



Adoption: Family Strategies and their Wellbeing

Programme Event

International Committee of Historical Sciences | 26–30 August 2026 | Leipzig, Germany

DATE 27 Aug 2026, 14:30 - 16:30	LOCATION House 5 - SR26
THEME F - Demography and Historiography	CONFERENCE International Committee of Historical Sciences

Overview

This panel delves into the intricate and multifaceted phenomenon of child adoption in pre-industrial period. Adoption during this era was not merely a familial or individual decision but an integral part of the broader Eurasian demographic and cultural system. The primary motivations behind adoption practices included the continuation of family lineage and addressing labor shortages, reflecting the societal priorities of the time.

The discussion will highlight the regional disparities in adoption trends across Taiwan, with a particular focus on the significantly higher adoption rates of daughters in the northern regions compared to the south. These variations were influenced by complex and interrelated factors, including gender roles, family composition, historical context, and socioeconomic conditions. Key themes include the association of daughter adoptions with the "daughter-in-law" marriage practice and the economic and familial circumstances that often necessitated the adoption of sons.

Furthermore, the panel will examine the interplay of internal family dynamics—such as the wellbeing of adopted girls, presence of grandparents, parental marital types, and the birth order of children—and external societal influences like cultural norms and economic constraints, in shaping adoption decisions. By exploring these themes, the panel aims to provide a nuanced understanding of how adoption functioned as a mechanism to navigate familial and social challenges.

We unravel these historical narratives, offering insights into the cultural, economic, and demographic factors that shaped adoption practices and their lasting implications for understanding family systems in Eurasia.

1. Child Adoption in Colonial Taiwan: Gender, and Socioeconomic Realities.
2. The Wellbeing of Adopted Girls in Colonial Taiwan: Historical Evidence and Analysis.

ChiaChi Lin (Tamkang University)

Chun-Hao Li (YuanZe University)

Shu-Li Huang (Academia Sinica)

Participants

Panelists

- Chun-Hao Li (YuanZe University)

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- Shu-Li Huang (Academia Sinica)