist globalization. *China Journal of Social Work* 1(2), 130-148.
- _____. (2009). Foreign brides, multiple citizenship and immigrant movement in Taiwan. *Asia and the Pacific Migration Journal* 18(1), 17-46.
- Luria, A. R. (1976). *Cognitive development: Its cultural and social foundations*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Mao, Z. (1937). On practice: On the relation between knowledge and practice, between knowing and doing. In *The Selected Writings of Mao Zedong*, 1970, vol. 1 (pp. 259-273). Beijing: People's Publishing House. (In Chinese)
- Marx, Karl (1978[1847]). The coming upheaval. In *The Marx-Engels reader*, ed. R. C. Tucker, pp. 218-219. New York: W.W. Norton.
- McAdam, D., J. D. McCarthy, & M. N. Zald (eds.) (1996). *Comparative perspectives on social movements: Political opportunities, mobilizing structures and cultural framings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Moser, C. O.N. (1989). Gender planning in the third world: Meeting practical and strategic needs. *World Development*, 17, (11), 1799-1825.
- Schapiro, R. M. (1995). Liberatory pedagogy and the development paradox. *Convergence* 28 (2), 28-48.
- Stephen, I. (2008). Building alliances: Defending immigrant rights in rural Oregon. *Journal of Rural Studies* 24(2), 197-208.
- Tarrow, S. (1998). *Power in movement: Social movements and contentious politics* (2nd ed). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Touraine, A. (1981). *The voice and the eye: An analysis of social movements*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- _____. (1988). *Return of the actor*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

PART II

Making Knowledge and Learning from Unions, Worker Alliances, and Left Party-Political Activism